



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

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

of

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BA (Simon Fraser University, 2016)

**“‘Doing Good?’ Thrift Stores and Second-Hand
Clothing Donations in Victoria, BC”**

Department of Political Science

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

10:00 A.M.

Clearihue Building

Room B017

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Marlea Clarke, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Feng Xu, Department of Political Science, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Stephanie Ross, School of Labour Studies, McMaster University

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Rhonda Hackett, School of Social Work, UVic

Abstract

Do second-hand clothing donations 'do good?' Thrift stores promote the message that second-hand clothing (SHC) donations 'do good' when they solicit donations from individuals. I argue that this narrative of 'doing good' overemphasizes the social and economic value of donated clothes and conceals the negative aspects of overconsumption and the problems associated with the commercial export of SHC. The aim of this thesis is to better understand the relationship between fast fashion, clothing consumption and disposal patterns, and the global trade in SHC donations by examining what motivates individuals to donate SHC to thrift stores, and how thrift stores are linked to the international trade in SHC. I began to map SHC donations from households to thrift stores. I used a global production network (GPN) framework to examine the social, political, and economic relations that contribute to how value is created, increased, and extracted in this commodity chain. Using a case study approach, I conducted 30 interviews with individuals who donated used clothing and I conducted research at four different thrift stores that sell SHC in Victoria, BC.