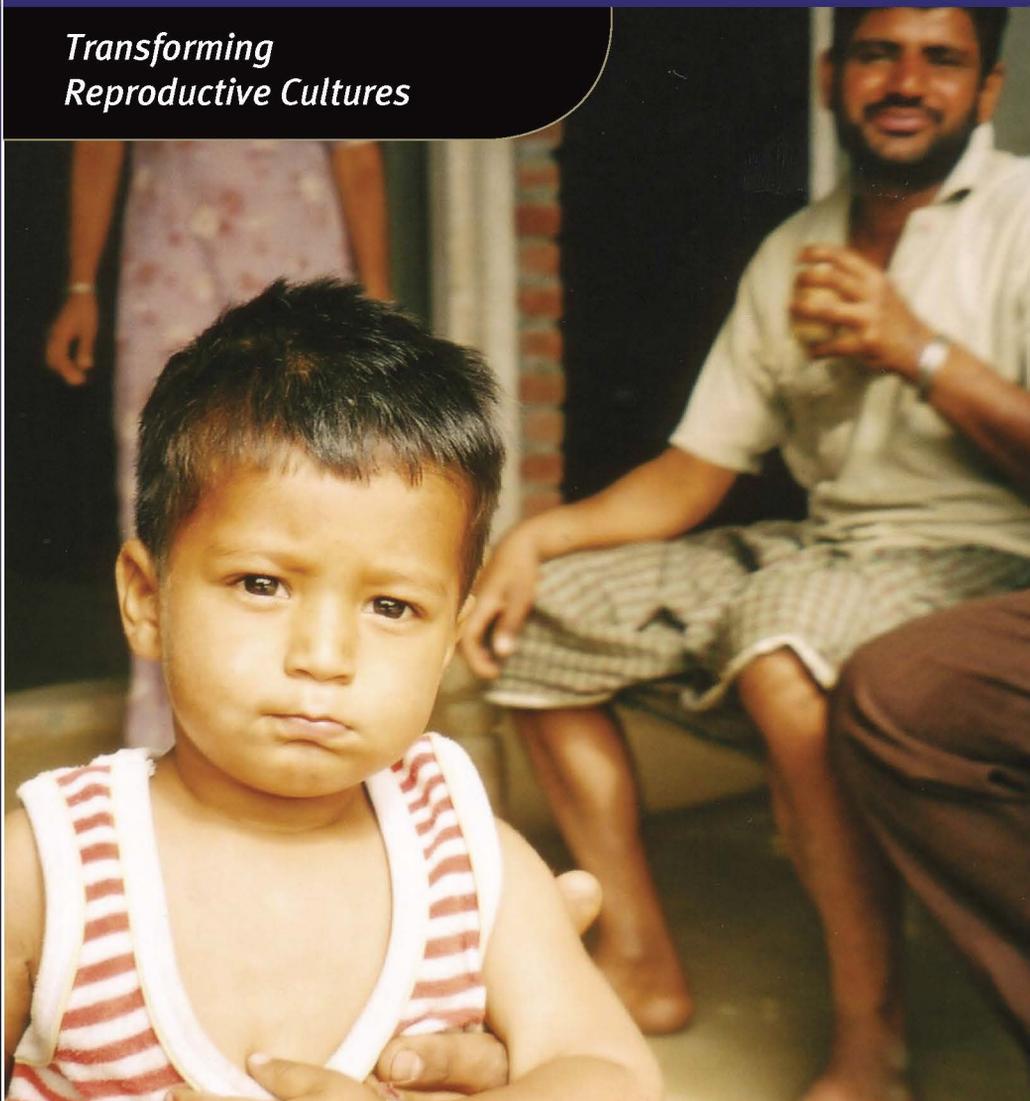


Parenthood Between Generations

*Transforming
Reproductive Cultures*



Edited by
Siân Pooley and Kaveri Qureshi

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Fertility, Reproduction and Sexuality

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TRANSFORMING REPRODUCTIVE CULTURES

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CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Introduction	
<i>Siân Pooley and Kaveri Qureshi</i>	1
Chapter One. Between Future Families and Families of Origin: Talking about Gay Parenthood across Generations	
<i>Robert Pralat</i>	43
Chapter Two. The Politics of Fertility and Generation in Buganda, East Africa, 1860–1980	
<i>Shane Doyle</i>	65
Chapter Three. Changing Mothering Practices and Intergenerational Relations in Contemporary Urban China	
<i>Michala Hvidt Breengaard</i>	91
Chapter Four. Intergenerational Negotiations of Non-marital Pregnancies in Contemporary Japan	
<i>Ekaterina Hertog</i>	114
Chapter Five. Grandfathers, Grandmothers and the Inheritance of Parenthood in England, c. 1850–1914	
<i>Siân Pooley</i>	135
Chapter Six. First-time Parenthood among Migrant Pakistanis: Gender and Generation in the Postpartum Period	
<i>Kaveri Qureshi</i>	160
Chapter Seven. Intergenerational Mythscapes and Infant Care in Northwestern Amazonia	
<i>Elizabeth Rahman</i>	181

Chapter Eight. Generational Change and Continuity among British Mothers: The Sharing of Beliefs, Knowledge and Practices c. 1940–1990 <i>Angela Davis</i>	207
Chapter Nine. ‘I Feel My Dad Every Moment!’: Memory, Emotion and Embodiment in British South Asian Fathering Practices <i>Punita Chowbey and Sarah Salway</i>	229
Chapter Ten. Becoming Papa: Kinship, Senescence and the Ambivalent Inward Journeys of Ageing Men in the Antilles <i>Adom Philogene Heron</i>	253
Conclusion <i>Siân Pooley and Kaveri Qureshi</i>	277
Index	283

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

3.1. A day in the life of eight-month-old Gaigai	96
7.1. The Xié River	186
7.2. The Xié River and its mythscape	188
7.3. The Xié River and its mythscape	189
7.4. The Xié River and its mythscape	189
7.5. Splash-washing next to an ancestral rock	194
7.6. Splash-washing next to an ancestral rock	195
10.1. Scratchie with his two youngest daughters walking to preschool and day-care	256
10.2. Gus's routine Sunday nap beside his granddaughters	272

Tables

0.1. Intergenerational transmission: a new framework	22
9.1. Table of respondents' characteristics	233

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INTRODUCTION

Siân Pooley and Kaveri Qureshi

This is a volume about the making – and breaking – of relations between generations. It is about how the bearing and rearing of children is shaped by the intergenerational mobility of practices, ideas and values between daughters and fathers, aunts and nephews, granddaughters and grandmothers, mothers and sons. We ask how these dynamic interactions between generations are negotiated and given shifting social, emotional and cultural meanings across the life course. This allows us to unpick the unequal and multi-directional processes by which men and women choose aspects of themselves to pass on to their children, to reframe or to silence, while simultaneously receiving, reinterpreting or rejecting aspects of others' lives. We thus explore intergenerational transmission as a complex state of entanglement, as people repeatedly remake their presents, pasts and futures through the moulding of children.

This volume makes three central contributions. Firstly, patterns of intergenerational transmission have been the subject of sustained social scientific attention since the middle of the twentieth century. Much of this research has been primarily quantitative in its approach. Data have been used to demonstrate the ongoing significance of intergenerational 'solidarity' and 'reciprocity' alongside extra-familial welfare provision (Albert and Ferring 2013; Brannen, Moss and Mooney 2004), the intergenerational inheritance of inequalities in human capital and the passing-on of social class (Chan and Boliver 2013; Goldthorpe 1987; Halsey, Heath and Ridge 1980; Horrell, Humphries and Voth 2001; Miles and Vincent 1993), the importance of intergenerational transmission in explaining demographic patterns (Bras, van Bavel and Mandemakers 2013; Jennings,

Sullivan and Hacker 2013; Vandezande and Matthijs 2013), and the role of intergenerational relations in determining patterns of belief and religiosity (Bengtson 2013; Jones 2012). In order to complement these studies, the chapters in this volume adopt a predominantly qualitative approach to understanding the ways in which intergenerational transmission influences how men and women become parents. All of the chapters focus on the intimate powers of being, doing, knowing and remembering. In doing this, we build on a second set of pioneering feminist studies that examine how women learnt socially-constructed and historically-specific forms of motherhood, and their ambivalence about the resulting roles that they were expected to take on (Chodorow 1978; Kristeva 1975; Rich 1976). Like Kitzinger (1996), Brannen, Moss and Mooney (2004) and Thomson et al. (2011), we consider how intergenerational interactions – between fathers, mothers and sons, as much as between mothers and daughters – were profoundly gendered. We do this to examine questions that it is difficult to answer quantitatively: when do people find it possible and desirable to share knowledge, values and practices with those in other generations (and when do they not)? Contributors explore the mechanisms and narratives of inheritance in explicitly interdisciplinary ways. Authors originate from three complementary disciplinary backgrounds – anthropology, history and sociology – but also draw on insights from related scholarship in demography, psychology and literature. The chapters thus identify contrasts and commonalities in intergenerational transmission both through synchronic comparisons between contemporary cultures and through diachronic comparisons of continuity and change over periods of up to a century. The evidence used to make these claims include ethnographies, oral histories, structured interviews and archival sources. This also allows conclusions to be drawn about how our arguments about intergenerational transmission are shaped by the particular evidential traces that we have available to us and the specific genres to which we are attentive.

