PROGRAMME

The Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies)

Dawn Rabey
2005 Trinity Western University, MA (Counselling Psychology)
1996 Ambassador University, BSc (Psychology)

“Women’s Stories of Their Transpersonal Experiences with the Divine Feminine”

Tuesday, September 17th, 2013
9:30am-12:30pm
MacLaurin, A341

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Honore France, Department Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic (Supervisor)
Dr. Tim Black, Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic (Department Member)
Dr. Laura Lauzon, School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Corinne Koehn, Faculty of Education, UNBC

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Lyn Davis, School of Public Health and Social Policy, UVic
Abstract

Spirituality is becoming an increasingly important dimension of Counselling Psychology. As multicultural communities become more inclusive and global, it is valuable for counsellors to become more familiar with the different types of spiritual experiences that individuals are having. By attending to such experiences, counsellors may address how current forms of spirituality encourage healing, growth, and development, thereby increasing our understanding of human potential. Furthermore, many cultures are emerging from a religious history that portrays a male god as supreme, and the predominant images of the Divine as masculine. This imbalance of the masculine and feminine in relation to spirituality has been associated with a profound disconnection from our bodies, the earth-body, and the split between spirit and matter. For this reason, relating to the Divine Feminine may hold an essential piece for many to reconnect with earth, body, and soul.

In this narrative inquiry, ten women are interviewed about their transpersonal experiences with the Divine Feminine. Their stories illuminate what the Divine Feminine is, the meaning attributed to Her, and the changes in their lives associated with their experiences. This study increases our understanding of the role the Divine Feminine has in the lives of women, and represents some forms of spirituality emerging in the new global context. In turn, it widens our perspective on the therapeutic implications these and related phenomena could have on Counselling Psychology.

The key findings of this research show that contemporary women are experiencing the Divine Feminine through: (a) Goddesses, (b) Shakti and Kundalini Shakti, (c) one’s Self (body, sexuality, blood mysteries), (d) Nature and sacred plant medicine, (e) Mother, and (f) spirit guides, visions, and past life experiences. This inquiry raises the awareness of the powerful healing, deep insight, and growth enhancing shifts that are attributed the Divine Feminine. The intention is that these stories will inspire counsellors to inquire into their clients’ transpersonal experiences
with the Divine Feminine; these experiences can be potent life-affirming and growth-enhancing resource.

**Awards, Scholarships, Fellowships**

*2009-2013 – Fellowship Award, University of Victoria*

**Presentations**

“Women’s Transpersonal Experiences with the Divine Feminine”

Spirituality and Psychology Conference, Atherton CA, USA. February 2012 (poster)