Psychoanalytic Concepts of Fatherhood:

Patriarchal Paradoxes and the Presence of an Absent Authority

Tabitha Freeman, Ph.D.

Tabitha Freeman is Research Associate at the Centre for Family Research, University of Cambridge and Research Fellow at St Edmund's College, Cambridge.

Contact:

Dr Tabitha Freeman, Centre for Family Research, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cambridge, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RF, UK.

Tel: +44(0)1223 334514; Email: trf23@cam.ac.uk; Fax: +44(0)1223 33057

Psychoanalytic Concepts of Fatherhood: Patriarchal Paradoxes and the Presence of an Absent Authority

Abstract

This essay presents a critical examination of the patriarchal assumptions that have shaped psychoanalytic concepts of fatherhood since the inception of this discipline. Patriarchy is founded upon the symbolic power of the father and yet there has been a longstanding cultural silence shrouding men's parental roles and relationships in experiential terms. The subsequent tension between the symbolic presence and substantive absence of fathers is built into the heart of orthodox psychoanalytic theory, being enshrined in Freud's foundational concept of the oedipus complex. In particular, the oedipus complex is premised upon the father's absence from the pre-oedipal sphere, perpetuating an image of paternal authority legitimated by men's distance from, and difference to, the naturalised domain of mother-child relations. The simultaneous exaltation of paternal power and marginalisation of fathers from the fabric of family life is reproduced across the central schools of psychoanalytic thought, as exemplified by the work of Klein and Lacan.

At the core of this discussion is a critical analysis of key sites of silence and contradiction in Freud's account of the oedipus complex that are attributed to the negation of paternal intimacy in early infant relationships. Most notably, the oedipal resolution is seen to lie at the source of deep psychological tensions within male and female gender identities that conform to patriarchal definitions of 'normal' adult heterosexuality. In recent years, paternal absence has been problematised in theoretical, empirical and political terms, with a weight of therapeutic observation, feminist critique and cultural commentary beckoning a fundamental reassessment of psychoanalytic concepts of fatherhood. I argue that the corresponding turn towards more positive representations of father-child relationships signifies a radical critique of the paradoxes of patriarchy that has yet to be incorporated into psychoanalytic theory. By confronting the conceptual limits of the authority of the absent father, this discussion illuminates a theoretical vacuum within mainstream psychoanalytic thought in which to usher in more realistic conceptions of the fathering experience.

Patriarchal foundations: the place of the father within psychoanalytic theory

> 'The paradox of patriarchy...is that, while a father may be "head" of the family, simultaneously he is constrained from being a central character within it.' (Lewis & O'Brien 1987)

Patriarchal thought lays claim to the authority of the father as the symbolic origin of male privilege. This universalising appeal to 'rule of the father' stands alongside a deep-seated reticence for parenting to be conceptualised as a significant dimension of male experience. In comparison to the historical wealth of images celebrating the enduring strength and intimacy of the mother-child bond, the paternal relationship has

remained relatively hidden from the cultural gaze. This gendered imbalance reflects a longstanding assumption that childcare is an essentially and exclusively female activity; a naturalised constant that has provided a vital underpinning of the cultural supremacy of the male. Thus whilst fatherhood has traditionally formed the bastion of patriarchal privilege, this ideological system has rested upon the tacit negation and devaluation of the potential depth and complexity of men's parental relationships.

The curious tension between the symbolic presence and substantive absence of fathers evident in patriarchal thought is embedded at the heart of psychoanalytic theory. From this perspective, psychoanalysis can be characterised as a quintessentially patriarchal discourse. Indeed, psychoanalytic theory recreates the fundamental paradoxes of patriarchy by giving central place to the father as a symbolic figure of authority, whilst eclipsing men's relationships with their infants under the shadow of the omnipresent nurturing mother.

From its inception, psychoanalytic theory has been thoroughly imbued with allusions to the symbolic power of father. Most poignantly, the paternal role is attributed with fundamental significance in the formation of the individual psyche and of civilisation itself. This characterisation of the paternal role is enshrined in Freud's foundational concept of the oedipus complex, which retains central place as the cornerstone of psychoanalytic theory. In itself, the enduring presence of Freud's pedagogic authority and intellectual creativity as the 'founding father' of psychoanalysis illuminates something of the psychic significance of the paternal he seeks to describe; as Liebman and Abell remark, 'the idealisation of Freud by many psychoanalysts was about the all-too-common longing for a soothing and powerful

father figure'.[1] More broadly, the oedipus complex places fatherhood at the centre stage of psychoanalytic theory; being foundational in essence, to the emergence of individual identity, in structure, to the (re)production of patriarchal culture,[2] and in significance, to the creation of psychoanalysis.

Despite the symbolic weight bestowed upon fatherhood, one cannot escape the underlying paradox that, at least until relatively recently, male parenting has marked an empirical blind-spot within psychoanalysis; a systemic neglect that has led to the father being dubbed the 'forgotten parent' of psychoanalytic thought.[3] Rather, the exclusive presence of the mother has long been perceived as the lynchpin of early child development. This focus on the maternal relationship has been actively encouraged by certain factions of the psychoanalytic movement, most notably through the pioneering work of Melanie Klein. Indeed, from the 1930s onwards, the mother-infant relationship became isolated as the principal focus of the psychoanalytic gaze, directing what is commonly referred to as the 'maternal turn' within the discipline. This visible pull towards the maternal is slowly being met by the recent tide of change heralding the potentially positive impact of men's involvement in early childcare. However, the mere fact that the mother-centeredness of psychoanalysis has emerged

---

[1] Liebman and Abell (2000), p.99. In this light, it is prescient to note that Freud's development of the oedipus complex was instigated by his own intricate engagement with the role of the father in both metaphorical and literal terms. Most immediately, this involved his personal confrontation with the death of his own father and his deep fascination with mythical, fictional and historical fathers; the most pertinent clearly being his contemplation of the legend of Oedipus Rex. For further discussion, see Heim (1997), Kahane (1997) and Krull (1986).

[2] The cultural significance of the oedipus complex is illustrated by Freud's assertion that 'the beginnings of all religions, morals, society and art converge in the oedipus complex' (1912-13: 156-7). For feminist appropriations of Freudian psychoanalysis as an explanatory account of patriarchy, see in particular Mitchell (1974) and Rubin (1975).

[3] Ross (1979), p.317. This view echoes Lamb's description of fathers as 'forgotten contributors to child development' (1976). For further discussion on this point, see Richards (1987), Samuels (1989) and Liebman and Abell (2000). As Beail and McGuire argue, the neglect of the father's potential involvement in the child-rearing process has created a paradoxical situation in psychological research, in which 'a group of researchers who were always supporters and defenders of the traditional family built a psychology of parent-child relations which was, at base, a theory of the single-parent family' (1982: xi).

as a galvanizing source of criticism suggests the extent to which the paternal relationship has traditionally been occluded.

