



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

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

of

COLLEEN MacPHERSON

BA (Malaspina University-College, 2002)

**“Children as Weapons: Child Protection Responses to the Parenting of
Men who Batter”**

School of Child and Youth Care

September 6, 2017
2:00 P.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B021

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Sybille Artz, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Jennifer White, School of Child and Youth Care, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Grant Charles, School of Social Work, University of British Columbia

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Susan Strega, School of Social Work, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

Although there is extensive research on children's exposure to intimate partner violence and its impacts, there is very little information available with respect to how child protection workers assess the risks posed to children by the negative parenting associated with battering and how these workers intervene to protect children. This case study therefore sought to understand how child protection workers accounted for the parenting of men who batter in their assessments of child safety and in their service plans. It explores in detail how mothers and child protection workers conceptualize and describe the parenting attitudes and behaviours of the men who came to the attention of MCFD due to battering, how protection workers assessed children's safety in light of the parenting behaviours and examines the types of child welfare responses or interventions that were utilized in order to deal with these challenges. Results show that despite the level of understanding on the part of the child protection workers' with regard to the links between the perpetration of intimate partner violence and negative parenting approaches, these fathers' parenting was largely overlooked in the child safety assessment and service delivery plans. Thus, it is recommended that child welfare policies draw robust links between the perpetration of intimate partner violence and negative parenting approaches and provide child protection workers with the safety assessment tools and clear direction to assess the parenting behaviours of fathers who batter their children's mothers.

Keywords: child protection, child welfare, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, battering, parenting of men who batter, interventions, child safety assessments