DIVERSITY AND MEANING IN THE STUDY OF BLACK FATHERHOOD

Toward a New Paradigm

Maria S. Johnson

Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, University of Delaware

Alford A. Young, Jr.

Departments of Sociology and *Afroamerican and African Studies, University of Michigan*

Abstract

For the past several decades, numerous studies have focused on the so-called "crisis of Black fatherhood"—that is, the many ways in which Black fathers struggle to fulfill traditional paternal roles and duties. Given major shifts in both the structural conditions and cultural expectations of fatherhood in general over the past century, we argue that it is necessary to reestablish not only what Black fatherhood looks like today—in particular, the internal diversity and dynamism of this category—but also how Black men (as well as other members of Black families and communities) make sense of these changes and meaningfully negotiate their implications. We outline a two-pronged research agenda that: first, identifies gaps in the existing literature that limit our knowledge of the full range of Black fathering practices and experiences; and second, reclaims and repurposes "cultural analysis," not to pathologize "what's wrong with Black families and fathers," but to shed much needed light on the ways in which Black fathers themselves process and make meaning of their roles and realities.

Keywords: Black Men, Fatherhood, Culture, Family, Father Involvement, Black Families

INTRODUCTION

The crisis of fatherhood in the Black community is both an old and a new story. On the one hand, concerns about the number of Black single-mother households have long roots stretching back to late nineteenth and early twentieth-century public sentiment and urban ethnographies (DuBois 1973; Furstenberg 2007). On the other hand, the questions of whether and how Black men struggle to perform traditional father roles and duties have intensified or, at the very least, been repackaged as a new "crisis"

in the face of the disproportionate rates of unemployment, concentrated poverty, and incarceration of contemporary Black men (Clayton et al., 2003; Cochran 1997; Cosby 1986; Hamer 2001; Jarrett et al., 2002; Livingston and McAdoo, 2007; McAdoo and McAdoo, 1994; Willis 1996). At the same time, however, the roles and expectations associated with fatherhood in modern society have diversified. That is, the social role of fathers is no longer wholly defined as or measured by men's performance of traditional roles such as "bread winners," heads of household, or disciplinarians (Griswold 1993; LaRossa 1988, 1997). Accordingly, contemporary concerns regarding Black men's fathering capabilities now contend with a broader understanding of what exactly that role involves. But are these expanded notions of fatherhood "good" or "bad" for Black men and Black families? Have we just increased the number of ways that Black fathers could be judged as falling short or has the shifting definition of fatherhood opened the way to recognize forms of paternal care already performed by Black fathers but not previously valued?

The point we seek to make in this article is that before we can address these more specific questions, we need to know more about what Black fatherhood looks like contemporarily. In particular, we must pay more attention to the internal diversity and dynamism of this category, due to class and sexual identity distinctions that are not fully recognized in earlier research. We also need a more incisive understanding of how Black men (as well as members of Black families and communities) make sense of these changes and meaningfully negotiate their implications. To this end, we outline a two-pronged research agenda that: first, identifies gaps in the existing literature that limit our knowledge of the full range of Black fathering practices and experiences; and second, reclaims and repurposes "cultural analysis," not by way of reinforcing the pathological "what's wrong with Black families and fathers," but by shedding much needed light on the ways in which Black fathers themselves process and make meaning of their roles and realities. Importantly, we focus our discussion on the post-Moynihan era; in other words, following the aftermath of and critical backlash sparked by Senator Moynihan's 1965 report, which infamously argued that the cultural values and practices of Black families were linked to their breakdown, sparking debate about the use of culture to explain the socioeconomic status of Black families. Our use of culture, by contrast, does not ascribe pathology or inherent deficiencies to Black families. Indeed, the static notion of Black family culture that Moynihan's report necessitated, and that has endured throughout academic investigations of Black men, Black fathers and Black families since the end of 1960s, is precisely what we argue needs to be challenged. This must be enacted through studies that reflect greater demographic diversity and the infusion of a new approach to cultural analyses. In what follows, we will elaborate on what this type of analysis would look like and how it would prompt us to ask different kinds of questions.

Trends in research reveal important aspects of Black fatherhood, but there remain clear gaps in knowledge pertaining to Black fathers. Public discourse and even research approaches to Black fathers often proceed according to a problem-based approach with a focus on urban, impoverished, and disconnected fathers. Furthermore, much of the research on Black fathers centers on behavior and roles. Accordingly, class distinctions in the performance of fatherhood by Black Americans, the types and qualities of performance of residential fathers, the kinds of gender-based and sexuality-based ideologies embraced by these fathers, the existence and significance of social fathering, and how fathering unfolds across the life course of such fathers remain as understudied categories of Black fatherhood. We elaborate on each of these areas as research avenues that would serve to invigorate current studies of fatherhood.

In terms of cultural analyses, we find that while a number of studies have emphasized the values and conduct of Black fathers, we have limited understanding of how Black fathers, in general, make meaning of the unique circumstances in which fatherhood surfaces for them. In this piece, we argue for a cultural analytical approach in which researchers move beyond descriptive reports of values and behaviors to examine how Black men view their opportunities and motivations for reaching their parenting goals. This type of analysis connects Black men (an often socially isolated group) to larger trends and realities in family formations and lived experiences. It also requires readers to think of Black men not as problematic anomalies, but as agents within the larger social structures that create and constrain opportunities (Young 2006). Our goal here is not so much to advocate for any one specific cultural analytical approach, but to emphasize the importance of studying the many dynamic, sometimes competing frames for making sense of fathering, and the actual strategies that individuals use to navigate fathering practices and their meanings.

THE NEW CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF FATHERHOOD IN AMERICA

Popular conceptions of the role of fathers in American families underwent a gradual transition over the twentieth century (Griswold 1993; LaRossa 1988, 1997). As late as the mid-nineteenth century there was still no dominant consensus in American life and culture about the social role of fatherhood. A version of White, middle class fathering was emerging that emphasized working outside of the home, a marked departure from the more involved home-based fathering of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Griswold 1993; LaRossa 1997). But these new practices had not yet generated a new societal rhetoric regarding fatherhood, and certainly did not accurately reflect the practices and constraints of fathering particularly for poor, working Whites, immigrant and migrant workers, Native Americans, enslaved Black Americans, and later newly freed Black Americans. Public understanding of the role of fathers did eventually crystallize in and around the notion that fathers should be married, the principal providers of economic resources for the family, and provide limited support for child rearing (LaRossa 1997).

Over the past few decades the singular conception of the providing father has been challenged and today there exists a more expanded notion of the paternal role. Fathers are now considered to be contributors to the emotional, social, and economic development of family members, particularly children (LaRossa 1988; Marsiglio and Roy, 2012). This transformation in scholarly and public conception of fatherhood has been associated with certain demographic shifts in family structure in the United States. There has been, for example, a rise in the number of births outside of marriage—a shift from about 5% of births in the United States being out-of-wedlock in 1960 to about 41% by 2013 (Child Trends 2014b). The changing role of fathers has therefore partly been a parallel development alongside shifts in the changing roles of mothers, particularly those increasingly taking on the duties traditionally associated with fathers. Additional research has shown that as family structure has changed in American life, unmarried (or no-longer-married) fathers experience a substantial range in the types of interactions with their children (Amato et al., 2009; Bronstein and Cowan, 1988). Studies have found that married fathers have increased the proportion of time they dedicate to direct child care (Casper and Bianchi, 2002), and that the percentage of nonresident fathers that frequently see their children increased from 18% in 1976 to 31% in 2002 (Amato et al., 2009).