Secondly, this means that at the heart of this volume is the examination of the interaction between, in Gillis's model, the family that people 'live by' and those that men, women and children 'live with' (1989: 213). Since the 1950s there has developed a rich sociological, psychological and historical literature on the ways in which Western mothers over the last hundred and fifty years have worked with 'expert' advice, strategically and selectively, in finding a useable route through the gap between prescript and practice (Beier 2008; Davis 2012; Lee et al. 2014; Newson and Newson

1963; Ross 1993; Young and Willmott 1957). In this volume we build on this literature by examining how intergenerational relations mediate the way people use advice and the types of advice they seek. Chapters were selected to enable the interrogation of patterns of inequality and diversity in intergenerational relations – around categories of gender, class, age, ethnicity, sexuality and nationality – so as to consider what makes particular practices of intergenerational care feel relevant to diverse adult selves. We deliberately place at the heart of this volume the ways of being with children that are articulated by the words and actions of the vast majority of ‘ordinary’ men and women, with limited social and political power except over their own lives – and of course the lives of those close to them. It is thus possible to demonstrate the disjuncture between the trajectories suggested by the anxieties in prescriptive sources, and the chronologies of change that emerge from people’s everyday relationships (Hufton 1995; Thane and Evans 2012). We suggest that it is as important to explain profound continuities, both through sustained material constraints and through the constant labour of making sure particular practices and ideas survive, as it is to identify the effort required to make change happen. In his autobiographical account, the writer Alan Bennett explores how his mid-twentieth-century English father and mother lived lives of sustained ‘yearning’ after an unattainable familial ideal, undisturbed by the truism that ‘Every family has a secret and the secret is that it’s not like other families’ (2005: 82). In our chapters we seek to be sensitive to the particular kinds of intimate aspirations that have the power to make individual lives with children feel both liveable and unliveable.

Thirdly, building on studies by Chavkin and Maher (2010) of motherhood, Arber and Timonen (2012) of grandparenting, Inhorn, Chavkin and Navarro (2014) of fatherhood, Faircloth, Hoffman and Layne (2013) of parenting cultures, and Narvaez et al. (2014) of child-rearing, the volume highlights patterns of global connection, communication and comparison. At the heart of many of the studies are the processes by which people, ideas and practices move not only between generations, but also between cultures and nations across the globe. Yet in exploring the global processes that shape how cultures of reproduction are communicated, we suggest that it is equally essential to be attentive to power that continues to derive its legitimacy from relations that are local and intimate. First, as historical chapters by Doyle, Pooley and Davis suggest, high rates of spatial mobility that spread generations of a single family across

regions and nations are not a peculiar feature of the contemporary world. The challenge of maintaining – or more often failing to maintain – intimacy at a distance has not only been central to individual memories and family stories of intergenerational relations, but has also been a fundamental driver of social and cultural change in reproductive cultures. Second, even in the context of contemporary communication technologies and global ‘flows’ of information, capital and people, it is crucial to identify who the individual trusted agents are who enable practices and ideas to be communicated in ways that are persuasive (Davis 2011). It cannot be taken for granted that certain discourses are inevitably mobile and hegemonic as a result of the elite or professional identity of the author. Instead, we show that kin remain central to these processes of forming relations of trust, expertise and authority. As chapters by Qureshi and Philogene Heron particularly suggest, the men and women with the most influence in shaping how children are cared for – even in a contemporary globalized and connected world – are those who are most spatially, physically and constantly present as a child is held, bathed, fed or watched over.

The rest of this introduction sets out in more detail the central concepts and approaches that inform this volume. We begin by examining how attention to the significance of older generations in shaping the rearing of the young allows us to reconceptualize reproduction. We then explore how we approach the concept of generations as one of the principal, flexible cultural resources on which men and women draw in making sense of their lives. We conclude by examining four central processes of intergenerational transmission that structure the rest of the volume, showing how the chapters offer a new conceptual vocabulary and interdisciplinary scholarly agenda for taking intergenerational transmission seriously.

Reproductive Cultures

The central concepts in this volume – reproduction, generation and transmission – are embedded in narratives of time and power. All of these ‘keywords’ have been attached to linguistically diverse and historically-specific meanings (Jaeger 1985; Lovell 2007; Strathern 2005; Weigel 2002; Williams 1976), yet they consistently imply a sense of the uniformity and determinism of the act of passing-on. Pictures are reproduced to look like the original; generators create electricity that is reliably the same; communication signals are

transmitted so as to ensure that identical information is received. Yet, as Solomon (2013: 1–2) reminds us in his rich study of contemporary American parenthood, the term ‘reproduction’ acts as a ‘euphemism to comfort prospective parents’. Children never grow to adulthood as their fathers and mothers imagined that they would. This language creates a veneer of control over the most powerful, intimate, dynamic – and thus unpredictable – social relations. In this section we draw out the approach we take to reproduction, which tries to work against the biologism of the concept and the implication of cultural stasis.

This book is about how parents and their adult children share values, ideas and practices concerning the bearing and bringing-up of children. Our focus is reproduction in both its biological and social senses. We seek to explore how, as Ginsberg and Rapp (1995: 1–2) put it, reproduction can be an ‘entry point to the study of social life’, showing us ‘how cultures are produced (or contested) as people imagine and enable the creation of the next generation, most directly through the nurturance of children’. Our use of reproduction as a concept is to attempt, anew, to shift it from its relentlessly biological connotations. Influential critiques in the 1970s and 1980s argued that the biologism of reproduction was so problematic that it had undermined the study of fundamental social phenomena such as kinship and gender (Collier and Yanagisako 1987; Needham 1971; Schneider 1968, 1984; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995). Later studies of medicalization (Lock and Kaufert 1998; Martin 1992) and assisted reproductive technologies (Becker 2000; Edwards et al. 1993; Franklin and Ragoné 1998; Strathern 1992; Thompson 2005) reinstated reproduction as a vital field of study that could reset the terms of the debate on kinship and gender, by pushing at the separation between the biological and the social (or ‘nature’ and ‘culture’). These studies have radically exposed how Western folk conceptions have been carried over into theory, making us interrogate our own categories and habits of thought. However, a difficulty with the direction of recent work is that the empirical focus on medicine and technology has prevented us from thinking equally about the raising and nurturance of children through the concept of reproduction, and thereby complicating this concept.

In this book we think about reproduction as firstly the production and nurturance of children, and secondly the negotiation of social arrangements and culturally-specific histories and traditions over time. Weiner’s (1979) writings are a useful step in specifying our approach to reproduction further. In her re-study of the

Trobriand Islands, famous in anthropology because of Malinowski's (1913) controversial descriptions of their conception beliefs, Weiner demonstrated that the mother-father dyad that Malinowski had presumed to be the 'minimal unit of kinship' was insufficient for analysing Trobriand reproduction. Reproduction in the Trobriand Islands required the intervention of ancestral spirits and the simultaneous inputs – social, material and cosmological – of mothers and fathers, mother's brothers and father's sisters, and the entire matrilineages of which they were a part. Weiner's interpretation of reproduction was about renewing, over time, the networks of intergenerational relationships across matrilineages, held together by transactions of yams and women's inalienable wealth, which constituted Trobriand society. However, as Sarah Franklin (1997) appreciates, Weiner's work offers a comprehensive challenge to the biological conceptualization of reproduction. Whilst a mother-father dyad might be biologically capable of producing an infant, in the Trobriands, they could not produce a 'person'. The concept of 'personhood', we suggest, is an important step in releasing reproduction from its stubbornly biological moorings. Mauss was the first to outline the distinction between the human being *per se* and the 'person', or 'the notion or concept that men of different ages have formed of it' (1985 [1938]: 3). Evincing the evolutionary assumptions of his time, Mauss argued that the category of the 'person', which was applied in indigenous American tribes only to the present occupants of the small set of roles in a clan, had been extended more and more universally in the history of the West, as it was abstracted as a legal concept that came to be in principle applicable to every human being. In the 1980s and 1990s anthropologists developed this conceptualization, demonstrating that personhood was not given by biological conception or birth, but accrued gradually and differentially (Conklin and Morgan 1996; Fortes 1987; James 2000; Loizos and Heady 1999; Montgomery 2000; Scheper-Hughes 1992). Moreover, the person did not have to be a bounded individual as in Mauss's depiction of the modern West. As Strathern (1988) showed in her study of the Hageners in Melanesia, personhood in non-Western contexts could be 'partible' and composite, the sum of the relations and gendered substances contributed by multiple kin others. Carsten (1997, 2000, 2004) argued that if personhood could revitalize the concept of kinship, kinship studies could equally critique the concept of personhood. Whereas Strathern, like Mauss, posited a distinction between modern Western personhood as the bounded individual, and non-modern, non-Western personhood as more joined-up and

