



University
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

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

of

KIMBERLY SMITH

BSc (University of Alberta, 2005)

**“It’s Not Getting Better:
The transformative potentials of hopelessness”**

Department of Sociology

Friday, December 15, 2017
10:00 A.M.
Cornett Building
Room A317

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Stephen Garlick, Department of Sociology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Nicole Shukin, Department of English, UVic (Outside Member)
Dr. Simon Glezos, Department of Political Science, UVic (Additional Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Stephen Ross, Department of English, Simon Fraser University

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Eric Roth, Department of Anthropology, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

This thesis approaches hopelessness through the work of Deleuze and Guattari, situating their thought in relation to Baruch Spinoza and Brian Massumi. Drawing on the Massumi's theorizing of fear, and Spinoza's theorizing of link between hope and fear, I argue that hope keeps bodies and politics bound to a future that comes to organize the present. From this perspective, I argue that hopelessness can become an important element of not only undoing the ways that future forces come to organize the present, but can open immanent ways of participating in the organization of emergent forces. The thesis also clarifies the differences between affect and emotion, and the body and the subject. This supports an understanding of politics as the undoing and warding off of hope through attending to hopelessness, and an increase in bodies' capacities to experiment and participate in the organization of their own desires and situations.