Transformations in the American family have meant that notions of responsible fatherhood now fall somewhere in between traditional and contemporary conceptions. The traditional idea concerns the breadwinning duties that are regarded as the primary or sole contribution that fathers make to their children and families. The contemporary perspective considers fathers as complete participants in the lives of their children beyond the actual birthing (Gerson 1993; Griswold 1993). More specifically, this conception includes the view that fathers provide myriad forms of daily care and interact with their children in order to foster emotional, social, and cognitive growth (Dowd 2000; Marsiglio and Roy, 2012). Thus, rather than just providing material support, fathers are now considered responsible for more thorough contributions to the welfare of the child.

Some researchers argue, however, that changing culture has not completely translated into differences in conduct (Craig 2006; LaRossa 1997; Shows and Gerstel, 2009). According to their findings, fathers are only modestly more involved in domestic responsibilities and care giving activities, despite shifts in cultural narratives regarding fatherhood (Craig 2006; Shows and Gerstel, 2009). Further, studies find that expanded notions of fatherhood sometimes work to reinforce the dominance of men within families (Craig 2006; Gavanas 2004). On the other hand, Sullivan (2010) finds that when large-scale longitudinal data are examined, there is evidence of slow, measurable change in both gender ideologies related to gender equality in the home and in fathers' participation in family work, particularly child care. Varied results reveal that more studies and information need to be gathered about the gap between the culture and conduct of fatherhood.

Other researchers note structural factors that may shape certain fathers' ability and/or desire to transform accordingly. While fathers across class may support engaged fathering, economic resources shape their motivation for pursuing nurturing father roles. Marginalized, low-income unmarried fathers, both Black and White, embrace nurturing behaviors and expectations because they are easier to fulfill than more traditional roles, like breadwinner (Edin and Nelson, 2013). Low-income fathers, Edin and Nelson (2013) argue, pursue nurturing fathering in place of providing in more traditional manners, whereas middle class fathers use nurturing as a supplement to their fathering. Thus the real issue for both low-income mothers and fathers is that their class status prohibits many of them from achieving both traditional *and* contemporary parenting and marriage related goals.

A strand of "fragile family" research examines precisely such issues. Researchers in this area are comprised primarily of liberal advocates and organizations that promote work opportunity and argue that father absence is due to economic and structural issues. Social science studies of fragile families (typically investigations of low-income couples who share at least one child and are not married to each other) have served to inform and support policy interventions related to fatherhood (Gavanas 2004; Jordan-Zachery 2009; Mincy and Pouncy, 2002; Waller 2010), highlighting the influence of economic forces, particularly unemployment, on low-income family formation (Edin and Kefalas, 2005; Gavanas 2004; Silva 2013). The bulk of federal government policy related to responsible fatherhood has focused on nonresident fathers, particularly those within fragile families. While not the first time responsible fatherhood was mentioned in federal policy, the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act marked the first major federal financial contribution to targeted responsible fatherhood programming (Responsible Fatherhood Programs 2010). Congress designated up to $50 million per year for responsible fatherhood programs, with the majority of the funding supporting programs that teach parenting skills (Responsible Fatherhood Programs 2010). With the launch of My Brother's Keeper, the Obama administration continues the emphasis

on responsible fatherhood through the expansion of coalitions with fatherhood organizations, media campaigns, mentoring initiatives, and proposed budgets, with a focus on the experiences of Black and Latino men and boys (Obama 2014). These government programs highlight yet another way which cultural transformations have concrete consequences for how men father, particularly low-income Black nonresident fathers who interface with child support and social welfare programs (Jordan-Zachery 2009; Pate 2010). Such targeted programs also reveal, however, the ways in which the "new" discourses regarding engaged fathers can also serve to simply repackage concerns about a "crisis" of problematized Black fatherhood.

TRENDS DEFINING RESEARCH ON BLACK FATHERHOOD

Two considerations tend to dominate discussions of Black fatherhood in terms of both *which* Black fathers are studied the most, and the types of questions we ask about them. They are: (1) the dilemmas brought about by the contemporary era of socio-economic disadvantage faced by Black fathers, and (2) the existence and increase of nonresident fathers in the Black community.

The Socio-Economic Landscape of Black Fatherhood

Researchers have examined how the collapse of a formidable industrial employment sector has been a causal force in the reduction of job prospects for many Black fathers. Although Black men are not the only victims of this transition, the downturn in employment prospects has caused a great crisis for Blacks because of their over-representation in manufacturing employment sectors (Hamer 2001; Johnson 2000; Johnson and Oliver, 1992; Kletzer 1998; Sampson 2011; Wilson 1987, 1996; Young 2006). Additionally, Black fathers are more likely to live in areas with concentrated poverty, reduced amenities and services, and limited employment opportunities than men of other races (Edin and Nelson, 2013; Hamer 2001; Sampson 2011). Thus, research on Black fathers and employment has explored how the availability of social and material resources matter for Black fathers' fulfillment of paternal commitments (Edin et al., 2009; Hamer 2001; Jarrett et al., 2002; Roy 2004b; Sullivan 1989). Studies find that Black fathers and family members experience tensions due to some Black men's failure to fulfill traditional roles as economic providers. This literature has also revealed that some Black men's inability to fulfill the economic provider role causes tensions and anxieties for family members as well as for the fathers themselves, and has been shown to negatively affect the fathers' expressive provisions (Bowman 1990; Bowman and Foreman, 1997; Roy 2004b). Economic difficulty is also linked to sociobehavioral issues such as stress-related illness, violence, and drug abuse, which have bearing on how provider or expressive roles are performed by fathers (Bowman and Sanders, 1998; Gary 1981; Gary and Leashore, 1982; Pearlin et al., 1981; Staples 1982; Wilson 1987, 1996).

Nonresident Fatherhood in the Black Community

Nonresident fatherhood remains an area of intense scrutiny concerning the situation of Black fathers. The increase of nonresident Black fatherhood by Black men is often demonstrated by data such as reports that 51% of Black children live in single mother headed households, 34% of Black children live in two married-parent households (Child Trends 2014a), and 73% of all births given by Black women in 2013 were by unmarried women (Child Trends 2014b). Additionally, some past studies argue nonresident Black fathers are uninterested in performing traditional paternal duties

with some having drawn the conclusion that Black absentee and nonresident fathers are ineffective or irresponsible when involved in the lives of their children (a review of these claims is found in Cochran (1997)). Of course, many nonresident Black fathers *do* interact with their children, often at higher rates than fathers of other racial and ethnic groups (Cochran 1997; Coley and Chase-Lansdale, 1999; Danziger and Radin, 1990; Edin and Nelson, 2013; Gordon et al., 1994; Hamer 2001; Hammond et al., 2011; Jones and Mosher, 2013; Livingston and McAdoo, 2007; Price-Bonham and Skeen, 1979).