inhering in kin relations, Carsten showed, through her study of British adoptees' heartwrenching search for their birth parents, that in the modern West, too, kin relations are intrinsic to the person. Our chapters here extend Carsten's point and show, in a range of historical and cultural contexts, that reproduction is not just the biological making of babies but the sociocultural production of persons, persons who grow and unfurl gradually, over a lifetime of embodied nurturing practice.

Our reconceptualization of reproduction has some affinities with, but fundamentally departs from, earlier strands of work on 'social reproduction'. This concept has been developed in two contradictory directions. In the 1980s Marxist feminist studies of 'social reproduction' emphasized how the relations of child-bearing and child-rearing are essential to the political economy of production, the market and state action (Meillassoux 1981; Redclift 1985; Young, Wolkowitz and McCullagh 1981). Yet as O'Brien (1981: 165) identifies, theorists who view the product of reproduction – the child – as labour or 'use value' alone miss the fact that a child must also be understood to have the 'value of the human being as human being'. In building on this debate, chapters in this volume conceptualize the 'value' of a child to its parents as multidimensional, dynamic and – for many men and women – indescribable, such that it is clearly unhelpful to seek to define boundaries between the realm of the economic and the emotional. Goody (1982) and Godelier (1996) used the term 'social reproduction' quite differently, to conceive of parenthood as the responsibilities that achieve the social as well as the physical replacement of one generation by the next. In this volume, however, we seek to move away from the determinism implied by the idea of reproduction as the renewal of a society and its culture across generations. As Strathern (2014: 84) identifies in her recent reflections on Godelier, 'as far as "whole" systems are concerned, evidence that the destiny of what works now is that it will work in the future is at best patchy, now strong, now weak, and thus unpredictable'.

It is this unpredictability that we argue is essential to understanding the reproduction of cultures, as the efforts of nurturing kin are evaluated, interpreted and sometimes rejected by new generations acting in the unique circumstances in which they find themselves. Children are not blank sheets of paper on which to be written. The young are active agents in cultural reproduction, to the extent of moulding the cultural world in which adults live (Alanen and Mayall 2001; Hirschfeld 2002; Mason and Tipper 2008; Montgomery 2008; Waldren and Kaminski 2012). Crucially, this means that they

also shape how they are raised (Gottlieb 2000; Madge and Willmott 2007; Punch 2001; Seymour and McNamee 2012). In this book, therefore, we emphasize the agency of children who engage – unequally – in the process of negotiating what is passed down to their generation.

Our use of the term reproductive cultures is to be explicitly comparative. The volume brings together accounts of parenthood from different societies, historical eras and genres, allowing us to compare synchronically and diachronically the diverse opinions, customs and beliefs that influence whether people have children and what they consider to be appropriate methods for raising them. Yet as Gottlieb has elegantly shown in her work on infancy among the Beng in Côte d'Ivoire, there is also a profound diversity of opinions and practices within cultures. In comparing the pragmatic, secular advice that an elder woman would offer to the mother of a colicky infant with the spiritual advice provided by male diviners, Gottlieb highlights 'the critical role of positionality in accounting for what passes for common sense' (1995: 22). Common sense, internalized and taken for granted, can be seen as a form of power, working in a non-agentive manner. Drawing from Gramsci (1971), Comaroff and Comaroff (1992: 27) propose that cultures contain within them multiple notions of common sense, some of which are hegemonic, and others not: 'some will be woven into more or less tightly integrated, relatively explicit worldviews; others may be heavily contested, the stuff of counter-ideologies and "subcultures"; yet others may become more or less unfixed, relatively free-floating, and indeterminate in their value and meaning'. Lock and Kaufert (1998: 5) argue furthermore that hegemonic power in modern cultures of reproduction is now a 'shrinking domain' as 'common sense ... becomes increasingly subject to disputation'. The conceit of drawing lines around discrete cultures is no longer sustainable. Historians and anthropologists have demonstrated that populations have rarely lived in isolation from one another. They have long been interconnected through mobility, networks of communication, relations of economic exchange, and projects of political domination (Appadurai 1996; Bayly 2004; Burke and Hsia 2007; Clifford 1997; Gupta and Ferguson 1997). These interactions have intensified in the hundred-year period covered by the chapters in our book. Contemporary globalization has 'ensured that the majority of the world's people are aware, as never before, that other ways of being exist beyond the boundaries of their respective communities' (Lock and Kaufert 1998: 5). This encourages people to reflect on

who they are and what they do, heightening the possibility that they will reject their social arrangements, passionately assert their own traditions, or articulate hybrid practices that creatively emerge from this tension.

The case studies in this volume reflect this conceptualization of cultures as multiple, fractured by power and interconnected. However, the historical specificity of the cultures examined in our chapters belies the more fundamental insight into reproduction that they also offer. Studies of international migrants, for example, show that migration can lead people to encounter very different reproductive norms and ideologies from those with which they were brought up (Unnithan-Kumar and Khanna 2015). Here, we show that migrants' efforts to translocate familiar practices are wrought through with novel elements reflecting their exposure to new discourses and ways of doing things; this process of hybridization may continue across many generations (see Chowbey and Salway in this volume). But it is not only migrants who experience change but also the members of their families and societies who stay put, as the parenting practices of those remaining behind are also affected (Qureshi and Philogene Heron in this volume). More profoundly, as Gedalof (2009) has argued, migration and contact between peoples are not what drive change in an otherwise repetitive process of reproduction, but rather, reproduction is a site where replication and innovation are inextricably intertwined. Everywhere, people do not merely repeat what has been done in the past, but they work out a way to respond to the challenges that their children present, anew, to each person who takes on the responsibility of raising them. Our accounts, like Gedalof's, confront the framing of reproduction in terms of sameness, and this challenge must also mean 'undercutting exclusionary and static models of "indigenous" cultures and the work that is done in the domestic space to reproduce them' (Gedalof 2009: 97). The small everyday tasks of parenting – of providing children with a sense of family, of providing structures of belonging and negotiating change – make cultures of reproduction reactive and ever-made. As the chapters in this volume demonstrate, people transpose, rather than replicate their pasts.

This book examines reproduction from different vantage points in people's life courses. Some of our chapters explore the expectation that people will have a child or the transformation that people undergo when they have one, whilst others explore the ongoing and lifelong practices through which parent-child relationships are achieved, maintained and subjectively experienced. Our choice of

the term parenthood to describe these different perspectives on reproduction differs from the recent ‘parenting culture studies’ (Lee et al. 2014). These studies regard parenthood as a pre-1950s construction that has been replaced by *parenting*, the noun turned into a verb, with the implication that parent-child relations have become newly emotionally intense, socially demanding and politically charged. Without disputing that parenthood is historically changeable and contingent, our chapters are sceptical of whether such linguistic shifts in the expert literature reflect meaningful changes in the pressures experienced by families. As studies of early modern England by Bailey (2012) and Crawford (2010) also show, we argue that child-bearing and child-rearing have involved intimate emotional work and have been intensely regulated since long before the 1950s. Although the state and professional experts have become more voluble in this regard, we argue that these forces operate most strongly when they combine with local and intimate structures of authority within families and communities (see Doyle, Hertog and Pooley in this volume). Moreover, we show that people’s narratives of intergenerational transformations may belie more fundamental and material intergenerational continuities (see Breengaard and Davis in this volume).