Whilst the conceptual framework of psychoanalysis has effectively marginalised the father as a remote figure lurking on the sidelines of child development, the patriarchal heritage of this tradition ensures that the male parent is ultimately not without influence. Rather, throughout psychoanalytic theory, the power of the father has been defined through his absence; an absence that demarcates the male's ontological difference from the naturalised sphere of maternal embodiment and thus confirms the father's cultural supremacy.[4] This characterisation of the father as an absent authority at once confounds the apparent centrality of fatherhood within psychoanalytic discourse, whilst reinforcing the symbolic reach of paternal power. Indeed, in being exerted through his absence, the power of the father is effectively detached from the materiality of the individual, signifying the ubiquity of patriarchal dominance beyond its incarnation within any individual male.

The theoretical disembodiment of paternal authority has been most overtly expressed in the work of Jacques Lacan, as encapsulated by his central distinction between the 'real father' (i.e., father as person) and the 'symbolic father' (or 'name-of the-father') and corresponding privileging of the latter.[5] However, this theme also echoes more widely across the central schools of psychoanalytic thought, where the

[4] For further discussion of the patriarchal premise that male dominance is founded upon the father's fundamental difference from the naturalised maternal sphere, see in particular Oliver (1997) and Minsky (1998b).

[5] Lacan (1977). Indeed, for Lacan, the symbolic father is of paramount importance in the developmental process, being ascribed the paternal function of enforcing the Law of the Symbolic Order.

potency of the father can be seen to operate as a transcendent presence defined by his relative absence in material terms.[6]

From a cultural perspective, the psychoanalytic conceptualisation of the symbolic role of the father clearly carries strong religious overtones, with the omnipotence of God, the procreator, providing an archetypal metaphor of a materially absent yet symbolically present father. The primary importance bestowed upon the father in the oedipus complex thus acquires additional potency by invoking long-established systems of belief that sustain a patriarchal culture; the masculinisation of the origins of individual and collective development resonating with the power of creativity ascribed to the Judeo-Christian God as the omnipotent father.[7]

As this brief overview suggests, psychoanalytic discourse is shot through with allusions to the symbolic authority of the father. Thus, whilst the assumption of the mother's monopolisation of childcare masks the potential presence of males within early infant relations, on closer inspection, it can be seen that the power of the father is never far behind. However, in deference to the symbolic authority of the absent father, the marginal place given to male parenting has remained largely uncontested, and so the patriarchal conundrum at the heart of psychoanalysis is left to lie.

In this essay, I argue that, whilst the paradoxical place of fathers within psychoanalytic theory can be understood in terms of its patriarchal heritage, the implicit tension between the symbolic presence and qualitative absence of men in

---

[6] For example, whilst the 'maternal turn' object-relations and Kleinian theorists seek to displace the centrality that Freud placed upon the father's role in individual development by focusing on the depth and complexity of the primary maternal relationship, they do so by reinscribing paternal power within the 'phallic woman', thereby reinforcing the potency of the absent father. For an illustration of this point, see Klein's concept of the intervention of paternal authority through the maternal body as the 'father-inside-the-mother' (Klein 1928).

[7] In this context, it is important to note that whilst Freud was a self-proclaimed atheist, he was heavily influenced by the Judeo-Christian context in which he was writing and gave much consideration to questions concerning the psychic and cultural origins of religion; see in particular Freud (1912-13, 1930). In his speculations on the origins of religion, Freud makes explicit links between the human father and God, with the former being seen as 'hidden behind every divine figure' (1927: 19).

family life ultimately undermines the logic of this ideological system. In order to develop this argument, I return to Freud's account of the oedipus complex to uncover the internal contradictions that flow from his dogged adherence to the gendered hierarchies of patriarchal thought. The oedipus complex revolves around the twin assumptions of the engulfing presence of the mother and substantive absence of the father during the pre-oedipal stage. This gendered scheme has been reproduced throughout the evolution of the psychoanalytic tradition, as illustrated above by the compounding of maternal presence and paternal absence in the work of the 'maternal turn' theorists and Lacanian School respectively. Thus by exposing the conceptual fault-lines laid down within Freud's original account of the oedipus complex, this analysis has wider implications for understanding the limitations of post-Freudian theory.[8] In particular, the stubborn retention of the gendered dynamics of the oedipal triad within psychoanalytic theory has maintained the lack of an adequate theoretical account of the pre-oedipal father that is seen as untenable within the present discussion.

In recent years, the assumed absence of the father within early infant relationships has been brought into question, with a weight of therapeutic observation, feminist critique[9] and cultural commentary calling for a fundamental reassessment of orthodox psychoanalytic concepts of fatherhood. I end by highlighting emergent themes within this fragmented yet sustained critique of paternal absence: my intention being to locate the ensuing turn towards more positive representations of father-child relationships as a potentially radical challenge to the patriarchal preconceptions that

[8] For further discussion of the centrality of the Freudian, object-relations/Kleinian and Lacanian approaches in defining psychoanalytic concepts of fatherhood, see Samuels (1993, 1996) and Minsky (1998b).

[9] I use the term 'feminist critique' broadly to embrace a range of gender theory, including female-oriented analyses that are not necessarily feminist in approach and the burgeoning sphere of masculinities studies.

have worked to limit men's parental involvement in both theoretical and experiential terms.

Unravelling the oedipus complex: father as friend or foe?

Freud's landmark 'discovery' of the oedipus complex established the fundamental importance of the father within psychoanalytic theory by identifying a child's confrontation with paternal authority as the most critical stage in their psychosexual development. The internal crisis instigated by the oedipus complex requires the repression of the unbounded phantasies of early childhood by yielding to the gendered moral order represented by the father; a rite of passage that lays the psychic foundations for the formation of the unconscious and a 'normal' heterosexual identity[10] and conversely, constitutes 'the nuclear complex of all neurosis'.[11]

In emphasising the father's civilising function, the oedipus complex consolidates the psychic and symbolic significance of the paternal as representative of what Freud deemed to be the inherently patriarchal sphere of culture. More specifically, the oedipus complex defines the father's principal role as disrupting the naturalised mother-child dyad and turning the child towards culture. According to Freud, the newborn infant is merged in a blissful union with the mother, epitomised by the pure gratification of being breastfed.[12] This idyllic state is characterised as fundamentally asocial; a closed and inward-looking incestuous attachment that

[10] For Freud, normal adult sexuality requires the abandonment of the polymorphous perversity of infantile phantasies in favour of genital-oriented heterosexuality, by which 'the pursuit of pleasure comes under the sway of the reproductive function' (Freud 1905: 336).

[11] *Ibid.*, p.361. In Freud's words: 'Every new arrival on this planet is faced by the task of mastering the oedipus complex; anyone who fails to do so falls a victim to neurosis' (1905: 361).

