



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

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

of

DOUGLAS STETAR

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.