We also differ from ‘parenting culture studies’ in exploring the distinct cultural constructions of motherhood and fatherhood, and the particular conceptualizations of parent-child interaction that they presume. ‘Parenting culture studies’ tends to equate parenthood with motherhood, with recent studies of fatherhood concerned with the extent to which it has changed to become as intensive and emotionally absorbing as motherhood (Collier and Sheldon 2008; Dermott 2008). By contrast, and in common with historical studies by Strange (2015) and King (2015), our chapters show that fatherhood is not merely an extension of motherhood, and that to talk only of parenthood flattens what are distinctly gendered activities (see Chowbey and Salway, Philogene Heron, Pralat and Qureshi, all in this volume). Moreover, we question the approving tone of many studies of contemporary fatherhood, which emphasize the emerging triumph of intimacy over disciplining and economic provision. Our chapters show that, in some families at least, these elements of fatherhood should be understood as integral aspects of caregiving and intimacy (see Hertog, Philogene Heron and Pooley in this volume).

While most studies of parenthood deal with the intense experience of making and being with young children, our chapters, by

contrast, are primarily about older parents talking to and interacting with their adult children. People do not stop being parents when their children grow up, and in this volume we see parenthood doubled up, refracted over different generational positions and points in the life course. In this sense, our chapters offer a perspective that is significantly more complicated than most studies of reproduction. We examine people parenting their adult children, directing them and supporting them at the particular point when they are going through their own transformation into parents (or not, as the case may be). Other chapters focus on the conversations that adult children sustain with their parents – sometimes out loud, sometimes in their heads – about the decisions their parents made in bringing them up. The studies here are thus as much about grandparenthood, or prospective grandparenthood, as they are about parenthood.

On this final point, we depart from existing studies of grandparenthood that limit their focus to the help and advice provided by older generations in terms of ‘multiple care-taking’ (Gottlieb 2004; Harkness and Super 1992; LeVine et al. 1994; Liamputtong 2007; New 1988; Tronick et al. 1987), ‘allo-parenting’ (Bentley and Mace 2012), the provision of support or communication of indigenous knowledge (Aubel 2012; Geissler and Prince 2010), or even the evolutionary ‘grandmother hypothesis’ (Volland, Chasiotis and Shiefenhövel 2005). Instead of this focus on the utility of grandparents, we highlight older people’s ‘generativity’, their desire to pass on some part of themselves so they may ‘live on’ in subsequent generations (Erikson 1997 [1982]). We examine how older people build relationships with their grandchildren, how those relationships feel, and how the arrival of grandchildren changes people’s relationships with their own adult children. We therefore deepen existing intergenerational studies of reproduction by simultaneously holding the interactions between parents, grandparents and children in view.

There are various ways in which these dynamic networks of intergenerational relationships might be analysed, from ‘family systems’ (Byng-Hall 1988) to ‘family configurations’ (Widmer and Jallinoja 2008) or simply ‘kinship’, when conceptualized as the study of what kin ties mean to people and how they work to create and sustain them, rather than through its earlier focus on structures, functions and rules (Carsten 1997, 2000, 2004; di Leonardo 1987; Sahlins 2013). Our chapters draw variously from these frameworks, which all speak to the idea of reproduction as a state of complex and messy entanglement.

Making Generations

One of the central stories that we tell of – and to – ourselves is that of ‘generation’. Here we draw out three principal understandings of generation with which this volume works: as a vertical familial relationship, as a sense of horizontal commonality and as a linear narrative of change. Our chapters also show how people move between and elide these distinctions.

As rich literatures on narratives and collective memory suggest, the ways in which relationships between the past and the present are articulated – the sense of what people can, in Dawson’s (1994) terms, ‘compose’ from their pasts – also shape the options available for acting in the present and the future. This approach is most developed in the context of twentieth-century wartime memories, where research has shown how dominant public and social articulations in literature, film and ritualized commemorations interact with personal memories in allowing survivors and subsequent generations to make use of their pasts to form stories of their own lives (Argenti and Schramm 2010; Hirsch 2008; Noakes and Pattinson 2014; Summerfield 2004). We suggest that the significance of this process of composure does not apply solely to such publicly commemorated events. Chapters in this volume explore the diverse ways in which men and women creatively use what they understand to be their most private and individual memories of their own upbringing, fathering or mothering. Yet in so doing, these memories are intertwined with – and sometimes silenced or shaped by – more publicly legitimated and collective narratives of intergenerational relations (Alexander 2010; Green 2013; Light 2014; Roper 2000). In this way, the concept of generation becomes a flexible cultural resource through which some people choose to make claims about how they identify with communities of others in time, whether through a language of family, lineage or cohort. We thus explore generation as something that is made by men and women as part of their identities, not as a marker that is given to them as an inevitable result of biology or year of birth.

The first approach to ‘generation’ conceptualizes it as a vertical identity through which men, women and children situate themselves temporally within families. This volume focuses on what Perce describes as the ‘infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual’ (1997: 209–10). All of the following chapters work from the premise that for most people who raise children, it is their memories and interactions with their own families that form the background

noise that habituated them to the complexities, contingencies, tensions and messy singularities of bearing and rearing children. In doing this, we build on rich historical and literary traditions that explore practices of passing-on between parents and children autobiographically (Alexander 2009; Bertaux and Thompson 1993; Koleva 2009; Mort 1999; Steedman 1986). As John Burnside wrote in his account of his troubled relationship with his British father, '*this is the real lie about my father. I cannot talk about him without talking about myself, just as I can never look at myself in the mirror without seeing his face*' (2006: 231). For the son, his father's life story was not only linked to his own in shifting ways across the life course, but had, after his father's death, become a single story of entangled lives. Much of the autobiographical and biographical writing on intergenerational relations has emphasized the deep social wounds and lifelong psychological scars left by relations with parents, itself often a motivation for the act of writing within a late twentieth-century Western culture of therapy (Bates 2012; Cohen 2013). None of the chapters in this volume examine this genre of published accounts, though some of those who participated in our work experienced intergenerational relationships that they considered abusive, grief-ridden and dysfunctional. Some also explained aspects of their intergenerational relationships through popular versions of psychoanalytical and psychological thought. Yet, as chapters by Chowbey and Salway, and Pralat demonstrate, expressions of sorrow, envy and desire are also articulated, with varying degrees of explicitness and coherence, through alternative vocabularies that men and women derive from diverse, rich and authoritative cultural scripts, such as those founded in religious belief, ritual and popular culture. As chapters by Qureshi and Pooley reveal, it is also clear that short-term narratives that people offer to explain everyday practices of intergenerational transmission present these complex relationships in ways that are quite distinct from those that make sense when the same men and women look back reflectively on a life. Both forms of making sense are important.

Demography is essential to the reproductive cultures and practices of intergenerational transmission that this volume describes. As studies of fertility and mortality declines have indicated, the rates, timing and especially reasons for demographic change have not followed a single, global model of 'demographic transition' through modernization (Bledsoe 2002; Johnson-Hanks 2005; Szreter 2011). This makes it especially important to be attentive to how diverse demographic circumstances shape the presence of kin, their health

and capacity to provide care, and the timing of their own child-rearing responsibilities. Anderson points out that in England and Wales a woman born in the late seventeenth century would expect to live for only three years after the marriage of her last child, a woman born in the 1830s would expect to live for six more years, while a woman born in the early twentieth century would expect to live for twenty-two years after her last child married (1999: 53). The implications of this ongoing demographic transformation for familial roles and intergenerational relationships are significant. Indeed, as a result of the global increase in average life expectancy, by the late twentieth century three-quarters of thirty-year-old Americans had at least one surviving grandparent (Arber and Timonen 2012: 3). Yet, smooth transitions in statistical averages and demographic norms disguise the profound uncontrollability and seemingly inexplicable injustices that are integral to the lived experience of reproduction. Roper's (2004) study of early modern Germany demonstrates how the fragility and unpredictability of fertility shaped widespread fears and fantasies, which, when articulated in certain contexts, had the force to grow into the concerted community pursuit of old, infertile women as witches. Such complex and often tension-filled intergenerational relations, which perceived demographic change prompts most powerfully, are examined in chapters by Breengaard, Doyle and Hertog. These wider power struggles to manage reproduction – whether that be at the level of an individual, a family, a community or a state – run as a theme that is woven into every chapter in this volume.