While census tract or community-level data would be necessary to fully affirm the effects of changing demographic patterns concerning nonresident and uninvolved Black fathers, the high percentage of children living in single-mother headed households has given rise to the notion that nonresident fatherhood has become a community-level phenomenon for Black Americans. This claim is sustained by the fact that 80% of African American children spend some portion of their childhood living away from their fathers (Aird 2003) and Black Americans remain more residentially segregated than Asians and Latinos (Frey 2011). Therefore, children living in these environments, especially those of lower-income statuses, experience both an absence of fathering at home, and a dearth of consistent community-level exposure to resident fathering in their neighborhoods. Understandings of Black fatherhood take on an added sociological dimension as children are without opportunities to witness the performance of father roles in proximate social settings.

The magnitude of this development is such that nonresident fatherhood is not simply a dilemma of many households in the Black community, but a staple feature of many predominantly Black residential communities. Accordingly, absentee or nonresident fatherhood[1] has become a community-level issue for Black Americans such that many current and future fathers have little to no exposure to men who perform the role in their households or their neighborhoods. The lack of consistent exposure to men performing that role becomes critical in effecting what men can or cannot draw upon to formulate understandings of how fatherhood can be enacted.[2]

The fact that many Black fathers are not residing with their children, that many (despite residence) struggle to secure and provide financial resources, and that these occurrences unfold in the midst of new images of fathering surfacing in America renders the traditional image of fatherhood as inappropriate for many Black Americans. In the course of elucidating how Black fathers respond to constraints and how they articulate their values regarding fatherhood, social science literature has argued that Black family structure and intra-family relations often differ from those of non-Black families (Billingsley 1992; Bowman 1993; Hamer 2001; Jarrett et al., 2002; Liebow 1967; Rainwater and Yancey, 1967). Most importantly, these differences have profound significance for how roles and obligations concerning fatherhood are construed and enacted. Although the analytical frames differ, they are often focused upon the same behaviors: the duties that Black fathers actually perform, duties that they perceive should be performed but for various reasons are not, duties that are socially defined as appropriate for males, and duties that mothers desire fathers to do. Taken together, these points comprise the functions, responsibilities, and expectations concerning fatherhood. In much of this research, the issue of whether and how Black fathers have functioned as providers for their children has been the overriding concern. However, more recent studies have offered a broader framework for documenting different dimensions of fatherhood (Bowman and Forman, 1997; Coles and Green, 2010; Hamer 2001; Roy 2004a).

Cultural analysis is a critical strategy for exploring gaps in the literature related to the meanings Black fathers attach to structural transformations. Such analyses foreground

the meanings men attach to fatherhood and the sociological factors (e.g., patterns of life experience, geographical or residential community contexts, etc.) that are relevant to the construction of such meanings. Contemporarily, this kind of consideration is important because an increasing pattern in Black fatherhood is that the role has been unfolding in contexts where many fathers were, themselves, reared with limited relationships with their biological fathers.

REINVIGORATING STUDIES OF BLACK FATHERHOOD

As the previous section established, researchers have focused overwhelmingly on questions and issues most relevant to low-income, non-resident Black fathers. A limitation of this focus is that it obscures the full diversity of the category of Black fatherhood. As a collective, it also supports (however unintentionally) the sentiment that all Black fathers are low-income and non-resident, and the "crisis" they constitute is a primarily an economic and demographic one. In this section, we focus on the various aspects and forms of Black fatherhood that remain understudied, but which point to important ways of rethinking the category of fatherhood itself. These include class distinctions in the performance of fatherhood by Black Americans, the narratives of resident fathers, the types of gender-based and sexuality-based ideologies embraced by Black fathers, the experiences of social fathers, and Black fathering as it changes throughout the life course. Then, in the following section, we will discuss why, once we know more about the diversity of Black fatherhood, a specifically *cultural* analysis is needed to study it.

Differences According to Class

The traditional way that Black fatherhood and class are studied leaves out some fathers and limits our understanding of Black fathering. Specifically, we still know relatively little about stably employed or middle class Black fathers. Over the past two decades, studies of middle class Black families have increased, but few studies have middle income or middle class Black fathers as the central focus, with studies from the late 1970s and 1980s, such as Cazenave (1979), still being widely cited. Cazenave (1979) finds that the provider role was important to the Black middle-income male postal workers he interviewed. Providing served as the fathers' primary value and role that facilitated their practice of other paternal roles. Newer studies are consistent with this finding (Taylor et al., 1988), but research that focuses on middle class families still tends to look only at married, resident, middle class fathers (Perry et al., 2012), and not middle class fathers who may also live in separate households.

Studies of the Black middle class have limited information regarding parenting practices and ideologies (Hill and Sprague, 1999), but findings indicate that Black middle class parents strategically incorporate racial socialization and assimilation into their parenting practices (Lacy 2007). Existing studies find that middle class Black fathers parent in ways that are similar to White fathers, but also differ in that Black fathers socialize their children around racial issues (Hill and Sprague, 1999). Thus, Black fathers think, talk, and enact parenting practices that are specifically shaped by their racial identification and issues they anticipate their children having to contend with (Childs and Dalmage, 2010). As Hill (2001) put it "…although Black parents have embraced most of the values of the dominant society, their American experiences and African heritage have lead to some distinctive socialization patterns, most of which revolve around race, class and gender" (p. 495). In addition, Patillo (1999) finds that some middle class Black male teens without fathers in their lives search for "masculine identity" by engaging in gang activity and drug dealing in order to connect with men.

Researchers' focus on men who are the most economically marginal skews our understandings of Black fathers toward issues which are often poverty-related. Hill and Sprague (1999), Hill (2001), and Furstenberg (2007) argue that some of the race-based findings of previous studies are really linked to many Black families' class status. In essence, some attributes that are considered uniquely African American may be class-based responses to issues. Therefore, it is important to study what is "racial" about the experiences of Black fathers (such as the racial socialization of children) and what is class. To truly understand this we need more analyses of Black fathers from various class backgrounds. Hill and Sprague (1999) also argue that cross-racial analyses should follow in the tradition of multiracial feminism to consider the ways race *and* class intersect to create particular experiences, rather than thinking of race *or* class. By exploring intraracial differences among Black fathers, we can more effectively understand which cultural attributes are related to race or to class.

Resident Fatherhood

While most of what we know about married, heterosexual Black fathers covers their experiences with provider role strain (Bowman 1990; Bowman and Forman, 1997) or experiences within low-income, fragile families (Edin and Nelson, 2013), some recent sociological studies also examine aspects of married, resident fathering not related to provision or economic support. In *The Myth of the Missing Black Father* (Coles and Green, 2010), a few chapters appear that represent some of the most recent sociological studies of Black resident fathers (Bulanda 2010; Childs and Dalmage, 2010; Marks et al., 2010). These studies consistently find that married Black fathers value parenthood, engage in involved parenting styles, like authoritative parenting, and attempt to influence the racial identity development of their children (Bulanda 2010; Childs and Dalmage, 2010; Marks et al., 2010). According to these studies, married Black fathers also face obstacles that influence their fathering behaviors, such as poverty (Bulanda 2010), obligations to extended kin and friends, relationships with wives, and assuming the roles and responsibilities of marriage (Marks et al., 2010). Limited material and financial resources in addition to family and community based expectations are connected to fathers' parenting choices. These findings reveal that, while challenging, married Black fathers embrace parental roles and work that lead to healthy child development and sustain marriages and relationships.

