

Why Does Gender Matter in Child Welfare? An International Conversation

Brid Featherstone & Carol-Ann Hooper (UK)
Andrea Doucet (Canada)

Thursday April 10, 2008, 2:30 – 5:30

Wendy Patrick Room, Ground Floor, Wilson Hall, 3506 University Street

Andrea Doucet: Men and Mothering, Feminism and Fathering: Exploring Possibilities and Tensions



One of the most dramatic transformations in Canadian families in the past four decades has been the increase in fathers' participation in, and responsibility for, the care of children. Drawing from her decade-long research program on diverse fathering experiences in Canada, Doucet highlights what facilitates and impedes fathering involvement, how gender differences deeply permeate caregiving in particular times and social sites, and how fathers are both celebrated and scrutinized in community settings. Andrea Doucet is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Carleton University. Her book, *Do Men Mother?* (2006), was awarded the John Porter Tradition of Excellence Award from the Canadian Sociology Association. She co-authored *Gender Relations: Intersectionality and Beyond* (with Siltanen, 2008) and is the 2007 recipient of the

SSHRC Thérèse Casgrain Fellowship on women and social justice, from which she is currently writing a book on women as primary breadwinners.

Brid Featherstone: Engaging fathers in child welfare services: Interrogating the politics



Child welfare services are encouraged by government and some fathers' organisations in the UK to 'engage' fathers or develop 'father-inclusive' services. Are such developments to be welcomed by feminists and progressives or are they further examples of attempts to restrict women's autonomy in a neo-liberal context? Featherstone explores such questions in this lecture drawing from her experience as a researcher of New Labour child welfare policies over the last ten years. Brid Featherstone is Professor of Social Work and Social Policy at the University of Bradford. Her books include *Mothering and Ambivalence* (1997) co-edited with Hollway, and *Family Life and Family Support: A Feminist Analysis* (2004); *Working with Men in Health and Social Care* (2007) with Rivett & Scourfield.

Carol-Ann Hooper: Gender, risk and resilience: Reflections from qualitative research



Much research in the fields of child maltreatment and youth offending has focused on the identification of risk factors. According to Hooper, gender rarely features in such analyses despite its relevance to both issues. Drawing on a recent qualitative research study involving 70 low-income families, Hooper explores the dynamics of risk and resilience in relation to maltreatment within the multiple contexts in which family members interact. Carol-Ann Hooper is Senior lecturer in Social Policy, University of York, UK. Her books include *Psychodynamic Perspectives on Abuse* (2000) co-edited

with McCluskey, *Abuse, Interventions and Women in Prison: a literature review* (2003) and *Living with Hardship 24/7: The diverse experiences of families in poverty in England* (2007) co-authored with Gorin, Dyson & Cabral.