[12] For Freud, this forms an illusive phantasy of perfect satisfaction that we crave to recover throughout our lives. In his words: 'No one who has seen a baby sinking back satisfied from the breast and falling asleep with flushed cheeks and a blissful smile can escape the reflection that this picture persists as the prototype of the expression of sexual satisfaction in later life' (Freud 1905: 332). As this image suggests, for Freud, the fusion of the mother-child dyad stems from the innate dependency of the child for survival, thus conflating motherhood with the nurturing role.

requires breaking up for the maintenance of society. It is through presenting himself as an irrefutably powerful and feared rival for the mother's love that the father instigates the crucial severance of the exclusive mother-infant bond by instilling the cultural prohibition of incest. The appearance of the father thus compels the child to achieve a separate identity and moral consciousness, initiating an internalisation of authority that is synonymous with the development of the super-ego.[13] Thus whilst Freud equates mothering with the 'natural' labours of reproduction and nurturing in a physical sense, the psychological birth of the infant is extolled as the culturally defined responsibility of the father.

The oedipus complex demarcates a transition from the loving harmony of the exclusive mother-child dyad to the conflict-ridden oedipal triad of mother-father-child; an internal logic that both assumes and requires the qualitative absence of the father from the pre-oedipal sphere. Moreover, this progression from the comforts of unconditional maternal love to the pain of paternal rivalry means that the child's initial confrontation with their father is marked by aggressive resentment and fear; at this stage, the father is no more than a 'dreaded enemy to the sexual interests of the child'.[14] This perception of the father as an unwelcome threat to the maternal dyad occludes the possibility of early paternal intimacy and love; an exclusion that ultimately unravels the logic of Freud's account of the resolution of the oedipus complex in its own terms. Indeed, whilst the primary function of the oedipus complex in forming a child's heterosexual identity means that males and females interpret the father's appearance in decisively different ways, for boys and girls alike, this defining moment forms a source of deep contradiction.

---

[13] See Freud (1923).
[14] Freud (1912-13), p.130.

These tensions within Freud's theoretical scheme can be illuminated by focusing on the child's recognition of their father as a symbol of masculinity; for boys, an identification of sameness that is critical to the establishment of a masculine gender identity, and for girls, an attraction of difference that forms the crux of female sexuality. For both sexes, this recognition is precipitated by the discovery of the anatomical basis of sex difference; a crude awakening that intensifies the emotional charge of the oedipus complex by exposing the deficiencies of the hitherto adored mother as lacking the phallic object she desires. This diminution of the mother is matched by the subsequent elevation of the father in the child's esteem, thereby redirecting their desire for absolute possession of the mother onto the phallus. The subsequent enthrallment with the awe-inspiring potency of the father induces the notorious predicaments of 'castration anxiety' and 'penis envy' in the male and female respectively.[15] The male's fear of the loss of his penis, the signifier of masculine authority, and the female's reluctant acceptance of this deficient state means that, for both sexes, the resolution of the oedipus complex implicitly confirms the incontestable supremacy of the paternal figure.

In the case of the male child, identifying with the father requires an affiliation with a revered yet deeply resented figure. Indeed, the boy's initial hostility towards his rival is necessarily mixed with feelings of admiration and love in order that he

[15] See Freud (1924, 1925). In considering the relative role of the mother and father within the oedipal crisis, it is interesting to note that the boy's fear of castration stems from the perceived authority wielded by *both* parents. Indeed, Freud points out that this authority is usually meted out through the mother's reprimands of the boy's masturbatory activities, albeit commonly relying upon the additional clout that the threatened punishment will be carried out by the father or another reputable male figure such as the family doctor (1924: 420); an overt reinforcement of the authority of the absent patriarch. However, despite recognising the moral sway of both parents, Freud frequently slips between referring to 'parental' and 'paternal' authority; a juxtaposition that ultimately reveals his association of the moral discipline imparted by the parental figures with the father figure alone. One of the numerous illustrations of this theoretical twist is the following account of the male's resolution of the oedipus complex: 'The authority of *the father or parents* is introjected into the ego, and there it forms the nucleus of the super-ego, which takes over the severity of the *father* and perpetuates his prohibition against incest' (Freud 1924: 398, emphasis added).

positively identifies with the father and internalises his authority. In particular, this ambivalent position generates the essential component of guilt that tempers the son's murderous impulses to displace his father in his mother's affections through forming a self-regulating system of moral constraint.[16]

This constellation of conflicting emotions implies the existence of an earlier, pre-oedipal attachment to the father by which the son's new found enmity is combined with elements of familiar love. Indeed, Freud himself concedes to the logical existence of a close pre-oedipal relationship between father and son: in his words,

> 'The hatred for his father that arises in a boy from rivalry for his mother is not able to achieve uninhibited sway over his mind; it has to contend against his old-established affection and admiration for the very same person.'[17]

However, at no point does Freud confirm the significance of paternal intimacy or enquire further into the nature of this attachment because of his antithetical assertion that pre-oedipal relations are exclusively oriented towards the mother. Freud's account of the male oedipal complex effectively requires the father to be both present and absent within the pre-oedipal sphere; a paradox that is never adequately articulated or reconciled within his work.

The male oedipal resolution is thus riddled with intricate and ultimately insurmountable tensions, not least owing to the deep ambivalence that the boy's denunciation of his once idealised mother places at the heart of his future heterosexual relations. Freud rather crudely smoothes over the dilemmas of masculine identity with reference to the privileged position this promises; the son being rewarded for giving up his infantile phantasies by being passed the sceptre of patriarchal dominance to carry into his adult life. Perhaps the deepest irony is that this supposedly alluring

[16] See in particular Freud (1930), pp.42-44.
[17] Freud (1912-13), p.129.

vision of supremacy is essentially devoid of love. In striving for masculine autonomy, the boy learns that men must conspire in their authority yet ultimately stand alone.[18]

For the female child, the rather less compelling challenge of the oedipal crisis is to compensate for her gendered fate of being equated with the natural inferiority of the mother by turning her affections towards her father; a transition that offers the consolation of the vicarious pleasures of 'completing her love of the organ [i.e., penis] by extending it to the bearer of the organ.'[19] The girl's rocky path towards her heterosexual destination therefore requires re-channelling her love towards her father; the intimidating man whom she instinctively reviles as a troublesome competitor for her mother's affections. The process by which 'the enemy becomes the beloved'[20] encapsulates what, for Freud, is the central enigma of the female oedipal crisis: accounting for the girl's compulsion to abandon her active desire for her mother in favour of a passive subservience to her father and concomitantly, to all men.

Freud's proposed resolution of the female dilemma is to attribute the girl's rejection of her mother to a self-deprecating contempt of women, thereby instilling a masochistic sense of innate unworthiness at the heart of feminine identity.[21] The female's humiliating recognition of her deficient state concurs with the masculine denunciation of the castrated female as the universally inferior sex. Indeed, whilst the girl's penis envy is instigated by her desire to take her father's place as her mother's

---

[18] Bologh's (1990) characterisation of masculinity as posing a dilemma between love and greatness presents an insightful analysis of the hidden psychic costs of patriarchy. The implicit tensions between being a loving father and husband and a successful, autonomous and rational man were in fact clearly recognised by Freud, as illustrated in his following statement of the emotional sacrifice endured by men in the name of civilisation: '[T]he work of civilisation has become more and more men's business; it confronts them with ever harder tasks, compels them to sublimations of instinct which women are not easily able to achieve. Since man has not an unlimited amount of mental energy at his disposal, he must accomplish his tasks by distributing his libido to the best advantage. What he employs for cultural (occupational) purposes he withdraws to a great extent from women, and his sexual life; his constant association with men and his dependence on his relations with them even estrange him from his duties as husband and father' (1930: 33).