However, current research related to resident fatherhood often links residence with marriage. A recent study provides an example of how researchers can begin to investigate differences between married and cohabiting fathers (Perry et al., 2012). Researchers find that the strongest predictor of married fathers' involvement is self-perception. Age, religiosity, parenting stress, and having children with multiple partners also plays a significant role in father involvement (Perry et al., 2012). Among cohabiting fathers, the authors find that maternal support is the single significant factor influencing father involvement. These findings indicate the need for researchers to continue to explore the diversity of meanings, motivations, and beliefs of resident fathers living with the mothers of their children.

Single Black fatherhood is another form of resident fathering and a family structure that researchers have only recently begun to study. The topic provides fertile ground for exploring complexities related to custodial fathering, nurturing, caregiving, and providing. Researchers of Black single fathers tackle many challenges associated with single parenthood, describe similarities between Black and White single fathers, and compare single father experiences to those of Black single mothers (Coles 2009, 2010;

Green 2010; Hamer and Marchiorio, 2002; Osgood and Schroeder, 2010). Their work establishes Black single-father families as a growing family form. Much of the research emphasizes Black single fathers' behaviors, conceptions of father roles, and experiences with structural obstacles. According to these studies, many fathers' behaviors and priorities are similar to those of single mothers. Nurturing and providing are top priorities for single fathers (Coles 2009). They are also dependent on extended kin support (Coles 2009, 2010; Hamer and Marchiorio, 2002) and face barriers that are particular to their positions as single fathers. For instance, single fathers are less likely to receive public assistance than single mothers (Osgood and Schroeder, 2010), often have informal custody arrangements (Hamer and Marchiorio, 2002) and maintain their status as single fathers for short periods of time (Coles 2009, 2010; Green 2010; Hamer and Marchiorio, 2002). However, as Green (2010) notes, single fathers and mothers share more similarities than differences in their parenting goals and experiences, such as challenges related to income. Thus an understanding of the ways society conceives of the father role, especially in the absence of mothers, is an important interrogation. Future research on single Black fathers should expand knowledge regarding the ways single fatherhood supports and disrupts mainstream and even Black conceptualizations of fatherhood, masculinity, and nurturing.

Sexual Identity and Gender Ideology

There are even wider gaps in knowledge related to Black fathers who defy traditional, heterosexual norms related to fatherhood. For instance, studies of Black gay fathers are rare. Yet, examinations of the experiences of gay Black fathers have important implications for our understanding of the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality for Black fathers. Existing studies often incorporate gay fathers into broader examinations of Black fatherhood or gay parenting (Cahill et al., 2003), but do not have gay fathers as the central focus. However, studies about gay Black fathers reveal that they parent in a myriad of ways. Within their family units these men are vital sources of support as biological, social, foster, and adopted fathers, uncles, and brothers (Cahill et al., 2003). While gay Black men are less likely to be parents than Black lesbians, they are more likely to be fathers than gay White men (Cahill et al., 2003). For instance, Hawkeswood (1996) finds that Black gay men in Harlem acted as fathers to women's children, particularly their sisters. In return for women's prior support and help, the men would provide child care assistance, money, or being a father-figure. Consequently, there are important policy considerations as these fathers adopt and informally care for extended kin and others and face a disproportionate brunt of public policies that limit opportunities for gay and lesbian parents (Cahill et al., 2003).

Feminist fathering presents yet another space to study issues of race and gender among Black fathers. A key feature of feminist fathering is its emphasis on nurturing and care giving (White 2006, 2008). Studies of Black feminist fathers find that Black fathers embrace nurturing and caretaking aspects of parenting, particularly roles normally associated with mothering (Neal 2005; White 2006, 2008). These studies reveal some interesting directions in how researchers can investigate alternative fathering practices, but they are relatively few in number. It is important to explore these possibilities for fathers who experience difficulty in meeting traditional paternal roles. For them, acceptance of expanded roles would not reflect substituting for the inability to commit to traditional fathering, but rather the capacity to enrich their functioning in such ways.

Maria S. Johnson and Alford A. Young, Jr.

Social Fathering

Many studies of Black fathers focus on biological fathers, while studies of Black men's roles as father figures remain limited (King 2010; Lempert 2009; Richardson 2009; Smith 2010). Studies of social fathers identify relatives, fictive kin, and community figures that perform family roles typically associated with biological fathers. In general, studies of social fathers: (1) identify men who assume social father roles, (2) describe their family contributions, and (3) argue that social fatherhood needs more investigation. These studies emphasize the ways social fathers fulfill contemporary family needs. However, more research is needed on the historical context of social fathering and the contemporary structural and cultural environments that have morphed social fathering.

Fathering Across the Life Course

Life course issues emerge in several studies of Black fathers, with many studies focusing on young fathers in early adulthood. However, life course perspectives indicate that Black fathers' engagement changes over their lifetime (Jarrett et al., 2002; Roy 2006). The life course approach requires that researchers consider ecological factors that enhance and prohibit Black father involvement across the life course (Roy 2006). Further, life course studies highlight the need to fully conceptualize and examine the myriad father-figure roles Black men occupy across their lifetimes.

Difficulties related to accessing samples may be connected to our lack of information about single, co-habiting, gay, or other understudied fathers. Many men do not remain single fathers for long periods of time and the number of single fathers is small (Coles 2009). Additionally, mothers may move in and out of relationships in ways that make it difficult to sample co-habiting fathers, though the Fragile Families Study provides a wealth of data about economically marginal resident fathers (married and unmarried). Also, stigma around gay fathering may preclude some men from revealing their sexuality and status as gay fathers. Nevertheless, more efforts on the parts of researchers must be made to include these men in studies. For instance, many studies of fathers launch the sample from biological children and mothers, thus heterosexual parenting is emphasized. This, however, does not account for fewer studies of married, heterosexual fathers, particularly ones who are not low-income. While the marriage rates of African Americans are lower than those of other races, there are enough married African American men to complete a study. Problem-focused inquiry directs attention to more vulnerable and tenuous family arrangements, and leaves us with gaps about diverse Black fathering experiences.

A NEW AGENDA FOR CULTURAL ANALYSES OF BLACK FATHERHOOD

In this post-Moynihan era, many researchers have shied away from exploring cultural elements of Black family life and the meanings Black Americans assign to family roles in order to avoid trends in cultural studies that emphasized deficits in Black family life (Small et al., 2010; Young 2004). Instead, many researchers chose to focus on structural constraints to fathering (such as unemployment). As a result, we know a great deal about the structural barriers facing Black fathers. We have the greatest depth and understanding from cultural studies that examine the strains low-income Black fathers face, their values, and various cultural and family values adaptations to constraints (Edin and Nelson, 2013; Hamer 2001; Young 2004). Missing, however, from many cultural studies of Black fathers is an emphasis on Black men's meaning-making

strategies regarding Black fatherhood and their cultural responses to larger structural and cultural changes (Young 2004). We also know little about how various Black fathers' ideologies (such as Black feminist fathering) or Black fathers' identities (such as gay fathers, social fathers, or single fathers) may shape how they conceptualize fathering.