The simultaneity of generational roles within individual lives further adds to the complexity of these power dynamics. A father is a father, whatever his age, but – as Brannen and Nilsen (2006) demonstrate so effectively – fathering also changes over the life course. Hareven (1978) examined the theoretical potency of a life-course approach in enabling a deeper understanding of the fluidity and dynamic nature of transitions, relationships and roles within families. Yet, as Pooley, Philogene Heron, and Chowbey and Salway show in this volume, a middle-aged man is likely to be simultaneously a son, father and potentially also a grandfather, indicating the importance of a non-linear perspective in understanding the synchronicity of these different identities. This simultaneity is certainly not captured by the concept of the life cycle and even in the concept of the life course there is an implied linear directionality – a route that a life takes – rather than the layering of roles that is essential to intergenerational relations. We suggest that it is useful to conceptualize

these roles more as layers of writing on a manuscript, a palimpsest formed of multiple roles and identities, which can accumulate, overlap, be written over, or gradually fade away. It is the shaping of these layers, and the often ambivalent feelings that result from these processes, that we seek to explore. As research by Smart (2007) and Cohen (2013) has revealed, men and women also write themselves into and out of these roles within families as they either seek out relationships that had been previously hidden from them or as they bury 'secret' evidence of children or parents whose presence at that point in time feels shameful to them.

Growing out of this narrative of vertical intergenerational inheritances is a second narrative of generation, founded on identification with a horizontal cohort of people. This structural sociological model of cohort-based generations was developed by Karl Mannheim in his essay of 1923 where he argued that formative experiences in youth unconsciously gave disparate people who were born around the same time a shared 'social location'. He suggested that this created 'certain definite modes of behaviour, feeling, and thought', which would be carried through life by all of those who had shared it (1952: 288–291). His writing was inspired by his experiences of the First World War and this lumpy deterministic conceptualization of time was widely shared by elite commentators across Europe in these interwar years (Orwell 1940; Waugh 1929). Rudyard Kipling, whose son died while fighting in 1915, expressed his loss in a poem four years later: 'If any question why we died, / Tell them, because our fathers lied' (1919). Kipling linked his personal loss as a father to a wider sense of being part of this older group of culpable imagined powerful fathers who had led the nation into a war, yet he simultaneously defused this simple model of generational conflict through writing in the angry voice of his lost son.

While avoiding Mannheim's deterministic model of 'generationalism' (White 2013), we find the idea of generation useful as a powerful cultural trope through which people sometimes choose to define who they are – and who they are not – in time (Elliott 2013; Lovell 2007). Nevertheless, the act of choosing to alter a reproductive culture in opposition to that of an earlier generation also requires active creative engagement with what people understand to be their parents' experiences, practices and values. For instance, this generational model has been used most extensively in research on social change in post-war Europe; historians have charted how younger generations of men and especially women between the 1950s and 1970s made decisions about sex and

sexuality, about education and maternal employment, and about faith and moral values in active opposition to the choices that they understood their parents to have made (Alexander 2009; Brown 2010; Gildea 2011; Passerini 1996). Yet not only did traces of what the younger generation was reacting against live on in their priorities and blind spots (Looser and Kaplan 1997; Jolly 2004), but many parents actively encouraged their offspring to embrace new post-war opportunities, seeking to allow their children to escape the regrets that were common especially within mothers' own lives (Alexander 1994; Dyhouse 2001; Steedman 1986; Todd and Young 2012). Chapters in this volume build on this attention to cohorts within reproductive cultures, but also highlight the extent to which it was not always the youngest generation who was most changed by these processes of intergenerational comparison. Hertog and Philogene Heron emphasize the significance of older generations' work in remaking their own identities in later life. In this way, change not only moves 'forwards' but also 'backwards' across generations. Not only can older people adopt the norms and values that they see amongst their children and grandchildren (Solomon 2013), but they also creatively and fundamentally transform themselves through making new types of relationships with the young later in life.

This can be developed a stage further, however, by considering how far mundane – though potentially personally transformative – processes such as child-bearing and child-rearing encourage men and women to construct cohort-based identities with others becoming parents or grandparents at around the same time. The creation of formal institutions that appeal to women through their maternal identities is one indication of the perceived importance of sharing the experience of motherhood with others at a similar life-course stage. The foundation of religious associations, such as the Mothers' Union, from the late nineteenth century offers an early formal example of this (Beaumont 2013; Moyse 2009), which is echoed in many contemporary forms, including by websites such as 'Mumsnet'. In neither case is motherhood necessary for participation. Yet the popularity of these groups of peers who mostly hold their current motherhood in common is revealing, potentially suggesting a desire to distance themselves from both the 'official' provision of expert advice and from their own mothers' guidance. O'Connor and Madge (2004) have shown how users of another U.K.-based website, 'Babyworld', draw on the forum as a source of non-judgemental 'safe' and up-to-date advice during the

transition to motherhood, but do not interpret these virtual worlds as replacing face-to-face support. Particular importance is attached to these peer groups by mothers who feel themselves to be isolated by their style of motherhood, such as the members of 'La Leche League International' who, as Faircloth has shown (2013), often express a sense of isolation from other parents through their choice to practise long-term breastfeeding. Interestingly, though attempts have been made to organize groups of men around their fatherhood for almost a century, they have more rarely been successful (Fisher 2005). It is clear that ongoing experiences of motherhood are a potent means to mobilize and organize women. There is little evidence, however, to suggest that this immediate and circumstantial desire for peer support transfers into a long-lasting sense of generational 'location' as proposed by Mannheim (1952). Indeed, it appears that these groups of peers tend to be contingent, transitory and instrumental, used to manage the challenges of the specific phase of early motherhood, rather than as a means of forming sustained cohort-specific identities of generation. This is not to suggest that it does not matter, but that it matters in a different way – in the sense of enabling parents to find a route through immediate short-term crises, rather than as a constitutive part of identity that is nurtured in the longer term. The case studies by Pralat, Chowbey and Salway, Davis and Qureshi all highlight the significance of groups of peers at a similar life-course stage in reinforcing values and practices. Yet these chapters also all suggest that these unrelated individuals had less authority – especially in forming moral judgements – for most young adults than their relations with their own parents.

Linked to this horizontal generational identity is a third temporal approach to generation. Men and women place themselves not just in relation to others situated vertically within their own family or horizontally through shared acts of rebellion or formative experiences, but in relation to powerful narratives of ever-greater 'modernization' imposed on each successive generation of families. Not only were these linear accounts central to the pioneering mid-twentieth-century British academic studies of intergenerational relations, but they remain commonplace within the ways in which Western men and women relate their own lives to broader popular narratives of how the 'modern family' has changed.

Mid-twentieth-century social scientists were fascinated by the question of how the rise of state-sponsored stability, much-celebrated 'affluence', and idealized 'companionate marriage' of the

post-war years was altering society. Pioneering social surveys and community studies by Moge (1956), Bott (1957), Young and Willmott (1957), Willmott and Young (1960), Stacey (1960), Rosser and Harris (1965), and Goldthorpe et al. (1969) probed deeply into the networks of kin reciprocity and sociability that surrounded 'the' nuclear working-class family. As primarily snapshot studies, the authors could only speculate on the degree and pace of change in family life, but the evidence that they presented on ties with kin is more equivocal than the conclusions that they tended to draw from it. The researchers all emphasized the significance of the mother-daughter bond to the transmission of 'traditional' practices of raising children and to sustaining working-class 'community' life. Yet this bond was interpreted as a relic of the grandmother's generation, whose values, practices and cultures of inner-city sociability were presumed to be about to be replaced by suburbanization, professional child-rearing expertise, a newly family-centred model of masculinity, and the trickle-down of middle-class cultures of child-rearing. Modernization was thus presented as rupturing the intergenerational transmission of reproductive cultures. Both research into these post-war social scientific encounters (Davis 2009; Lawrence 2014; Savage 2010; Todd 2008) and later re-studies of the same families and communities (Charles 2012; Dench, Gavron and Young 2006; Edwards 2008; Edwards and Gillies 2013; Lyon and Crow 2012) have revealed the need to re-examine critically this pioneering mid-twentieth-century argument for the centrality of intergenerational relations to social change. Davis's and Brengaard's chapters show how (in contrasting cultural contexts) elements of these beliefs are part of a popular narrative through which contemporary women situate their own experiences within a broader historical narrative. All of the chapters in this volume, however, demonstrate the benefits of rethinking how we interpret the presence, advice and values of older generations, by conceptualizing them as integral to – rather than in opposition to – diverse, 'modern' ways of caring for the young.