[19] Freud (1938).

[20] De Groot, quoted in Rubin (1975), p.194.

[21] See Freud (1925), p.407 and (1933), p.415.

lover, Freud describes how she comes to harbour strong resentment and hostility towards her primary love object; a bitterness that is intensified by her tendency to blame her mother for her own castration.[22] With the girl's love for her mother turning sour and invariably ending 'in hate',[23] the mother is thus cast aside in anticipation of the validation of the venerated father.

Freud clearly identifies the depth of the girl's attachment and identification with the mother during the pre-oedipal phase as a critical antecedent to the oedipal phase, providing the source of her strong impulse to love that is subsequently transposed onto her father. Whilst founded in love, this displacement also requires the existence of hostile feelings towards the mother to elicit her hateful rejection; a negative climax that Freud himself concedes could not be sufficiently accounted for by his assertion that the girl holds her mother responsible for her castration. Rather, Freud advisedly locates the source of this underlying conflict within the pre-oedipal phase.[24] However, the admission of ambivalence within the early mother-daughter relationship poses a deeper problem within Freud's conceptual scheme. Most critically, the allusion to intrinsic tensions within the pre-oedipal dyad implies that the father's intervention is not necessary to break apart the mother-child bond. As Freud reflects,

---

[22] As Freud reflects upon the female's rejection of the mother: 'The situation as a whole is not very clear, but it can be seen that in the end the girl's mother, who sent her into the world so insufficiently equipped, is almost always held responsible for her lack of a penis' (1933: 408).

[23] *Ibid.*, p.420.

[24] As I have implied, Freud's account of the girl's hostility towards the mother is more multifaceted than his emphasis on the significance of the castration complex would suggest; for a fuller account of the female's rejection of her mother, see especially Freud (1933).

> 'Perhaps the real fact is that the attachment to the mother is bound to perish, precisely because it was the first and was so intense.'[25]

However, Freud resists elaborating upon this possibility as it would significantly diminish, if not extinguish, the fundamental importance he attributes to the father's civilising role.

Freud's unwillingness to engage with his own intimations that experiential tensions within pre-oedipal relationships may lead to the dissolution of the oedipal complex without the authoritarian influence of the father simultaneously marks the collapse of the oedipus complex as a theoretical construct. This impasse is rooted in Freud's unremitting allegiance to patriarchal conceptions of the symbolic authority of the father, which renders him impervious to incorporating the potential presence of pre-oedipal paternal intimacy and maternal ambivalence into his theoretical scheme. Whilst conceptually flawed by the paradoxical foundations of patriarchy, the lasting challenge to this ideological system lies in Freud's perception of enforced conformity to hegemonic ideals of both masculinity and femininity as containing and perpetuating acute psychological tensions for the individual. Indeed, Freud's implicit acceptance of the inherently unstable nature of 'normal' adult heterosexuality under the patriarchal regime paves the way for a more humanistic critique of the paternalistic account of individual development that the oedipal drama describes.

---

[25] Freud (1931), p.382. Elsewhere, Freud also points to the redundancy of the father's role in destroying the phantasies of the oedipal crisis in relation to the child's futile wish to realise their amorous desires for the mother through bearing her a child. For example, in relation to the male child, Freud describes how '[t]he absence of the satisfaction hoped for, the continued denial of the desired baby, must in the end lead the small lover to turn away from his hopeless longing. In this way the oedipus complex would go to its destruction from its lack of success, from the effects of its *internal impossibility*' (1924: 395, emphasis added).

Reconceptualising fatherhood: the radical potential of paternal presence

In recent years, paternal absence has come under mounting scrutiny, with debates about the consequences of men's relative distance from family life emanating from a range of sources both within and outside the academic sphere. These discussions span the theoretical and empirical, with paternal absence being highlighted both as a conceptual weakness of psychoanalytic theory and as a social problem with detrimental psychological and cultural effects.

One of the most vehement strands of critique of parental absence has been the exposure of what have been alluded to as the normal pathologies underlying the psychological development of individuals subject to the unyielding authority of the symbolically powerful yet emotionally distant patriarchal father. A host of feminist theorists have questioned the psychoanalytic premise that paternal authority is necessary for the formation of 'healthy' feminine identities.[26] Rather, the negative impact of the authoritarian father on female development is brought the fore. In this vein, the model of hegemonic heterosexuality implicitly promoted by classical psychoanalysis has itself been called into question as a patriarchal institution which works to suppress the full expression of female sexuality.[27]

---

[26] This critical dynamic provides a central theme of the feminist engagement with psychoanalysis. As such, there is a substantial literature dealing with the pathological nature of 'normal' femininity within patriarchal societies, ranging from the now classic accounts of Chesler (1971), Chodorow (1978), Rubin (1985) and Dinnerstein (1987) to the contemporary postmodernist (e.g., Flax 1993) and poststructuralist (e.g., Irigaray 1985a) deconstruction of normative female heterosexuality. Jessica Benjamin's critique of female subjugation is particularly insightful in the context of the present discussion: for example, see her observation that '[t]he three pillars of oedipal theory, the primacy of the wish for oneness, the mother's embodiment of this regressive force, and the necessity of paternal intervention - all combine to create the paradox that the only liberation is paternal domination' (Benjamin 1988: 181). Likewise, Susan Speiler's re-evaluation of the female oedipus complex provides a useful summation of the overriding themes of this literature: 'Devaluation of self and mother, and over idealisation of father are hardly optimal motives for the acquisition of a heterosexual orientation, although they underlie the Oedipal resolutions of many females reared in traditional Western nuclear families' (Speiler 1984: 77).

[27] For seminal accounts of the distortion of female sexuality implicit within Freudian thought and the corresponding celebration of alternative sexualities based on lesbian experience, see Millett (1977) and Rich (1986) and more recently, Irigaray (1985b).

More recently, this gendered critique of the orthodox psychoanalytic framework has been applied to a critical evaluation of the psychological deficits of hegemonic masculinity.[28] Indeed, the recognition that the male resolution of the oedipal crisis lays the foundations for acute psychological tensions presents a particularly damning critique of patriarchy as it highlights the hidden costs of dominance for the very men this ideological system purportedly privileges. In particular, my analysis reveals how, in achieving masculine autonomy through rejecting the feminine, patriarchal males are denied access to the psychological vocabulary of love and emotional connectedness that define the maternal sphere. This denial inherently constrains the expression of involved forms of fatherhood in adult life; a forbidden intimacy that would at once provide emotional relief from the inevitable 'discontents' of civilisation whilst presenting a painful threat to masculine identity within a patriarchal culture.[29]

Whilst pointing towards the potential benefits of facilitating the enhanced presence of fathers, not least for the psychological wellbeing of children, the gendered critique of psychoanalytic theory has been rather less actively concerned with reformulating a positive conception of male parenting than unpacking the negative consequences of patriarchal fatherhood. Indeed, for many feminist and masculinities theorists alike, patriarchy and fatherhood can appear so inextricably interlinked that any allusion to the paternal role invariably signifies masculine domination.[30]

---

[28] See, for example, Seidler (1989, 1996), Rutherford (1992) and Frosh (1994).