In addition, we need to know more about how to appropriately incorporate Black fathers within research narratives regarding the culture of fatherhood in the United States. Let us return for a moment to the question of whether "new" father discourses are "good" or "bad" for Black fathers. In many ways Black fathers have engaged in nurturing roles for several decades, as their emotive and caretaking contributions have been vital to fulfilling family needs (Hamer 2001). This is particularly true of low-income fathers and social fathers who provide extended kin care for family members. For instance, Hamer (2001) finds that low-income nonresident fathers prioritize role modeling and care giving when they discuss their contributions to their children's lives. Interestingly, much of the public conversation regarding "new fatherhood" and paternal responsibility focuses on precisely this kind of fathering within the married, nuclear family context. But this focus on nuclear families limits our understanding of the myriad ways Black men practice expanded fatherhood. Again, we have limited knowledge and understanding of married, heterosexual Black fathers' experiences, particularly ones who are not low-income. Research gaps such as these may account for why Black fathers, in addition to still being problematized as in "crisis," have not been held up as, in fact, exemplars of engaged fathering.

In-depth cultural analysis requires that we move beyond describing Black fathers' behaviors or revealing their values. For example, descriptive analyses of married Black fathers note that their children respect them and value their role, and that the fathers value their relationships with their spouses and children (Marks et al., 2010). But a more in-depth cultural analysis would explore not only whether the fathers *value* the role of husband and father, but also how they *negotiate* their beliefs and worldviews regarding paternal roles, the challenges they face, and the stigma associated with Black fatherhood. While some recent cultural studies expand our understanding of how Black men with low incomes make sense of fathering, particularly in comparison to White fathers—with the exception of Hamer's (2001) intraracial analysis (Edin and Nelson, 2013; Marsiglio and Roy, 2012; Waller 2002;); future cultural studies of Black fatherhood should point out the meaning Black fathers of diverse backgrounds attach to various aspects of fatherhood. It is at those junctures that we can learn more about how some men sustain father-child relationships, even under challenging economic and interpersonal circumstances, while others disengage or enter into a cycle of connection and disconnection across their life course with different sets of children. This nuanced approach is necessary in order to understand how the men frame fatherhood and what they view as viable options.

To illustrate how the cultural analysis we advocate would compel us to ask different kinds of questions, let us consider the example of Black fatherhood as impacted by the disproportionate rates of incarceration for Black men. In recent decades, high rates of unemployment, drug sentencing policies, and increased policing in urban centers have been linked to Black men's increased and disproportionate incarceration (Goffman 2014; Western and Wildeman, 2009). Higher incarceration rates have led to many Black fathers rotating in and out of their children's lives. Their incarceration not only renders them physically unavailable but also limits their ability to offer financial and material provisions. The resulting strains to father-partner and father-child relationships result from the often unsatisfactory means by which family needs are fulfilled during fathers' imprisonment (Swisher and Waller, 2008; Western and Wildeman, 2009).

Unmarried fathers face the additional financial burden of arrears, defined as the accumulation of unpaid child support, during their incarceration. Upon release these fathers encounter sometimes insurmountable arrears in addition to the prospect of paying current and future child support (Holzer et al., 2005). Further, they are challenged to readjust to society, find a job, and reconnect with their families.

Studies that examine all of the above issues are valuable and important, yet they remain firmly located within the existing trend of structural analyses. From this perspective, in order to understand how incarceration affects Black fatherhood, one needs to ask questions about residency, resources, and relationship strains resulting from material and physical deprivations. Again, such questions are important, yet they provide only a partial picture—and importantly, a picture in which Black men in particular and Black families in general appear not as agentic, meaning-making subjects, but as either statistics or victims swept along by more powerful forces. But consider, in contrast, how the picture might change if we were to ask a different set of questions. For instance, do families actually understand incarcerated fathers to be absent and disconnected, or are they still considered connected, only with a lack of physical presence? Such perceptions are important because they influence how families engage fathers during their imprisonment, how they reincorporate fathers into family life upon their release from prison, and how, as a community, Black families view incarcerated fatherhood. A deeper cultural analysis might also prompt researchers to examine the implication of mass incarceration for Black family beliefs and worldviews. In what ways do understandings of father roles expand or contract in response to mass incarceration? For instance, does the similarly increased incarceration of Black *women* and the subsequent increase in extended kin care lend some men to re-imagine their roles within extended family units as nurturers and caretakers? In what ways to do men draw from more contemporary notions of fatherhood to fulfill family needs that result from incarceration?

Another area that a reinvigorated cultural analysis might tackle includes the beliefs and experiences of Black men who are unable to fulfill traditional and new father roles as a result of the recent economic downturn. The size of the Black middle class has decreased, creating yet another economic squeeze for Black families (Lacy 2012; Oliver and Shapiro, 2008), but researchers have not systematically explored the manner by which men that formerly *were* able to fulfill traditional roles respond to their recent financial role strain. How do their understandings of the image of Black fatherhood influence how they think of themselves and their financial contributions during this economic crisis? The point here is not that changing structural conditions no longer warrant analysis, but that they intersect with changing cultural discourses, and set in motion both structural *and* cultural consequences, thus our analyses should be attentive to all of these.

Similarly, a key transition in family life for the majority of people in the United States was the mass entry of women into the workforce. Over the past few decades a majority of heterosexual, two-parent households in the U.S. have become dual-earner families (Franklin 2010). This transition was less stark for Black families, as Black women have participated in the labor market for generations and Black families originated the concept of the dual-earner family (Franklin 2010). Relatively little research exists on how Black men made sense of their partner and father roles in light of these early experiences. Even less is known about whether the larger cultural shift had implications for the beliefs and worldviews of dual-earner Black couples. Specifically, did Black men's understandings of their roles in families shift as dual-earner families became a societal norm? Much of what is understood about new fathers is based on White fathers and from the standpoint that men have shifted their ideological and, to a

lesser extent, paternal behaviors. However, how did these shifts influence Black men's worldviews? Further, did Black men see or sense the transitions as significant cultural shifts, given their prior experiences? The inclusion of Black fathers' experiences would offer complicated nuances to the ideas of shifts in the cultural and behavioral practices of fathers.

Methodologically, cultural analyses would benefit not only from Black fathers' perceptions of themselves, but also the vantage points of Black women. Much of Black fathers' family lives involve Black women as their mothers, partners, extended kin, and daughters. A group level understanding of Black fathering would benefit from exploring how women understand the contributions of Black men to family life. For instance, in a study of Black father-daughter relationships (Johnson 2013), the author finds that women believe that fathers are important to their development as women. These women also identify areas of their lives such as dating and schooling where they seek and desire their fathers' support. This information is important for cultural analysis as it prompts researchers to explore how daughters conceive of their fathers' input into their lives. Further, this study revealed a myriad of ways Black men contribute to family life as social fathers, biological fathers, and in emotional and material support.

