

This book seeks to examine and explain the debates surrounding men's relationships, not just in terms of fathering, but how that very position of 'father' becomes distilled across the sociological and socio-political landscape of – poverty, family, and policy. At the heart of this book is the contextual position that is of the fathers themselves and allows the readers to understand the epistemic links between the historiography of being a parent from a low-income background and how they relate to the role of the father. What is clear from the scholarly discussion is that there is a real focus on understanding this praxis through an intersectional lens, combining; class, gender and generation, alongside fathering in poverty.

As Tarrant describes beautifully in this book, our current thoughts about the role of working-class fathers have, unfortunately, been most recently shaped by a political rhetoric that aimed to stylise the modern background of fathering as one chastised and entrenched, in part, by its framing as 'feckless'. What this book does well is to remind readers that the role of excluded fathers tends to pertain to the working-class and is thus one that is to not be fully associated with a moral exclusion, but a political social exclusion, one driven by neo-liberal attitudes in a post-Thatcherite UK. This, as Tarrant discusses, has recently been driven by a political punching-down post-2011-riots, thus blaming, and pouring political scorn onto low-income fathers. However, it is also part of a longer-term marginalisation of low-income fathers, and one built on a division between truth and reality. As Tarrant describes these as disconnected and false narratives are aimed at constructing fathers as either absent, uncaring, and responsible for their own intergenerational deprivation.

In bringing forth truth to this situation, the book publicises empirical data collected by Tarrant's study into 'Men, Poverty and Lifetimes of Care' and details many instances of this observed qualitative evidence. This evidence is also built on a wealth of theoretical data and discussed in detail over the first few chapters. What this encourages the reader to do very well is to understand the epistemological position that this work is drawn from.

In Chapter Two Tarrant examines the ever so important political backdrop, a subliminal narrative which runs through the book. Yet within this chapter it is presented as a literature review, delivering a vivid detailed examination of how men, masculinities, poverty, fathering and exclusion have been curated, understood, dismissed, and then rediscovered in newer policy approaches. In this chapter it is hard to avoid the associated 'Underclass' thesis and its ideas of an intergenerational transmission of the causes of poverty, and the '*condition*' of the poor. Both of which, Tarrant reminds us, seemingly pays no attention to the structural drivers of poverty. I find this to be a standout chapter which provides a historiographic discussion of fathering and poverty and the story of exclusion. The Industrial Revolution and the inter-war period approaches to fathering (absent fathers too) are introduced through the literature under review, and what is striking, as Tarrant describes, is how the same images of 'fecklessness and absent' in today's poverty porn driven (social) media are nothing new. This examination is brought up to date with evidence of how the most recent Great Recession impacted family life, and subsequently reflected the class division and approaches to fathering. These media representations become almost imaginary in their hyper-visibility, urging the 'moral panic' of absenteeism in family life, which belongs to a recent (best forgotten) history of neoliberal times.

Further to this, this grounding evidence is presented, discussed and interpreted over four empirical chapters beginning with an exploration of how low-income fathers engage with local networks of support. Drawn from a mixed-method approach, the first of these chapters seeks to establish the important role voluntary professional organisations play in generating a sense of security in the fathers who use their service. These have become ever more important in the lives of, not just fathers, but the family too, as the statutory services have suffered under neoliberal welfare retrenchment. Yet, as this chapter also makes clear these are also spaces to understand the role of the statutory provisions that still exist too, as Tarrant draws on interviews conducted with local authorities and their varied approaches with working within their (sometimes) Murray-esc 'Troubled Families' agenda.

It is in the three subsequent chapters where the book really reflects the lived experience of the fathers who participated within the study, as we get to hear much about them and their trajectories of caregiving, poverty and resourcefulness and urban civic and familial participation in their own words. Poignant in this section is, obviously, the vignettes of lived experience, which can often be painted over. However, Tarrant's use of photographs, and interview transcripts in these three chapters really helps to bring clarity to lived experience of fathering on a low income. One such powerful statement about deprivation and food - "£3.26 a day that's to feed, clothe & run a house for 5 kids" resonates with an unambiguous depth of clarity associated with the economic circumstances that many low-income fathers feel. This, and comments like it as you read the book, allows you to understand the juxtaposed traditional sociological identity of the 'male provider' and makes available an understanding of the real experience of, not just male poverty in the UK today, but lays bare its familial extent.