[29] See footnote 18 above. In this context, it is interesting to note that, in *Civilisation and its Discontents* (1930), Freud discusses various avenues of personal relief from the miseries of repression demanded by the civilised world, but noticeably excludes the pleasures of fatherhood. Rather, parenting is identified as a form of compensatory pleasure for mothers alone, although as ever, female pleasure is defined in relation to the male: for example, through the mother's vicarious pleasure of having a son who fulfils the ambitions she can only dream of. For an excellent discussion of the psychological costs of patriarchal privilege for men, see Minsky (1998a).

[30] Most poignantly, the unwelcome presence of fathers in family life has been unmasked through the feminist confrontation with sexual abuse; the dark side of paternal intimacy that marks the most negative expression of traditional patriarchal power. Whilst it must be born in mind that the proportion

Moreover, feminist theorists have exercised a deep-seated reticence to considering the inclusion of men within the hitherto feminised domain of parenting and childcare in order to defend women's superiority and expertise in what has been identified as the one domain of female power in a male-dominated world.[31]

The proliferation of contemporary cultural narratives concerned with the detrimental psychological and social impact of the allegedly alarming increase in 'fatherless' families illustrates just how readily discussions of paternal absence can act to reinstate the traditional moral authority of the patriarchal father. Whilst much of this discourse lies outside the sphere of psychoanalytic theory,[32] there is a distinctive strand of cultural polemic concerned with the pathological impact of 'fatherlessness' that is rooted within this intellectual tradition.[33] A unifying feature of this literature is the implicit reinforcement of the Freudian assumption that paternal authority plays a vital role in individual development and, by extension, in the maintenance of the

---

of male parents who sexually and physically harm their children is relatively small and indeed, much smaller than the cultural imagination might proclaim (e.g., Burgess 1997), the feminist sensitivity to the potential exploitation of paternal power serves as a crucial reminder of the realities of child abuse that has tended to become lost in contemporary public discussions of involved fatherhood, where increasing men's participation in family life is often presented in unambiguously positive terms.

[31] For a critique of the underlying ironies of this position and further discussion of the feminist dismissal of fatherhood, see Segal (1987) and Silverstein (1996). One of the most revealing examples of the feminist resistance to embracing a positive role for fathers can be found in Nancy Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978); a text that is frequently cited as the most widely influential feminist avocation of the democratic ideal of 'shared parenting'. Although Chodorow's argument points to the logical conclusion of increasing men's parental involvement, the majority of her discussion deals with the problem of paternal absence in terms of the detrimental effects of exclusive mothering and the necessity for women to expand their non-parental identities. Indeed, the critical solution of shared parenting in terms of embracing male participation in childcare is delegated to a limited discussion in the 'afterword'. Whilst in essence, Chodorow's account implies that male parenting is of positive value as a necessary step towards sexual democracy, many feminists are more sceptical. See, for example, Pollock and Sutton's (1985) outright rejection of *any* intimation towards fathers' involvement in family life as working to reinstate traditional patriarchal power structures. Such examples aside, the ambivalence towards fatherhood is perhaps most frequently expressed in feminist discourse through a conspicuous absence of any critical engagement with the issue: for further discussion, see Knijn and Mulder (1987).

[32] The 'moral panic' concerning absent fathers is evident right across the academic and cultural sphere. The most influential and alarmist accounts have arisen in the US, particularly though the development of the 'new right' fathers' rights movement; see, for example, Blankenhorn (1995) and Popenoe (1996).

[33]See, for example, Lasch (1991), Lansky (1992), Mitscherlich (1993), Craib (1989, 1994), Weatherill (1994) and Verhaeghe (1998). This contemporary cultural critique of paternal absence resonates with the work of the Frankfurt school; see, in particular, Adorno (1950) and Horkheimer (1972). For a critical discussion, see Seidler (1996) and Freeman (2004), pp.170-175.

moral order of society. However, as my analysis suggests, attempting to resolve the problem of 'fatherlessness' by referring to the distinctive authority of the father is ultimately futile, given that this vision of the paternal role is premised upon the male's ideological separation from the feminized sphere of childcare that promotes men's alienation from their children.

Within the clinical literature, there has likewise been an ongoing concern with the damaging consequences of fatherlessness for psychological development.[34] This body of work focuses on the psychological tensions, yearnings and crises associated with paternal absence, as encapsulated by Herzog's emotive concept of 'father hunger'.[35] By virtue of unpacking what are perceived as the wholly negative effects of paternal absence on a child's emotional wellbeing, such work also engages with more positive notions of paternal presence that effectively challenge the limitations of the patriarchal model of the authoritarian father. Indeed, the active pursuit of positive concepts of paternal involvement within psychoanalytic practice has amounted to what could be described as a 'paternal turn' emanating across the discipline since the mid-1970s.

The concerted effort to bring fathers into psychoanalytic accounts of child development has generated a wide-ranging empirical corrective to counter the traditional invisibility of fathers, based on therapeutic and experimental observation of the influence and qualities of paternal involvement.[36] This close examination has revealed the father's role to be more multi-faceted and actively engaged than the

[34] See, for example, Neubauer (1960) and Burgner (1985).
[35] Herzog (1982, 2002). Herzog, like many writers in this field, is primarily concerned with father-son relationships and the effect of paternal absence on masculine identities. See also Diamond (1998, 2007).
[36] See, for example, Abelin (1975), Lamb (1976), Ross (1979), Cath *et al.* (1982), Layland (1981), Liebman and Abell (2000) and Trowell and Etchegoyen (2002). As highlighted in footnote 35 above, much of the psychoanalytic literature is specifically concerned with the relationship between father and sons; see, for example, Blos (1984) and Palkovitz (2002). For an exception, see Speiler's (1984) work on father-daughter pre-oedipal relations.

limited authoritarian figure of traditional psychoanalytic theory. Such findings have lead to the promotion of multi-dimensional models of involved fatherhood that are seen both to reflect the actuality of men's diverse experiences as fathers and to represent a standard of 'good enough' parenting to aspire to in face of the problems associated with paternal absence.[37]

Whilst uncovering the presence of the father within early infant development has fundamental implications for psychoanalytic theory, this critique has yet to be incorporated in any substantial way.[38] Most pertinently within the context of the present discussion, this observational and clinical work points to a complex and interactive picture of pre-oedipal relations, including the identification of the symbiotic qualities assumed to be the exclusive property of the mother-child dyad within early father-child relationships.[39] The need to conceptualise the pre-oedipal father that created such a theoretical void in Freud's work is thus given empirical weight, whilst casting doubt on his notion of the absolute presence of the pre-oedipal mother.[40]

In this vein, there has also been a slow but growing recognition within the psychoanalytic forum that the hitherto hidden complexity of the paternal role is matched by the empirical diversity of contexts in which men, and indeed women, parent. The ubiquity of the heterosexual matrix that defines the oedipal triad can be

---

[37] For example, Diamond (1998, 2007) presents a model of active, engaged fathering that includes fathers' various roles as containers, protectors, facilitators, models, challengers, initiators, sanctioners and mentors. See also Hawkins and Dollahite (1997).