Finally, the cultural analysis we advocate here has not only theoretical but also methodological implications. By foregrounding a changing, non-essentialized understanding of culture, researchers would have to become more attentive to the dynamic, historically and situationally specific dimensions of meaning. If meaning matters, how exactly does it change over time, and how is it constructed by actors individually and collectively? Much research, for example, looks at Black fathers' early adulthood experiences. Yet, how do their worldviews regarding the influence of neighborhoods, class, and family contexts change over time? How do various life experiences combine with age to alter what options the men feel are available to them? In many Black urban areas the community-level influence of fatherhood absence is difficult to assess. Many residents are not witnessing father roles being enacted in a consistent manner. Accordingly, one wonders how changes in father residence and presence influence neighborhoods on a community level. The challenge for quantitative researchers is to document what happens around fatherhood as a property of neighborhood change over time. While we know that age, connection to the labor market, and even neighborhood location greatly influence paternal participation, we are limited in our knowledge of how fathers think about these influences on their lives and fathering choices.

We encourage the performance of a cultural analysis that interrogates how work and family roles are a daily strategy for Black fathers. The set of actions they perform is often in response to what they broadly believe fathers should do and the specific options they believe are available to them. For instance, a recent and innovative study used the cultural product of rap music to investigate how Black male rappers express their feelings about fatherhood and the opportunities and obstacles attached to fatherhood (Oware 2011). Individuals' reflections within the music highlighted Black fathers' group-level concerns regarding parenting (Oware 2011). While rap lyrics are certainly influenced by record company and consumer market demands, Oware (2011) argues that explorations of Black male cultural products provide researchers the opportunity to investigate fatherhood themes that are important to Black men. The use of ethnographic interviews and cultural products provide a solid foundation for investigating the myriad ways Black men think about and navigate fathering.

The effects of such new investigations of Black fatherhood are multiple, and they are relevant for a number of distinct sectors and constituencies. Formal scholarly research pursuits of this kind will offer an important bridge between the emerging field of men and masculinity studies, where portraits of new fatherhood have proliferated,

yet have been investigated largely by examining the experiences and attitudes of White middle and upper income fathers. Whether and, if so, how Black fathers relate to this new vision will lead to more inclusive and thorough understandings of the role, structure, and content of what fathering means in modern American society. In the policy arena specifically, such a new lens on Black fathers will allow for the financial provider role to be more properly placed alongside other forms and functions of fathering in discussions of intervention strategies and designs for strengthening fathers' contact with their children, if not families more generally (and the caution about immediately lumping the two together emerges from the understanding that strengthening fatherhood may not be coterminous with strengthening a family unit, especially if the parents do not constitute a strong partnership despite being devoted parents to their children). Most importantly, the new vision invites Black fathers to re-imagine themselves and their contributions as being broader than directly tied to the provision of financial resources. Although there are significant challenges involved in trying to reshape an understanding of any cultural role, there remains extensive validity in contributing to a healthier and more complete portrait of Black men, especially for those men themselves.

CONCLUSION

The objectives of this article have been twofold. First, we have argued for the importance of expanding and diversifying our often limited understandings of Black men and fathering; and second, we have tried to demonstrate why a shift towards more in-depth, cultural analyses of Black fatherhood would be particularly valuable to understanding those diverse forms and experiences of fathering. This approach serves as a corrective to continued pathological mainstream understandings of Black fatherhood, and problem-oriented policy approaches and research orientations to Black families in general.

Cultural studies must examine the particularities of Black fatherhood, but within the broader scope of culture and conduct of fatherhood. While many Black fathers face obstacles to fathering due to contemporary challenges of incarceration or deindustrialization, they also encounter, make sense of, and respond to changing cultural expectations and standards of fathering. An approach that embraces these various realities would keep researchers from discussing Black fatherhood as unique or deviant from more mainstream ideologies or practices of fathering. Further, this approach would allow researchers to assess the permeability of cultural theories of fatherhood and interrogate nuances in how cultural shifts are understood and even practiced among various groups.

Given the continued growth of scholarship on Black men and fatherhood, respectively, as well as aggressive policy and philanthropic actions such as President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Initiative, research that complicates and clarifies our understanding of Black fathering—and its implications for fathering in general—remains a pressing intellectual and public imperative.

Corresponding author: Maria S. Johnson, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, University of Delaware, 311 Smith Hall, Newark, DE 19711. E-mail: johnmar@udel.edu

NOTES

1. The distinction drawn here between the two terms remains, in that absentee fatherhood maintains a more pejorative identity as reflecting men who do not live with nor have meaningful access to their children. In contrast, nonresident fatherhood refers to men who live

in separate households than their children, but does not convey judgment regarding their efforts to maintain consistent involvement. However, the actual geographical distance between such fathers and their children still provides grounds for various challenges and problems in the men's capacity to remain intimately involved in their children's lives.

2. We make a distinction here between men's understandings of how that role can be enacted versus their beliefs about how it should be enacted. The former pertains to understandings of how the role is actually carried out (which may be best informed by witnessing its performance at home or in the local community) whereas notions of how it should be performed reflect the values and desires that men may embrace for the role (and which may be informed by the absence of that role ever being effectively performed for them).

REFERENCES

Aird, Enola (2003). Making the Wounded Whole: Marriage as a Civic Right and Civic Responsibility. In Obie Clayton, Ronald Mincy, and David Blankenhorn (Eds.), *Black Fathers in Contemporary American Society: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Strategies for Change*, pp. 153–164. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Amato, Paul R., Catherine E. Meyers, and Robert E. Emery (2009). Changes in Nonresident Father-Child Contact from 1976 to 2002. *Family Relations*, 58(1): 41–53.

Anderson, Elijah (1989). Sex Codes and Family Life among Poor Inner-City Youths. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 501(1): 59–78.

Billingsley, Andrew (1992). *Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Enduring Legacy of African-American Families*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Bowman, Phillip J. (1990). Coping with Provider Role Strain: Adaptive Cultural Resources among Black Husband-Fathers. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 16(2): 1–21.

Bowman, Phillip J. (1993). The Impact of Economic Marginality among African American Husbands and Fathers. In Harriette Pipes McAdoo (Ed.), *Family Ethnicity: Strength in Diversity*, pp. 120–137. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Bowman, Phillip J., and Reliford Sanders (1998). Unmarried African American Fathers: A Comparative Life Span Analysis. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 29(1): 39–56.

Bowman, Phillip J., and Tyrone A. Forman (1997). Instrumental and Expressive Family Roles among African American Fathers. In Robert Joseph Taylor, James S. Jackson and Linda M. Chatters (Eds.), *Family Life in Black America*, pp. 216–247. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Bronstein, Phyllis E., and Carolyn P. E. Cowan (Eds.) (1988). *Fatherhood Today: Men's Changing Role in the Family*. Oxford, England: John Wiley & Sons.

Bulanda, Ronald E. (2010). Poverty and Parenting Style among Black Married Couples. In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 47–64. New York: Columbia University Press.

Cahill, Sean, Juan Battle, and Doug Meyer (2003). Partnering, Parenting, and Policy: Family Issues Affecting Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) People. *Race and Society*, 6(2): 85–98.

