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

of

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Diploma (Emily Carr College of Art and Design, 1985)
M.F.A (Goodard, 2001)

“Cities of Fantasy: the Construction of the Desiring
Subject in Urban China”

Department of Pacific and Asian Studies

Friday, April 15, 2016
10:00 A.M.
Clearihue Building
Room C214

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Richard King, Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Michael Bodden, Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Lincoln Shlensky, Department of English, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Erica Woodin, Department of Psychology, UVic

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

Raymond Williams argues that a community’s cultural texts naturally draw upon its lived experience, and are thus a trustworthy expression of life within that community. This thesis explores the subject positions expressed in two contemporary texts—Wang Yuan’s Lipstick (口红), and Ning Ying’s I Love Beijing (夏日暖洋洋)—to understand how urban Chinese individuals experience and comprehend the transformations convulsing their cities. To facilitate this, my primary goal in this thesis is to build a theoretical framework that uses the psychoanalytic work of Jacques Lacan and Slavoj Žižek to create the concept of the fantasy construction of the desiring subject. Using this concept, and drawing on two aspects of the cultural theories of Walter Benjamin—his heavily citational methodology and his theory of the flâneur—I examine the role of fantasy in the construction of contemporary urban Chinese individuals as desiring subjects.