[38] For further elaboration on this point, see Machtlinger (1976), Kramer and Prall (1978), Cath *et al.* (1982) and Etchegoyen (2002). On the necessity for an inclusive theoretical framework for conceptualising the complex and multi-dimensional nature of fatherhood, see also Richards (1987), Marsiglio *et al.* (2000) and Cabrera *et al.* (2002).

[39] For example, in his overview of this body of research, Henderson (1980) identifies eleven common characterisations of the paternal role, which include a prenatal role (father as 'mother-facilitator'), and pre-oedipal roles (e.g., 'identification' and 'gender identity'). See also Ross (1975, 1979).

[40] Freud's idealised account of the fusionary oneness between mother and child has in fact been challenged by a range of theoretical and empirical assertions concerning the inherent complexity of this early relationship. See, for example, Stern (1985), Herman (1989), Samuels (1989, 1993), Benjamin (1990, 1998) and Parker (1995).

directly challenged by the existence of alternative 'non-traditional' parenting arrangements, including lone fathers and lone mothers,[41] same-sex couples[42] and parents who otherwise reverse or break with conventional gender roles, such as fathers who take on a primary nurturing role while their female partners go out to work.[43] Whilst some of the literature has reinforced the primacy of heterosexuality by focusing on the apparently pathological consequences of divergent family forms, the overarching trend has been towards a growing consensus that it is the quality of parenting that is of primary importance and not the gender or sexuality of the caregiver.[44] Once untied from gender and sexuality, involved parenting is no longer deemed to be the exclusive property of the biological mother, with the oedipal triad

---

[41] Historically, there has been relatively little psychoanalytic work on lone parent families, with the exception of a fairly substantial literature on the impact of parental loss; for early psychoanalytic work on lone parenting and child development, see Eisendorfer (1943), Neubauer (1960) and Kestenbaum and Stone (1976). There has, however, been a marked increase of interest in this area in recent years, not least due to a recognition that there are many different contexts in which children may be reared by one parent beyond bereavement. Indeed, the apparent fragmentation of the traditional nuclear family, signalled, in particular, by rising rates of divorce, has led to an extensive body of research on the impact of parental separation and paternal absence on child development. Whilst some of this work is grounded in the psychoanalytic forum (e.g. Samuels 1996), there has been more extensive debate across other domains of the social sciences (e.g. Dennis and Erdos 1992, Rodgers and Pryor 1998, Thompson and Amato 1999). I refer to this as a debate because of the spectrum of approaches, ranging from the negative condemnation of paternal absence epitomised by Murray (1990) to more positive and overtly progressive accounts of children's adaptability within so-called fragmented families (Smart *et al.* 1999, Smart 2000). As this summation suggests, the large majority of the literature on lone parenting focuses on lone mothers: for an exception, see, for example, Barker (1994)'s work on lone fathers. The increasing availability of assisted reproductive technologies has also enabled both men and women to parent alone, as discussed in footnote 42 below.

[42] For useful overviews of psychoanalytic and psychological approaches to lesbian and gay parenting, see, for example, Bozett (1987, 1989), Cohler and Galatzer-Levy (2000), Glazer and Drescher (2001) and Tasker (2005). Much, but by no means all, of the work on same-sex parenting inevitably focuses on couples who become parents through the use of assisted reproductive technologies, with research in this area also looking at heterosexual couples and lone parents who can likewise be enabled to have children in this way; see, for example, Golombok *et al.* (1997), Ehrensaft (2000) and Corbett (2001).

[43] See, in particular, the work of Pruett (1983, 1985).

[44] As summed up by a leading proponent of psychological research on fatherhood, Michael Lamb: 'As far as influence on children is concerned, there seems to be little about the gender of the parent that is distinctively important. The characteristics of the father as a parent rather than the characteristics of the father as a man appear to influence child development' (Lamb 1987: 13). For a similar argument with respect to the sexuality of parents, see Golombok and Tasker (1994), and for an interesting psychoanalytic account on the mutability of sex vis-à-vis gendered parental roles, see Samuels (1996). It is perhaps true to say that the psychoanalytic forum has generally tended to be less accepting of 'non-traditional' parenting arrangements than other spheres of social sciences, although there is now a growing body of clinical and observational work that supports the notion that children may flourish equally as well in these 'alternative' families: see, for example, Allen and Burrell (1996) and Fischman Drexler (2001).

being potentially overturned by a multiplicity of parental relationships that transcend the naturalised roles defined by the traditional nuclear family.

By allowing for the positive presence of the 'real father' – and increasingly, of a plurality of 'real fathers' – within child development, contemporary psychoanalytic discussions of involved fatherhood present a significant challenge to Freudian notions of the father as an absent authority. However, despite being backed by a wealth of political, cultural and theoretical challenges to patriarchy, the empirical argument for reformulating male parental involvement has done little to displace the abstract father of psychoanalytic thought. This confrontation with the potency of the symbolic father both demonstrates the resilience of this ideological system and represents the conceptual limits of notions of paternal authority that are ultimately defined through absence.

The diverse critiques of paternal absence filtering through psychoanalytic discourse find resonance with a wider cultural engagement with male parenting. Indeed, as changing patterns of partnership and procreation bring the ideological and empirical dominance of the traditional nuclear family into question, the roles, rights and responsibilities of fathers have become the focus of intense public scrutiny. The moral panic surrounding the purportedly alarming increase in 'fatherless families' stands alongside claims that men are becoming more intimately involved in childcare, as celebrated by the rhetoric of the 'new father'. This image of the loving father clearly stands at odds with persistent fears concerning the inexorability of male violence and sexual aggression expressed within the cultural demonization of abusive father. The apparently contradictory concerns with fostering a willingness to recognise the depth of paternal involvement at a time when the condemnation of

fatherless families and 'bad dads' is rife finds voice in a wider cultural rhetoric expounding that fatherhood is in a state of 'crisis'.[45]

By way of conclusion, I suggest that this cultural crisis can be framed as a visible manifestation of what I have identified as the underlying paradoxes of patriarchy. From this perspective, any attempt to reassert the symbolic authority of the father in face of empirical challenges to this patriarchal ideal will only work to exacerbate the inevitable sense of cultural confusion. In searching for a resolution, my analysis points towards the as yet unrealised radical potential of more enhanced conceptions of paternal intimacy to undermine the deeply gendered structures of patriarchy that continue to haunt the theoretical framework of psychoanalysis. In itself, the very inclusion of the father within the pre-oedipal sphere shatters the structure of the oedipus complex, breaking down the idealised assumption that the mother-child dyad is an exclusive and asocial relationship. The complex and diverse realities of male parenting demand a visible place within psychoanalytic theory. It is only by giving voice to the complexities of paternal relationships that we can move beyond the paradoxes of patriarchy, in order to forge more realistic understandings of what it means to be a father that are not oppressive to women and children – and nor indeed, to men.