Casper, Lynne M., and Suzanne M. Bianchi (2002). *Continuity and Change in the American Family*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Cazenave, Noel A. (1979). Middle-Income Black Fathers: An Analysis of the Provider Role. *The Family Coordinator*, 28(4): 583–593.

Child Trends Databank. (2014a). Births to Unmarried Women. <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=births-to-unmarried-women> (accessed December 14, 2015).

Child Trends Databank. (2014b). Family Structure. <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=family-structure> (accessed December 14, 2015).

Childs, Erica Chito, and Heather Dalmage (2010). Rearing Biracial Children: The Experiences of Black Married Fathers. In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 47–64. New York: Columbia University Press.

Clayton, Obie, Ronald Mincy, and David Blankenhorn (Eds.) (2003). *Black Fathers in Contemporary American Society: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Strategies for Change*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Cochran, Donna Lynn (1997). African American Fathers: A Decade Review of the Literature. *Families in Society-the Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, 78(4): 340–351.

Coles, Roberta L. (2009). *The Best Kept Secret: Single Black Fathers*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Coles, Roberta L. (2010). Single Custodial Fathers: A Narrative Tour of their Parenting. In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 83–99. New York: Columbia University Press.

Coles, Roberta L., and Charles Green (Eds.) (2010). *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Coley, Rebekah Levine, and P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale (1999). Stability and Change in Paternal Involvement among Urban African American Fathers. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 13(3): 416–435.

Cosby, Bill (1986). *Fatherhood*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Craig, L. (2006). Does Father Care Mean Fathers Share? A Comparison of how Mothers and Fathers in Intact Families Spend Time with Children. *Gender & Society*, 20(2): 259–281.

Danziger, Sandra K., and Norma Radin (1990). Absent Does Not Equal Uninvolved: Predictors of Fathering in Teen Mother Families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 52(3): 636–642.

Dowd, Nancy E. (1997). *In Defense of Single-Parent Families*. New York: New York University Press.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1973). *The Philadelphia Negro*. Millwood, NY: Kraus-Thomson Organization Ltd.

Edin, Kathryn, and Maria Kefalas (2005). *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Edin, Kathryn, and Timothy J. Nelson (2013). *Doing the Best I Can: Fatherhood in the Inner City*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Edin, Kathryn, Laura Tach, and Ronald Mincy (2009). Claiming Fatherhood: Race and the Dynamics of Paternal Involvement among Unmarried Men. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 621(1): 149–177.

Franklin, Donna L. (2010). African Americans and the Birth of the Modern Marriage. In Barbara J. Risman (Ed.), *Families as They Really Are*, pp. 63–74. New York: W.W. Norton.

Frey, William (2011). The New Metro Minority Map: Regional Shifts in Hispanics, Asians, and Blacks from Census 2010. <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2011/08/31-census-race-frey> (accessed December 14, 2015).

Furstenberg, Frank F. (1995). Paternal Participation and Public Policy. In William Marsiglio (Ed.), *Fatherhood: Contemporary Theory, Research, and Social Policy*, pp. 119–147. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Furstenberg, Frank F. (2007). The Making of the Black Family: Race and Class in Qualitative Studies in the Twentieth Century. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33: 429–448.

Gary, Lawrence E. (1981). *Black Men*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Gary, Lawrence E., and Bogart E. Leashore (1982). High-Risk Status of Black Men. *Social Work*, 27(1): 54–59.

Gavanas, Anna (2004). *Fatherhood Politics in the United States: Masculinity, Sexuality, Race and Marriage*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Gerson, Kathleen. (1993). No Man's Land: Men's Changing Commitments to Work and Family. New York: Basic Books.

Goffman, Alice (2014). *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Gordon, Edmund T., Edmund W. Gordon, and Jessica G. Nembhard (1994). Social Science Literature Concerning African American Men. *Journal of Negro Education*, 63(4): 508–531.

Green, Charles (2010). Single Custodial Fathers and Mothers Meeting the Challenge: A Comparative Note. In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 100–129. New York: Columbia University Press.

Griswold, Robert L. (1993). *Fatherhood in America: A History*. New York: Basic Books.

Hamer, Jennifer (2001). *What it Means to be Daddy: Fatherhood for Black Men Living Away from their Children*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Hamer, Jennifer, and Kathleen Marchioro (2002). Becoming Custodial Dads: Exploring Parenting among Low-Income and Working-Class African American Fathers. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64(1): 116–129.

Hammond, Wizdom Powell, Cleopatra Howard Caldwell, Cassandra Brooks, and Lee Bell (2011). Being There in Spirit, Fire, and Mind: Expressive Roles among Nonresidential African American Fathers. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 21(3): 308–318.

Hawkeswood, W. G. (1996). *One of the Children: Gay Black Men in Harlem*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Hill, Shirley A. (2001). Class, Race, and Gender Dimensions of Child Rearing in African American Families. *Journal of Black Studies*, 31(4): 494–508.

Hill, Shirley A., and Joey Sprague (1999). Parenting in Black and White Families: The Interaction of Gender with Race and Class. *Gender & Society*, 13(4), 480–502.

Holzer, Harry J., Paul Offner, and Elaine Sorensen (2005). What Explains the Continuing Decline in Labor Force Activity among Young Black Men? *Labor History*, 46(1): 37–55.

Jarrett, Robin L., Kevin Roy, and Linda Burton (2002). Fathers in the "Hood": Insights from Qualitative Research on Low-Income, African-American Men. In Catherine S. Tamis-Lemonda and Natasha Cabrera (Eds.) *Handbook on Fatherhood. Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, pp. 211–248. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Johnson, James H., Jr. and Melvin L. Oliver (1992). Structural Changes in the U.S. Economy and Black Male Joblessness: A Reassessment. In George Peterson and Wayne Vroman (Eds.), *Urban Labor Markets and Job Opportunity*, pp. 113–147. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Johnson, M. S. (2013). Strength and Respectability: Black Women's Negotiation of Racialized Gender Ideals and the Role of Daughter–Father Relationships. *Gender & Society*, 27(6), 889–912.

Johnson, Waldo (2000). Work Preparation and Labor Market Experiences among Urban, Poor Nonresident Fathers. In Sheldon Danziger and Ann Chih Lin (Eds.) *Coping with Poverty: The Social Contexts of Neighborhood, Work, and Family in the African-American Community*, pp. 224–261. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Jones, Jo, and William D. Mosher (2013). Fathers' Involvement with their Children: United States, 2006–2010. *National Health Statistics Reports*, no 71. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Jordan-Zachery, Julia (2009). Making Fathers: Black Men's Response to Fatherhood Initiatives. *Journal of African American Studies*, 13(3): 199–218.

King, Mansa Bilal Mark A. (2010). Fathering in Low-Income Families: Studying Father-Figure Flows. In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 147–169. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kletzer, Lori G. (1998). Job Displacement. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 12(1): 115–136.

Lacy, K. R. (2007). *Blue-Chip Black: Race, Class, and Status in the New Black Middle Class*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Lacy, Karyn (2012). All's Fair?: The Foreclosure Crisis and Middle-Class Black (In) Stability. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 56(11): 1565–1580.

LaRossa, Ralph (1988). Fatherhood and Social Change. *Family Relations*, 37(4): 451–457.

