



University  
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

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

of

**TARA LISE ERB**

BA (University of Victoria, 2016)

**“Facilitating Indigenous cultural safety and anti-racism training:  
Affect and the emergence of new relationships and social change”**

Department of Sociology

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

9:00 A.M.

Conducted Remotely

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. André Smith, Department of Sociology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)  
Dr. Charlotte Loppie, School of Public Health and Social Policy, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Billie Allan, School of Social Work, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Catherine McGregor, Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic

## **Abstract**

While the uptake of cultural safety initiatives are increasing in professional environments, literature on cultural safety lacks reference to the lived experiences and demands of facilitating Indigenous cultural safety training. Using a qualitative and Indigenous approach, this study examined the various challenges and successes involved in facilitating Indigenous cultural safety and anti-racism training from the perspective of facilitators. The diverse sample comprised of eleven facilitators and included Indigenous, non-Indigenous, male, female, and those who worked in post-secondary, healthcare and/or private sector environments. Results indicate that facilitators, typically highly skilled and perceptive individuals grounded in their identity and critical race analyses, used affect and affective activities that challenge participants to interrogate the ways that power and privilege influence their everyday interpersonal and professional relationships. Affect theory describes the ways in which our bodies have potential to be creative and respond in new ways; affect and affective activities in Indigenous cultural safety training increased the likelihood of a bodily emergence from participants, which is a necessary critical turning point to create new relationships to land, others and self. Furthermore, the study identified that cultural safety trainings are potentially risky spaces, as facilitators must constantly assess and manage the risks of harm, emotional distress and/or taxation to both participants and themselves. Finally, the study discusses possible supports necessary for facilitators to continue this important work. Overall, the study demonstrates how affect and bodily emergence is foundational to decolonialization and sustainable social change.