Acknowledgements
This essay is based on interdisciplinary research on fatherhood undertaken for my PhD thesis in the Department of Sociology at the University of Essex, UK, funded by studentships from the Fuller Bequest Research Fund and the University of Essex. I would like to thank the late Ian Craib, for provoking me to think about the paradoxes of psychoanalytic theory, and my PhD supervisor, Leonore Davidoff, for her boundless encouragement in guiding my attempt to resolve some of these contradictions in writing. I would also like to thank my partner, Thomas Nutt, who, as I write, is caring for our baby daughter.

[45] For further discussion, see Freeman (2003).

References

Abelin, E. L. (1975), Some further observations and comments on the earliest role of the father. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 56:293-302.

Adorno, T. (1950), *The Authoritarian Personality*. New York: Harper & Row.

Allen, M. & Burrell, N. (1996), Comparing the impact of homosexual and heterosexual parents on children: Meta-analysis of existing research. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 32:19-35.

Barker, R. W. (1994), *Lone Fathers and Masculinities*. Aldershot: Avebury.

Beail, N. & McGuire, J. (1982), eds. *Fathers: Psychological Perspectives*. London: Junction Books.

Benjamin, J. (1990), *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and the Problem of Domination.* London: Virago.

_____ (1998), *Shadow of the Other: Intersubjectivity and Gender in Psychoanalysis.* London: Routledge.

Blankenhorn, D. (1995), *Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem.* New York: Basic Books.

Blos, P. (1984), Son and fathers. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 32:301-324.

Bologh, R. W. (1990), *Love or Greatness: Max Weber and Masculine Thinking - A Feminist Enquiry*. London: Unwin Hyman.

Bozett, F. W. (1987), ed. *Gay and Lesbian Parents*. New York: Praeger.

_____ (1989), Gay fathers: A review of the literature. In: *Homosexuality and the Family*, ed. F. W. Bozett. New York: Harrington Park Press, pp.137-162.

Burgner, M. (1985), The oedipal experience: Effects on development of an absent father. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 66:311-320.

Cabrera, N. J., Tamisk-Lemonda, C. S., Bradley, R. H., Hofferth, S. & Lamb, M. E. (2000), Fatherhood in the twenty-first century. *Child Development*, 71(1):127-136.

Cath, S. H., Gurwitt, A. & Ross, J. M. (1982), eds. *Father and Child*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Chesler, P. (1971), Patient and patriarch: Women in the psychotherapeutic relationship. In: *Women in Sexist Society*, eds. V. Gornick & B. K. Moran. New York: Basic Books, pp. 251-275.

Chodorow, N. (1978), *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*. London: University of California Press.

Cohler, B. J. & Galatzer-Levy, R. M. (2000), *The Course of Lesbian and Gay Lives: Social and Psychoanalytic Perspectives*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Corbett, K. (2001), Nontraditional family romance. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 70:599-624.

Craib, I. (1994), *The Importance of Disappointment*. London: Routledge.

_____ (1989), *Psychoanalysis and Social Theory: The Limits of Sociology*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Dennis, N. & Erdos, G. (1992*), Families without Fatherhood*. London: Institute of Economic Affairs, Health and Welfare Unit.

Diamond, M. J. (1998), Fathers with sons: Psychoanalytic perspectives on "good enough" fathering throughout the life cycle. *Gender and Psychoanalysis: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 3:243-299.

_____ (2007), *My Father Before Me: How Fathers and Sons Influence Each Other throughout their Lives*. London: W. W. Norton & Co.

Dinnerstein, D. (1987), *The Mermaid and the Minotaur: The Rocking of the Cradle and the Ruling of the World*. London: The Women's Press.

Eisendorfer, A. (1943), The clinical significance of the single parent relationship in women. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 12:223-239.

Ehrensaft, D. (2000), Alternatives to the stork: Fatherhood fantasies in donor insemination families. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 1:371-397.

Etchegoyen, A. (2002), Psychoanalytic ideas about fathers. In: *The Importance of Fathers: A Psychoanalytic Re-Evaluation*, eds. J. Trowell & A. Etchegoyen. New York: Brunner-Routledge, pp. 20-41.

Fischman Drexler, P. (2001), Moral reasoning in sons of lesbian and heterosexual parent families: The oedipal period of development. *Gender and Psychoanalysis*, 6:19-51.

Flax, J. (1993), *Disputed Subjects: Essays on Psychoanalysis, Politics and Philosophy*. London: Routledge.

Freeman, T. (2003), Loving fathers or deadbeat dads? The crisis of fatherhood in popular culture. In: *Gender, Identity and Reproduction: Social Perspectives*, eds. S. Earle & G. Letherby. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 33-49.

_____ (2004), Conceptualising fatherhood: Gender, discourse and the paradoxes of patriarchy. PhD thesis, University of Essex.

Freud, A. (1986), ed. *Sigmund Freud: The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*. London: Penguin.

Freud, S. (1905), Three essays on the theory of sexuality. In: *Sigmund Freud: The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*, ed. A. Freud. London: Penguin, 1986.

_____ (1912-13), *Totem and Taboo*. London: Ark Paperbacks, 1960.

_____ (1923), The ego and the id. In: *Sigmund Freud: The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*, ed. A. Freud. London: Penguin, 1986.

_____ (1924), The dissolution of the oedipus complex. In: *Sigmund Freud: The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*, ed. A. Freud. London: Penguin, 1986.

_____ (1925), Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes. In: *Sigmund Freud: The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*, ed. A. Freud. London: Penguin, 1986.

_____ (1927), The future of an illusion. *Standard Edition.* London: Hogarth Press, 1961.

_____ (1930), *Civilisation and Its Discontents*. New York: Dover, 1994

_____ (1931), Female sexuality. In: *On Sexuality: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality and Other Works*, ed. J. Strachey. London: Penguin, 1977.

_____ (1933), Femininity. In: *Sigmund Freud: The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*, ed. A. Freud. London: Penguin, 1986.

_____ (1938), An outline of psycho-analysis. *Standard Edition*. London: Hogarth Press, 1957.

Frosh, S. (1994), *Sexual Difference: Masculinity and Psychoanalysis*. London: Routledge.

Glazer, D. F. & Drescher, J. (2001), eds. *Gay and Lesbian Parenting*. New York: Haworth Press.

Golombok, S. & Tasker, F. (1994), Children in lesbian and gay families: Theories and evidence. *Annual Review of Sex Research*, 4:73-100.

_____ _____ & Murray, C. (1997), Children raised in fatherless families from infancy: Family relationships and the socioemotional development of children

of lesbian and single heterosexual mothers. *Journal of Child Psychology & Psychiatry*, 38(7):783-792.

Hawkins, A. J. & Dollahite, D. C. (1997), eds. *Generative Fathering: Beyond Deficit Perspectives.* London: Sage.