LaRossa, Ralph (1997). *The Modernization of Fatherhood: A Social and Political History*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lempert, Lora B. (1999). Other Fathers: An Alternative Perspective on African American Community Caring. In Robert Staples (Ed.), *The Black Family: Essays and Studies*, pp. 189–201. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Liebow, Elliot (1967). *Tally's Corner: A Study of Negro Streetcorner Men*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

Livingston, Jonathan N., and John L. McAdoo (2007). Changing Perspectives on the Role of the Black Father. In Harriette P. McAdoo (Ed.), *Black Families*, 4ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Marks, Loren, Katrina Hopkins-Williams, Cassandra Chaney, Olena Nesteruk, and Diane Sasser (2010). My Kids and Wife Have Been My Life: Married African American Fathers Staying the Course. In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 19–46. New York: Columbia University Press.

Marsiglio, William, and Kevin Roy (2012). *Nurturing Dads: Social Initiatives for Contemporary Fatherhood*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

McAdoo, John L., and Julia B. McAdoo (1994). The African-American Father's Roles within the Family. In Richard G. Majors and Jacob U. Gordon (Eds.) *The American Black Male: His Present Status and His Future*, pp. 286–297. Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall Publishers.

Mincy, Ronald, and Hillard W. Pouncy (2002). The Responsible Fatherhood Field: Evolution and Goals. In C. Tamis-LeMonda and N. Cabrera (Eds.) *Handbook of Father Involvement: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, pp. 555–598. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Moynihan, Daniel P. (1965). *The Negro Family: The Case For National Action*. Washington, DC: Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor.

Neal, Mark A. (2005). *New Black Man*. New York: Routledge.

Obama, Barack (2014). Remarks by the President on "My Brother's Keeper" Initiative. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/02/27/remarks-president-my-brotherskeeper-initiative> (accessed December 14, 2015).

Oliver, Melvin L., and Thomas M. Shapiro (2008). Sub-prime as a Black Catastrophe. *The American Prospect*, October, pp. A9–A11.

Osgood, Aurea K., and Ryan D. Schroeder (2010). Public Assistance Receipt: A Comparison of Black and White Single-Father Families. In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 125–146. New York: Columbia University Press.

Oware, Matthew (2011). Decent Daddy, Imperfect Daddy: Black Male Rap Artists' Views of Fatherhood and the Family. *Journal of African American Studies*, 15(3): 327–351.

Pate, David (2010). Fatherhood Responsibility and the Marriage-Promotion Policy: Going to the Chapel and We're Going to Get Married? In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 351–366. New York: Columbia University Press.

Pattillo, M. E. (1999). *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril among the Black Middle Class*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Pearlin, Leonard I., Elizabeth G. Menaghan, Morton A. Lieberman, and Joseph T. Mullan (1981). The Stress Process. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 22(4): 337–356.

Perry, Armon R., Dana K. Harmon, and James Leeper (2012). Resident Black Fathers' Involvement: A Comparative Analysis of Married and Unwed, Cohabitating Fathers. *Journal of Family Issues*, 33(6): 695–714.

Price-Bonham, Sharon, and Patsy Skeen (1979). A Comparison of Black And White Fathers with Implications for Parent Education. *Family Coordinator*, 28(1): 53–59.

Rainwater, Lee, and William L. Yancey (1967). *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy: A Trans-Action Social Science and Public Policy Report*. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press.

Responsible Fatherhood Programs: Hearing before the Income Security and Family Support Subcommittee, Ways and Means Committee. 111th Cong. (2010) (statement David Hansell, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/olab/resource/david-hansell-on-responsible-fatherhood-programs> (accessed December 14, 2015).

Richardson, Joseph B. (2009). Men Do Matter: Ethnographic Insights on the Socially Supportive Role of the African American Uncle in the Lives of Inner-City African American Male Youth. *Journal of Family Issues*, 30(8): 1041–1069.

Roy, Kevin (2004a). Three-Block Fathers: Spatial Perceptions and Kin-Work in Low-Income African American Neighborhoods. *Social Problems*, 51(4): 528–548.

Roy, Kevin (2004b). You Can't Eat Love: Constructing Provider Role Expectations for Low-Income and Working-Class Fathers. *Fathering*, 2(3): 253–276.

Roy, Kevin (2006). Father Stories. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27(1): 31–54.

Roy, Kevin, and Omari Dyson (2010). Making Daddies into Fathers: Community-based Fatherhood Programs and the Construction of Masculinities for Low-income African American Men. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 45(1–2): 289–310.

Sampson, Robert J. (2011). *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Shows, Carla, and Naomi Gerstel (2009). Fathering, Class, and Gender a Comparison of Physicians and Emergency Medical Technicians. *Gender & Society*, 23(2):161–187.

Silva, Jennifer (2013). *Coming Up Short: Working-Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Small, Mario, David Harding, and Michele Lamont (2010). Reconsidering Culture and Poverty. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 629: 6–26.

Smith, Aaron A. (2010). Standing in the GAP: The Kinship Care Role of the Invisible Black Grandfather. In Roberta L. Coles and Charles Green (Eds.), *The Myth of the Missing Black Father*, pp. 170–191. New York: Columbia University Press.

Staples, Robert (1982). *Black Masculinity: The Black Male's Role in American Society*. San Francisco, CA: Black Scholar Press.

Swisher, Raymond, and Maureen Waller (2008). Confining Fatherhood: Incarceration and Paternal Involvement among Nonresident White, African-American and Latino Fathers. *Journal of Family Issues*, 29(8): 1067–1088.

Sullivan, Mercer L. (1989). Absent Fathers in the Inner City. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social* Science, 501(1): 48–58.

Sullivan, Oriel (2010). Changing Differences by Educational Attainment in Fathers' Domestic Labour and Child Care. *Sociology*, 44(4), 716–733.

Taylor, Robert Joseph, Bogart R. Leashore, and Susan Toliver (1988). An Assessment of the Provider Role as Perceived by Black Males. *Family Relations*, 37(4): 426–431.

Waller, Maureen R. (2002). *My Baby's Father: Unmarried Parents and Paternal Responsibility*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Waller, Maureen R. (2010). Viewing Low-Income Fathers' Ties to Families through a Cultural Lens: Insights for Research and Policy. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 629(1): 102–124.

Western, Bruce, and Christopher Wildeman (2009). The Black Family and Mass Incarceration. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 621(1): 221–242.

White, Aaronette M. (2006). African American Feminist Fathers' Narratives of Parenting. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 32(1): 43.

White, Aaronette M. (2008). *Ain't I a Feminist? African American Men Speak Out on Fatherhood, Friendship, Forgiveness, and Freedom.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Willis, Andre C. (1996). *Faith of Our Fathers: African-American Men Reflect on Fatherhood.* New York: Dutton.

Wilson, William J. (1987). *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Wilson, William J. (1996). *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor.* New York: Knopf.

Young, Alford A., Jr. (2004). *The Minds of Marginalized Black Men: Making Sense of Mobility, Opportunity, and Future Life Chances.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Young, Alford A., Jr. (2006). Low-Income Black Men on Work Opportunity, Work Resources, and Job Training Programs. In Ronald B. Mincy (Ed.), *Black Males Left Behind*, pp. 150–158. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.