Yet, not only does this mid-twentieth-century modernization model live on in Western public and highly politicized narratives of the decline in 'traditional' family values (Thane 2010; Thane and Evans 2012), but a related and much more pervasive narrative continues to feature both in popular and scholarly narratives of cultures of raising children. The most common chronological narrative through which changing intergenerational relations have been understood is a teleological, homogeneous story of the

making of 'modern' child-centred parenting. Importantly, most studies present a linear narrative of shifting shared attitudes to children as the principal cause of change. This allows the formation of a seductively straightforward tale of the modernization, professionalization, standardization and globalization of parenting around an increasingly idealized child subject (Abrams 2012; Cunningham 1995; Lee et al. 2014; Wright 1988). Such narratives tend to begin from a Western context of new Enlightenment and Romantic celebrations of the unique 'natural' innocence of childhood, followed by its elaboration through middle-class rituals of idealized domesticity and faith in professional authority (Davidoff and Hall 2002; Gillis 1996). During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, nascent socially-engaged European states gradually and patchily extended these elite ideals to the regulation of labour, provision of education and promotion of the health and welfare of working-class children, who were newly recognized as the state's future subjects and sometimes democratic citizens (Hendrick 1994; Heywood 1988). None of the chapters in this volume suggest that attitudes to children were irrelevant to their rearing, but they reject the master narrative of ever-greater child idealization and attentiveness. Instead, we show the benefits of paying much closer interpretative attention to men's and women's understandings of their changing adult selves as the creators of these reproductive cultures.

Linear narratives have been most powerful in relation to the story of the rise of two forms of Western and colonial modern authority – professional expertise and the state. These linked authorities 'intervened' ever more deeply and widely in the lives of reluctant working-class and 'deviant' families, so as to disempower parents who submitted, increasingly passively, to new, elite-constructed modern knowledge of how and by whom the child was to be shaped. In Western-influenced global contexts self-defined 'experts' asserted their legitimate authority from diverse foundations: on the basis of their overtly 'modern' expertise and their often scientifically-oriented qualifications (Apple 2006; Hardyment 1983), their philanthropic and municipal bases that offered basic welfare provision that poor mothers needed (Davin 1978; Ross 1992), their bureaucratic and professionally-authorized methods of measuring, classifying and recording (Rose 1989; Shuttleworth 2010; Sutherland 1984), and the economic, political and social authority vested in them by states and latterly by international humanitarian organizations, both often prompted by the social anxieties and crises

engendered by warfare (Dwork 1987; Lewis 1980; Pedersen 1993). Chapters by Breengaard, Doyle and Hertog demonstrate, however, that we need to be careful in reproducing these linear chronological narratives even in national contexts, let alone transnationally or globally. Such accounts privilege the actions and initiatives of individuals with economic, social and cultural capital and of institutions with state-sponsored legitimacy. Little agency is given to the mass of ordinary people in effecting change, in shaping the shifting agendas of the state and experts, or in simply ignoring this latent anxiety about the young.

Indeed, in our chapters, we were struck by the infrequency with which adults talked about or identified something called 'the state' – or even institutions with state-sponsored authority – in the ways in which they interpreted their lives, despite the fundamental differences in state support for child-bearing and child-rearing that our studies uncover. In the same way that studies of readership and reception have demonstrated the radical autonomy of readers in interpreting texts (Darnton 1995; Hofmeyr 2004; Rose 2001; Vincent 1989), we should not presume that the impact and interpretation of these 'top-down' efforts were uniform, rapid or in-line with the creators' intentions. Instead, we build on Foucault's (2000) theory of governmentality and biopolitics, and Joyce's (2013: 3) examination of how the authority of states is 'embedded' in the power relations between generations to reveal how these most potent relationships within families also sustain the systems of 'organised freedom' through which self-consciously 'liberal' states operate. These states govern alongside a wide range of often mutually contradictory 'experts', agencies and institutions of civil society. This means that an organized, shared agenda for the reformation of intergenerational relations is frequently notable by its absence, especially if such an agenda would be seen to undermine the perceived privacy of the family. The contrast between this model of government and the more authoritarian states presented in the chapters by Breengaard and Doyle is important. Yet in all of the contexts studied in this volume, we find that the powers of the state and of professional experts are greatest when their networks congeal with, and are crystallized through, intimate intergenerational relations.

The chapters in this volume together suggest new ways of thinking about how men and women make sure that cultures of reproduction change or stay the same, but do so by rejecting teleological narratives of how modern families work.

Transmission

We now turn to the question of exactly how kin contribute to the transmission of cultures of reproduction. We suggest that the chapters in this book form a significant scholarly intervention by developing a framework to understand how transmission takes place.

Transmission is the process of passing-on to ensure the furtherance of a set of beliefs, practices and skills, across time and place. However, as Bloch observes, most studies of transmission are not concerned with the actual process by which things are passed on, but rather with the outcomes. As he identifies, there are good reasons for this. Transmission occurs through chains of events that take place primarily inside people's minds; it is 'not a matter of passing on "bits of culture" as if they were a rugby ball being thrown from player to player. Nothing is passed on; rather, a communication link is established which then requires an act of re-creation on the part of the receiver' (2005: 97). This means that unobservable processes like perceiving, inferring, remembering, believing and desiring are crucial. The chapters in this volume underline Bloch's conviction that transmission can be studied as a process rather than only as an outcome. However, since transmission is often semi- or entirely unconscious, this poses the methodological challenge of uncovering processes that occur without people's explicit attention or against their wishes.

Our chapters allow us to identify a framework of four central processes through which intergenerational transmission through kin takes place, so as to move beyond the existing quantitative and qualitative research on patterns of intergenerational transmission. We have organized the book to emphasize these four central processes, beginning with the kinds of messages that are conveyed long before people might become parents. We have grouped the chapters into sections on implicit normative expectations, moral judgements, habituation and memory. Each of the chapters introduces new concepts that develop the theorization of intergenerational transmission. However, these processes should not be understood as operating in isolation from each other. Table 0.1 represents the contributions made by the chapters in understanding transmission. This highlights how each case study centres on illustrating one mode of transmission, but also demonstrates how multiple processes, inevitably, interact in the passing-on of parenthood.

TABLE 0.1. Intergenerational transmission: a new framework

Processes of transmission	Primary process	Secondary processes
Implicit normative expectations	Pralat; Doyle; Breengaard	Hertog; Pooley; Qureshi
Moral judgement	Hertog; Pooley	Doyle; Breengaard
Habituation	Qureshi; Rahman	Chowbey and Salway
Memory	Davis; Chowbey and Salway; Philogene Heron	Breengaard

Implicit Normative Expectations

The first group of chapters focuses on how older generations communicate taken for granted normative expectations concerning child-bearing to their adult children. Due to its strong associations with sexuality, communication relating to reproduction is much more rarely explicit than in other domains of intergenerational learning. Harcourt (1997) has demonstrated in a range of historical and cultural settings that reproductive knowledge, orientations and practices are seldom transmitted through language and overt verbalizations. Instead, men and women either learn indirectly through ritual transformations at the time of puberty or social maturity or through analogy, by drawing their own conclusions from admonitions about displaying modesty, the acceptability of interactions with the opposite sex, or the importance of expressing maternal or paternal qualities. Historians and social scientists have noted the sustained cultures of silence, especially in order to maintain female idealized ‘innocence’, in intergenerational conversations over sexual and reproductive knowledge (Cook 2012; Fisher 2006; Szreter and Fisher 2010). Where communication between the generations is highly structured or taboo, implicit normative expectations, in the form of general statements of ‘this is what should be done’, tend to hold sway.

This situation is explored by Robert Pralat in Chapter 1, which focuses on the roles of parents in influencing the family-building intentions of young nonheterosexual men and women in contemporary Britain. Although Pralat found that parents and children rarely spoke explicitly about their reproductive expectations, young people gave considerable weight to what they thought their parents’ opinions would be. They remembered and could describe very vividly the

few scant conversations or asides from their parents that addressed this issue, however elliptically. The young people worked these speculations about their parents' opinions into their own views about potential parenthood. The prospect of future grandchildren provided an enabling language for young people and their parents to address the possibility of parenthood whilst brushing away the embarrassing 'nitty-hows' of how gay people have babies, including techniques such as donor insemination and surrogacy. Whilst reflecting quite deeply on their parents' 'assumed assumptions', Pralat's respondents also questioned the authority of older generations, pointing out that when their parents had decided to have a child, they had after all done so without seeking permission from their own parents.

In Chapter 2, Shane Doyle uses a combination of oral history and archival sources to examine the changing normative reproductive cultures of the East African society of Buganda across the twentieth century. Doyle examines the contestable and contextualized authority of older generations in setting norms for the reproductive practices of the young, an analytic he calls the 'generational politics of fertility'. In precolonial times, systems of land ownership, inheritance and political organization limited clan control over marriage and reproduction, undermining the natalism which supposedly forms part of the logic of the patrilineage in Africa. Under British colonialism, the nature of debates over reproduction changed, but this was only partially the result of pressure from missionaries and colonial authorities to reform the family. More significant factors were the combined forces of efforts by chiefs to reinforce patriarchal authority and broader patterns of economic and social change, which empowered individuals and limited the repercussions of extramarital sex. Yet even after Ugandan independence, when the young urban and peri-urban population began to limit their fertility in ways that partly reflected the further weakening of parental influence, reproductive cultures continued to be shaped by attitudes and ambitions that had been transmitted from the older generation. Cultures of reproduction altered generationally, but the causes of fertility decline were quite different from those that contemporaries articulated explicitly in authoritative and state discourses. Doyle concludes that reproductive change happened fastest where the interests of the young coincided with, or reflected, often unarticulated attitudes inherited from the old.