Heim, R. (1997), The symbolic father as revenant: The birth of psychoanalysis from the spirit of the father. *Psyche,* 51(11):1023-1050.

Henderson, J. (1980), On fathering (the nature and functions of the father role). *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry,* 25:413-431.

Herman, N. (1989), *Too Long a Child: The Mother-Daughter Dyad*. London: Free Association Books.

Herzog, J. M. (1982), On father hunger: The father's role in the modulation of aggressive drive and fantasy. In: *Father and Child*, eds. S. H. Cath, A. R. Gurwitt & J. M. Ross. Boston: Little, Brown, pp.163-174.

_____ (2002), *Father Hunger: Explorations with Adults and Child*ren. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press.

Horkheimer, M. (1972), Authority and the family. In: *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*, ed. J. O'Connell. New York: Herder & Herder.

Irigaray, L. (1985a), *Speculum of the Other Woman*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

_____ (1985b), *The Sex Which is Not One*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Kahane, C. (1997), Gender and patrimony: Mourning the dead father. A *Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies,* 9:49-68.

Kestenbaum, C. J. and Stone, M. H. (1976), The effects of fatherless homes upon daughters: Clinical impressions regarding paternal deprivation. *Journal of American Academy of Psychoanalysis*, 4:171-190.

Klein, M. (1928), Early stages of the oedipus conflict. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 9:167-180.

Knijn, T. & Mulder, A. (1987), eds. *Unravelling Fatherhood*. Dordrecht: Foris.

Kramer, S. & Prall, R. C. (1978), The role of the father in the preoedipal years. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 26:143-161.

Krull, M. (1986), *Freud and His Father*. London: W. W. Norton & Co.

Lacan, J. (1977), *Ecrits: A Selection*. trans. A. Sheridan. London: Routledge.

Lamb, M. E. (1976), ed. *The Role of the Father in Child Development*. London: John Wiley & Sons.

Lansky, M. R. (1992), *Fathers who Fail*. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press.

Lasch, C. (1991), *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*. London: W. W. Norton & Co.

Layland, W. R. (1981), In search of a loving father. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 62:215-223.

Lewis, C. & O'Brien, M. (1987), eds. *Reassessing Fatherhood: New Observations on Fathers and the Modern Family*. London: Sage.

Liebman, S. J. & Abell, S. C. (2000), The forgotten parent no more: A psychoanalytic reconsideration of fatherhood. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 17(1):88-105.

Machtlinger, V. (1976), Psychoanalytic theory: Preoedipal and oedipal phases with special reference to the father. In: *The Role of the Father in Child Development*, ed. M. E. Lamb. London: John Wiley & Sons.

Marsiglio, W., Amato, P., Day, R. D. & Lamb, M. E. (2000), Scholarship on fatherhood in the 1990s and beyond. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62(4):1173-1191.

Millett, K. (1977), *Sexual Politics*. London: Virago.

Minsky, R. (1998a), Womb-Envy and women as "too much of a good thing". In: *Psychoanalysis and Culture: Contemporary States of Mind*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 106-130.

_____ (1998b), The psychical significance of fathers. In: *Psychoanalysis and Culture: Contemporary States of Mind,* Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 131-151.

Mitchell, J. (1974), *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*. London: Penguin.

Mitscherlich, A. (1993), *Society without Father: A Contribution to Social Psychology*. New York: Harper Collins.

Murray, C. (1990), *The Emerging British Underclass*. London: IEA Health & Welfare Unit.

Neubauer, P. B. (1960), The one-parent child and his oedipal development. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 15:286-309.

Oliver, K. (1997), *Family Values: Subjects between Nature and Culture*. London: Routledge.

Palkovitz, R. (2002), *Involved Fatherhood and Men's Adult Development.* London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Parker, R. (1995), *Torn in Two: The Experience of Maternal Ambivalence.* London: Virago.

Pollock, S. & Sutton, J. (1985), Fathers' rights, women's losses. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 8(6):593-599.

Popenoe, D. (1996), *Life without Father: Compelling New Evidence that Fatherhood and Marriage are Indispensable for the Good of Children and Society*. London: Harvard University Press.

Pruett, K. D. (1983), Infants of primary nurturing fathers. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 38:257-277.

_____ (1985), Oedipal configurations in young father-raised children. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 40:435-456.

Rich, A. (1986), Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. *Signs,* 5(4):631-660.

Richards, M. P. M. (1987), How should we approach the study of fathers? In: *The Father Figure,* eds. L. McKee & M. O'Brien. London: Tavistock Publications, pp.57-71.

Rodgers, B. & Pryor, J. (1998), *Divorce and Separation: The Outcomes for Children*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Ross, J. M. (1975), The development of paternal identity: A critical review of the literature on nurturance and generativity in boys and men. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 23:783-817.

_____ (1979), Fathering: A review of some psychoanalytic contributions on paternity. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 60:317-327.

Rubin, G. (1975), The Traffic in women: notes on "political economy" of sex. In: *Toward an Anthropology of Women,* ed. R. R. Reiter. London: Monthly Review Press, pp. 157-210.

Rutherford, J. (1992), *Men's Silences: Predicaments in Masculinity*. London: Routledge.

Samuels, A. (1989), *The Plural Psyche: Personality, Morality and the Father*. London: Tavistock.

_____ (1993), *The Political Psyche*. London: Routledge.

_____ (1996), The good enough father of whatever sex. In: *Partners Becoming Parents: Talks from the Tavistock Marital Studies Institute*, ed. C. Clulow. London: Sheldon Press, pp. 101-118.

Segal, L. (1987), *Is the Future Female? Troubled Thoughts on Contemporary Feminism.* London: Virago.

Seidler, V. J. (1989), *Rediscovering Masculinity: Reason, Language and Sexuality*. London: Routledge.

_____ (1996), Fathering, authority and masculinity. In: *Male Order: Unwrapping Masculinity*, eds. R. Chapman & J. Rutherford. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Silverstein, L. B. (1996), Fathering is a feminist issue. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 20:3-37.

Smart, C. (2000), Divorce and changing family practices in a post-traditional society: moral decline or changes to moral practices? *Family Matters*, 56:10-19.

_____ Wade, A. & Neale, B. (1999), Objects of concern?: Children and divorce. *Child and Family Law Quarterly*, 11(4):365-376.

Spieler, S. (1984), Preoedipal girls need fathers. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 71(1):63-80.

Stern, D. (1985), *The Interpersonal World of the Infant: A View from Psychoanalysis and Developmental Psychology*. New York: Basic Books.

Tasker, F. (2005), Lesbian mothers, gay fathers and their children: A review. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*, 26:224-240.

Thompson, R. A. & Amato, P. (1999), eds. *The Postdivorce Family.* London: Sage.

Trowell, J. & Etchegoyen, A. (2002), eds. *The Importance of Fathers: A Psychoanalytic Re-Evaluation*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

Verhaeghe, P. (1998), *Love in a Time of Loneliness: Three Essays on Drive and Desire*. London: Rebus Press.

Weatherill, R. (1994), *Cultural Collapse*. London: Free Association Books.