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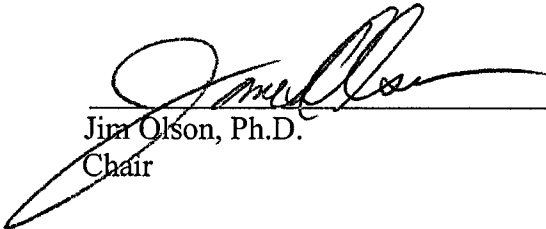
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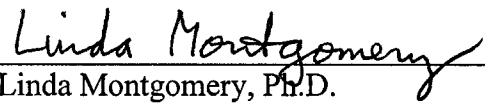
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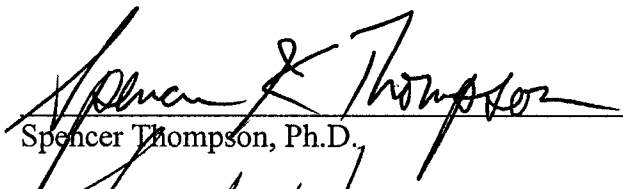
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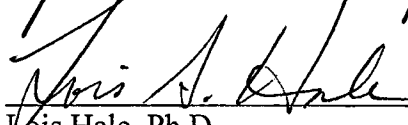
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PAVED WITH GOOD INTENTIONS: A DEFINITIONAL
STUDY ON THE ISSUE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL
CHILD ABUSE

by

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THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Faculty of Psychology

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Abstract

Definitional issues concerning child abuse have long plagued the identification and treatment of this malady. This study examined the role of perpetrator intention in categorizing adverse parenting skills, as well as psychological child abuse potential. Exploitative parenting styles were displayed and rated in a variety of vignettes. Social service professionals and university students were participants in this vignette style questionnaire study. Results indicated that with a few exceptions, a constant perpetrator intention did not appear to alter subject perceptions that the scenarios presented adverse parenting skills and child abuse potential. The participants were indecisive concerning scenarios that represented excessive athletic pressure, American cultural practice of orthodontics, and extreme farm chores. These results can be instrumental in further refining the definitions of psychological child abuse, and providing assistance to many children.