In Chapter 3 Michala Hvidt Breengaard examines the normative mothering ideals maintained by a group of professional women in contemporary urban China. It is immediately clear that these

women are rearing children in a unique reproductive context as a result of the explicitly articulated and state-enforced one-child policy. Breengaard examines how mothers responded to the state's message of reproducing less in order to nurture better, a principle that followed the population policy's ambition of reducing the 'quantity' but improving the 'quality' of children. This ideology was overtly articulated by the women who Breengaard interviewed, who were attracted by what they considered to be modern, professional approaches to child-rearing. Even though these women had also been born under the one-child policy in the early 1980s, they emphasized the value of their childcare practices by comparing them to what they understood to be normative in the previous generation, interpreting their mothers' practices as traditional and unimaginative. Yet by attending to inconsistencies in her interviewees' narratives, Breengaard also shows the sustained power of implicit intergenerational communication about motherhood. There is a gap between the rejection of their mothers' ideas and practices, and the ongoing practical centrality of their mothers in providing childcare. In fact, they remain strongly dependent and respectful towards their mothers. The younger generation's challenge to the older generation's expectations of motherhood was rarely articulated explicitly to their parents. Breengaard suggests that the mothers' narrative of intergenerational differences should be understood as the result of identity work around their aspirations to be 'modern', rather than as a reflection of a break in the intergenerational and often implicit transmission of mothering norms.

Moral Judgement

The second process of transmission that we examine is moral judgement. In contrast to implicit norms that are so widely assumed to be accepted within a society that they are rarely articulated, these moral judgements are the subject of explicit discussion between generations. Such judgements often result in the publication of prescriptive texts, the organization of programmes of inculcation and the establishment of formalized religious or ethical moral codes. All of these leave rich evidential traces that make the passing-on of explicit moral values to the young the most feasible aspect of parenthood to examine historically and comparatively (Hardyment 1983; Olsen 2014; Stearns 1993). Such moral and religious values undoubtedly influence the judgements that people make in their own lives. Yet chapters in this section argue that, in exchanging ideas about reproduction with their adult children, parents communicate

moral judgements in ways that are less worked-out than the concept of morality implies (Heintz 2009; Howell 1997; Zigon 2008). It is less the imposition of a moral code and more the expression of patchy and incoherent ideas about what is – and is not – appropriate parenthood. As Harris (2000) identifies in her study of the contradictory moral messages about motherhood within the Bolivian Pachamama earth mother cult, these ideas are drawn situationally from combinations of social and cultural precepts, rather than emerging from religion alone. Even the most apparently formalized and explicitly articulated assessments of morality are grounded in deeply personal, contextual and dynamic relationships.

In Chapter 4, Ekaterina Hertog examines illegitimate pregnancies in contemporary Japan and finds that parents' opinions profoundly affected their adult daughters' decisions about whether to keep or abort a pregnancy, as well as how they manage with a child after birth. In Japan, illegitimacy is very rare: single mothers are socially condemned, and abortion is widely approved of as an acceptable solution for non-marital pregnancies. Women deliberated over whether and how to tell their parents about their pregnancy, and grandparents found it difficult to accept the prospect of an illegitimate grandchild. They put immense and explicit pressure on their daughters to terminate a pregnancy or secure a shotgun marriage. As a result, contact sometimes ceased between generations. Although similarly fraught, the articulated vehemence of the older generation's moral condemnation contrasts with the rarely explicitly expressed normative feelings that were sensed by the younger generation of gay men and women in Pralat's study. Hertog shows, however, that most women reported that their parents eventually came to terms with the situation, accepting a grandchild out of wedlock as better than no grandchild at all, pitying their daughters for their straitened financial situations or deciding that children need a male or grandparent figure in their lives. Moral opprobrium against unwed mothers in general was replaced by more sympathetic and flexible judgements of their own daughters. In this way the chapter shows how children can alter their parents' moral conceptions, making changes in reproductive cultures go 'backward' as well as 'forward'.

In Chapter 5, Siân Pooley examines the neglected question of the significance of grandmothers and grandfathers in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century England. Pooley explores how moral authority in reproductive cultures was founded in often contradictory claims about generation, age, gender and resources, which

played out in ways that were distinctive in three contrasting provincial localities. Pooley uses fragmentary archival evidence to argue that the nascent elite, professional and national state condemnation of the child-rearing expertise of older generations had little bearing on how parenthood was understood by the vast majority of men and women across England. Grandfathers and grandmothers largely agreed with younger generations in upholding a notion of good childcare that was not established through child-focused knowledge, but through gendered adult articulations of selfless character and the active performance of attentive habits. Parenthood and grandparenthood were thus integral to men's and women's conceptions of their own – and others' – gendered moral worth. In spite of these shared moral interpretations of parenthood, Pooley shows how it was material insecurity – through the distribution of resources, the structure of labour markets, migration, illness and inequalities of gender and age – that required adult children to sustain relations with their parents, but that also simultaneously led to everyday personal judgements that fractured these relations. As a result of these morally-charged interactions between generations of parents, she argues that significant practices of care were transmitted directly between grandparents and grandchildren. This mitigated adult gendered conflicts over authority and had a lasting impact on how these grandchildren understood their own fatherhood or motherhood in the later twentieth century. This demonstrates how the active articulation of moral judgements about others' parenthood was most likely to occur when relationships were already tension-filled. These explicit articulations were, however, always entangled with more sustained processes of habituation and implicitly communicated norms.

Habituation

Our third process is habituation. This describes the process by which the repetition of everyday practices produces routines and habits of the body that come to be understood as natural and unquestionable. The concept of the *habitus* entered anthropology in Mauss's essay on techniques of the body, referring to the repertoire of culturally-patterned postures, gaits and gestures that are naturalized in a society in any particular historical context. Mauss took the word 'habitus' from Aristotle in order to capture better than the French *habitude* (habit or custom) the 'acquired ability' that he wished to conceptualize (1973 [1935]: 73). The concept of habituation was then popularized by Bourdieu (1977), who wrote of the *habitus* differently, as a

form of practical reason that is not expressed in embodied activities such as posture, gait and gestures so much as one that subsists in it. Through routinely carrying out activities involving particular bodily positions and movements, what Bourdieu calls a bodily 'hexis', a person develops their social, spatial, temporal and affective orientations. Following Bourdieu's later work (1984, 1986), the *habitus* has often been used in a way that implies a determinism and inescapability of a person's early constitution, as applied to child-rearing by Gottlieb and DeLoache:

part of what every one of us knows about being a parent comes from our own early experiences ... Seeing mothers carrying their babies around in homemade cloth slings all the time, a child forms the idea that carrying is a natural part of mothering. Seeing mothers transport their infants in a succession of baby seats, strollers and car seats, another child assumes the naturalness of manufactured baby carriers. When these children eventually become parents, they simply 'know' how these things are done and do not reflect upon that knowledge. (2000: 18–19)

Ingold, however, offers a critique of this reading of Bourdieu's *habitus*. Unlike in Gottlieb and DeLoache's passage, where the underlying model is of acquisition through a process of internalization (from its early observations the child 'forms the idea that ...') he sees Bourdieu as grasping how practical knowledge is actually 'generated within contexts of experience in the course of people's involvement with others in the practical business of life' (2000: 162). Rather than the transmission of a set of mental formulae from generation to generation, Ingold offers the concept of 'enskilment' to think about habituation as the 'regrowing' of skills in each generation through their practice and experience in a particular environment.

The chapters in this section of the volume speak, *inter alia*, to these different conceptualizations of habituation and explore their role in the transmission of reproductive cultures. In Chapter 6, Kaveri Qureshi uses Mauss's concept of the *habitus* to understand the ways in which first-time mothers acquire skills to allow them to care for a newborn baby. She examines the intergenerational transmission of care among a small group of Pakistani migrant women in London, focusing on the period of postpartum convalescence, during which women are normatively entitled to live-in help from experienced female kin. Although it is often said that women are trained into motherhood from childhood, Qureshi argues that the demanding postpartum period is a far more formative time, when women learn

very intensely how to mother a newborn infant. New mothers intently observed the ways in which experienced older women handled their babies, with a view to mastering the techniques of these practised hands. Qureshi analyses habituation as a self-willed means to acquire skills and knowledge that are not naturalized, but part of an array of techniques that they identify with different migrant and class cultures. When experienced women provided live-in help, the women's husbands participated little in this process of learning. Because of the strains and absences of migration, however, other new fathers improvised techniques of care, and were also recipients of intergenerational transmission, across and within genders.

