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

of

EMMA BYRNES

BAH (Queen’s University, 2013)

“Costly Choices: Gender and Luck Egalitarianism”

Department of Philosophy

Wednesday, January 13, 2016
10:00 A. M
Clearihue Building
Room B315

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Colin Macleod, Department of Philosophy, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Cindy Holder, Department of Philosophy, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Gillian Calder, Faculty of Law, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Jill Walshaw, Department of History, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

This thesis considers the topic of choice-based gender inequality in the context of the Luck Egalitarian project. In Chapter 1, I argue that Luck Egalitarianism, as it currently stands, is inadequate in dealing with the topic of gendered choice. I maintain that this is due largely to the fact that they are minimal in their discussions of the social forces shaping gendered choices (e.g. socialization, hostile social climates). In Chapter 2, I discuss whether attending to autonomy in choices gives the Luck Egalitarian a potential way to incorporate a more robust discussion of gender into their model. I argue that contextualizing the choice/circumstance principle is the key to ensuring that it tracks truly autonomous choice, and avoids treating choices shaped by gender norms as justifiably disadvantage-conferring. In Chapter 3, I begin the project of articulating a set of background conditions against which we can deem choices authentic, and free from gender-specific social constraints. I draw on feminist approaches to the philosophy of autonomy to inform this project.