



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

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

of

SALLY KIMPSON

MA (University of Victoria, 1995)

BSN (University of Victoria, 1989)

“Uncertain Subjects: Disabled Women on B.C. Income Support”

Interdisciplinary Studies (Departments of Nursing and Curriculum and Instruction)

Monday, October 26, 2015

11:00am

Halpern Centre for Graduate Students

Rooms 108

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Mary Ellen Purkis, School of Nursing, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)

Dr. Antoinette Oberg, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

Dr. Carol McDonald, School of Nursing, UVic (Member)

Dr. Katherine Teghtsoonian, Faculty of Human and Social Development, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Michelle Owen, Disability Studies Program, University of Winnipeg

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Juergen Ehling, Department of Biology, UVic

Abstract

With an explicit focus on how power is enacted and what this produces in the everyday lives of chronically ill women living on B.C. disability income support (PWD benefits), this research is located at the contested juxtaposition of what I refer to as three fields of possibility; feminism, poststructuralism and critical disability studies. Each of these fields suggests methodological, empirical and interpretive readings that enable me to produce different knowledge, differently, about disabled women's lives. Using verbatim narrative accounts from in-depth interviews focused on how each of four participants live their lives, take care of themselves, and make sense of and respond to the government policy and practices to which they are subject, reveals everyday, embodied practices of the self that constitute their subjectivities as disabled women. Together, these accounts along with critically interpretive reflections reveal/expose/make visible the lives of these women in response to exercises of power in ways that unseat, unsettle and disrupt taken-for-granted understandings of those who are disabled, female and poor.

Along with explicating power relations in the lives of disabled women and what these produce, I also link these critically to their health, socio-economic well-being and citizenship, while creating a disruptive reading that destabilizes common-sense notions about disabled women securing B.C. provincial income support benefits. Thus my research purposes and those of my disability activism are melded as these intersect within the (often-contested) borders of poststructural and social justice terrain. Despite public claims by the B. C. government to foster the independence, participation in community and citizenship of disabled people in B.C., the intersection of government policy and practices and how they are read and taken up by the women, produce profound uncertainty in their lives, such that these women become uncertain subjects. Living poorly, they experience structural poverty, compromised well-being and dis-citizenship, all inconvenient facts reflecting the disjuncture between how government programs are publicly represented and their strategic effects.