



University  
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

**EDWIN HODGE**

MA (University of British Columbia, 2011)

BA (University of British Columbia, 2006)

**“Grievance and Responsibility: Emotional motivators and knowledge production networks in men’s rights and pro-feminist men’s groups in North America”**

Department of Sociology

Wednesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

10:00 a.m.

Clearihue Building

Room B021

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Helga Hallgrimsdottir, Department of Sociology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, School of Public Administration, Uvic (Co-Supervisor)

Dr. Steve Garlick, Department of Sociology, UVic (Member)

Dr. Min Zhou, Department of Sociology, UVic (Member)

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Dr. Dominique Clement, Faculty of Sociology, University of Alberta

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Dr. Sanghoon Nam, Peter B. Gustavson School of Business, UVic

## Abstract

The men's rights movement (MRM) is a loosely affiliated collection of primarily online communities that together form a substantial component of a broader constellation of online men's groups known as the "manosphere". Though the specific ideologies that comprise the core of the modern MRM have existed since the mid-1970s, it was not until the advent of modern online communications that the movement was able to iterate into the form it is today. This research project examines the MRM as a form of reactionary countermovement, rooted in a collective sense of *grievance*, which directs knowledge producers and movement participants alike to engage in collective identity construction and in-group boundary maintenance through a shared, collaboratively developed countermemory. The research, composed of a qualitative analysis of MRM-produced texts found across more than thirty websites and online communities, indicates that the bulk of MRM literature and online activity facilitates the maintenance of this countermemory and to enable the movement to challenge its ideological opponents. Additionally, through a limited number of narrative interviews with members of pro-feminist men's groups, this research contrasts the inward-facing orientation of MRM knowledge production and activity against that of pro-feminist men's organizations, which engage in outward-facing, community-focused activism rooted in a shared sense of *responsibility*. This dissertation contributes to social movement theory by illustrating how online movements make use of virtual space through the construction of what I term *virtual geographies* to facilitate identity construction and knowledge transmission. The MRM makes use of these spaces to construct alternative discursive frameworks – countermemory – which allow for a reconceptualization of men's social position from one of privilege and dominance, to one of marginalization and oppression.