Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Social Work

of

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BCYC (Douglas College, 2017)

“Fat Bodies in Space: Explorations of an Alternate Narrative”

School of Social Work

Friday, March 26, 2021
10:30am (PDT)
Remote Defence

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Jeannine Carriere, School of Social Work, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Bruce Wallace, School of Social Work, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Sarah Nutter, Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Patricia Cochran, Faculty of Law, UVic

Dr. Stephen V. Evans, Acting Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

For far too long ‘obesity’ and healthcare have been inextricably linked, both forming and maintaining distinct narratives responsible for the “fear of fat” North American societies have embraced. Largely unrecognized, fatphobia now permeates individual and social consciousness and creates considerable harm broadly and within healthcare practice and policy. The following study seeks to unsettle the pathologization and binary views of weight and bodies to contribute to a building a more socially just, intersectional system of care. Fat Bodies in Space is a qualitative study situated on the unceded lək̓w̓elən territories and grounded in critical race, queer and decolonial perspectives. The disproportionate impacts of fatphobia in Canadian healthcare are discussed through the stories of five self-described fat individuals navigating their health in Victoria, British Columbia. Storywork, narrative and autoethnographic methods were part of the collection and analysis processes. Findings suggest a longstanding relationship between systemic inequities, social discourse and the treatment of fat individuals within health care systems.