Notice of the Final Oral Examination for the Degree of Master of Arts of

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B.A.H (Queen’s University, 2015)

“A Defense of Ecofeminism: Re-Examining the Clayoquot Sound Peace Camp”

Department of Political Science

Wednesday, May 5, 2021
10:00 A.M.
Remote Defence

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Will Greaves, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Mara Marin, Department of Political Science, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Kara Shaw, School of Environmental Studies, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Prof. Conrad Alexandrowicz, Theatre Department, UVic

Dr. Stephen Evans, Acting Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
**Abstract**

The relationship between gender and the environment has been explored most fully throughout the theory of ecofeminism, which is a theoretical position and political movement that examines environmental problems through the lens of gender, revealing the ways that the oppression of women and the exploitation of nature are conjoined and mutually reinforcing. However, ecofeminism has often been ignored, re-named, or subjected to critiques of gender essentialism. As a result, I return to the 1993 Clayoquot Sound protests on Vancouver Island, British Columbia to re-examine the theory and praxis of ecofeminism. Although the ecofeminist dimensions of this social movement have often been ignored within the academic literature, I argue that the main environmental organization, the Friends of Clayoquot Sound (FOCS), consciously invoked ecofeminist principles of equality, consensus and non-violence to direct the camp and campaign. Ecofeminism within Clayoquot Sound kept gender equality at the forefront of the environmental movement while challenging traditional hierarchical power relations and systems of dominance that many social movements experience. Clayoquot Sound was therefore a watershed social movement that integrated a gendered perspective into environmental discourse, analysis, and action. Additionally, essentialist notions were notably absent from Clayoquot, which calls into question how critics have unfairly labelled and dismissed ecofeminism, therefore limiting the theoretical and political potential of the theory. I urge further research and reflection among both activists and academics regarding the intersection between environmentalism and feminism, especially in today’s worsening climate crisis.