In Chapter 7, Elizabeth Rahman brings together ethnographic descriptions of infant care practices among the Warakena, an Arawakan river-dwelling population who live in Northwest Amazonia, with analysis of what she calls their 'mythscape'. Xié origin myths narrate the creation of the contemporary riverscape as the doing of their culture hero, Napiruli, and point to places on the river's course where the first woman menstruated and gave birth. Today, the Warakena make sense of perinatal care practices in relation to these myths. Humoral practices of cooling and heating during pregnancy and birth, and distinctive methods of cooling babies by splash-washing them in cold water are recorded in the mythscape as ancient person-forming techniques that Napiruli observed when he first explored the river. They are also techniques through which babies may acquire bodily and mental strengths, including the river's characteristic coolness, poise and open flexibility. Drawing from Ingold (2000), Rahman sees these as environmental incorporations into the *modus operandi* of the developing babies. She analyses these techniques as 'sedimented' (Merleau-Ponty 1962 [1945]) in the historical diffusion of Arawakan culture in the region. But the oral histories she recorded suggest that the Warakena were not always river-dwellers and that their ways of life were not always hydrocentric and humorally related to river cycles. In contrast to the assumptions about previous generation's norms that Breengaard charts as essential to reproduction in contemporary China or that Doyle identifies in twentieth-century Buganda, patterns of generational change are silenced within Warakena culture. She argues that the mythscape is there precisely to efface this historical change.

Memory

This leads us on to our last set of chapters, which examine people reflecting on their earlier experiences of being parented, their

memories of their childhoods, and their constructions of their own parents. Like practices of raising a child, models of parenting are not relegated to unconscious habituation; memory is an explicit way of thinking. However, as the oral history literature has argued, memory is not a straightforward retrieval of past experience but a dialogue between a person's past, present and future self. Narrating memories of parenting is thus a process of self-fashioning (Bailey 2010; Perks and Thomson 1998; Portelli 1991). Anthropological treatments of memory have also critiqued the notion of remembering as a process of calling up information from the inner storage box of the mind, and seen it as a way of inhabiting the world. If habituation is not all about the body, in some interpretations, then memory is not only about the mind: 'memories are generated along the paths of movement that each person lays down in the course of his or her life' (Ingold 2000: 148), including the movements, bodily spaces and situations of being with one's parents as a child, or one's own children as an adult. The final chapters all build on these insights, but they approach men's and women's intergenerational narratives of parenthood in three distinct ways.

In Chapter 8, Angela Davis pursues this investigation of self-fashioning through narratives about intergenerational change in her analysis of oral history interviews conducted with British women who had their children in Oxfordshire between the late 1960s and 1980s. Davis finds more than one narrative of intergenerational change and continuity, with some women telling her that they are 'following in their mother's footsteps' and others who are 'trying to do something new'. Davis considers the transmission taking place at an apparently conscious level, as in the practical help and support that mothers offered their daughters in respect to infant care and child-rearing, but also at an unconscious level, through the models of motherhood they represented. This perhaps reflects the ways in which these older women later made sense of processes of habituation, such as those revealed by the ethnographic approaches adopted by Qureshi and Rahman. To understand these unconscious dynamics, Davis draws from Chodorow (1978), whose psychoanalytic writings generated widespread professional and popular interest in the reproduction of mothering at the same period that her interviewees were bearing children. The chapter demonstrates the continued importance of the mother-daughter relationship in the transmission of attitudes and practices. As they constructed their life stories, women were actively creating, consciously and subconsciously, the model of

motherhood they wished had been passed down to them and that they hoped to transmit.

In Chapter 9, Punita Chowbey and Sarah Salway explore interviews with men of South Asian origin in contemporary Britain, many of whom lacked vivid memories of their own fathers, although the memories that they articulated were attached to strong emotions. They remembered their fathers as distant disciplinarians, a model of fatherhood which they condemned and said that they sought to move away from in their own fathering practice. Nonetheless, they found themselves unable to do so, partly because of the emotional legacy of the practices that formed them in their early lives, and partly through the effects of class, labour markets, working hours and racism, which meant that men who expressed a desire to spend more time with their children could not. Chowbey and Salway draw from Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1986) to examine the reproduction of inequalities through habituation, and point to the significance of migration histories and social injustice in structurally passing on inheritances from which the fathers said they sought to escape.

Our final chapter, by Adom Philogene Heron, approaches very explicitly the simultaneity of generation. In his ethnography of grandfatherhood on the island of Dominica in the Lesser Antilles, Philogene Heron conceives of generation biographically. Caribbean men have long been regarded as peripheral to the family because of their purported absence as fathers and concomitant structures of matrilocality, an approach that Philogene Heron shows is unhelpful for understanding men's experiences of kinship. He examines men's narrations of their life histories in terms of their 'father wound' – having been brought up without fathers, whom they mythologized – and in terms of their youthful escapades and working lives, which took them away from their children. As they aged they felt a pull towards the family, resulting in rapprochements with their adult children, as some had indeed earlier experienced with their own fathers. In becoming 'papa', they were increasingly enveloped in the home. Philogene Heron describes the men's infectious enjoyment of their young grandchildren and sense that their grandchildren make them feel younger. Yet he offers us no linear stories of change, as the men's inward journey proves to be ambivalent, their mixed emotions and ambivalent memories reflected in their narrations of life history which allow them to revisit their virile earlier selves.

Conclusion

The processes uncovered and explored in our chapters offer a map for future discussions of transmission. As each case study demonstrates, in practice intergenerational communication never works through any one of these processes in isolation. Yet in beginning to focus on the crucial question of how parents and children influence each other, we argue that it is useful conceptually to place a spotlight on each. We hope that such insights are thought-provoking not only for scholars working on cultures of reproduction, but also for those working in other contexts, whether that be the transmission of religious faith, political commitments or social class. First and foremost, however, we have created a framework and conceptual vocabulary for approaching reproduction intergenerationally. Our findings show reproduction and parenthood to be inherently dynamic, yet change is unpredictable, multidirectional and always constrained by material circumstances. Efforts at passing-on are continually refracted and reoriented by men, women and children as they, selectively and critically, draw on the models provided by older kin and as they apply these to their own diverse children and unique circumstances. Our central message is all the more important in the face of the alluring simplicity of powerful and globally mobile discourses that present the act of breaking with the past as essential to the making of the modern world.

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Chapter 1

BETWEEN FUTURE FAMILIES
AND FAMILIES OF ORIGIN
TALKING ABOUT GAY PARENTHOOD
ACROSS GENERATIONS

Robert Pralat

My mum made a comment one day about, you know, being gay and having children. I went, 'Oh, you'll be a grandmother soon, don't worry!' And she's like, 'Oh, I didn't realize!' And that was fine. She's like, 'Oh, okay, whatever', you know ... It wasn't an issue, basically.

You know, she was neither supportive nor unsupportive, but just like, 'Alright, okay, it's fine.'
(Vicky, 28, in a civil partnership)

Academic debates about gay parenthood tend to concentrate on the parenting couple rather than the wider family (for brevity, I use the term 'gay parent/hood' as a synonym for 'nonheterosexual parent/hood', aiming to encompass gay men, lesbians as well as bisexual people in same-sex relationships). This is not surprising since it is the structure of the nuclear family unit that has made nonheterosexual reproduction seem historically unprecedented, and hence worthy of study in the first place. There has also been a premise that gay people are nothing like their (presumably heterosexual) parents, which has facilitated the interest in the peer-group relationships and commonalities. This horizontal understanding of generation, based

on identification with a cohort of contemporaries, has been popular, if not overstated, in the social study of specific groups – of which sexual minorities, with their prominent civil rights movements, are a good example.

Nevertheless, social scientists interested in lesbian mothers and gay fathers increasingly pay attention to extended kin networks, or what they call ‘families of origin’, showing a concern with the vertical dimension of generation in this context. This chapter seeks to extend this line of inquiry by considering the role of these families at the point when grandchildren are not yet on the horizon. In other words, rather than exploring the relationship between families of origin and lesbian-mother or gay-father families that have *already been created* – like most of the scholarship on gay parenthood – the chapter considers the relationship between families of origin and families that nonheterosexual people *might* create in the future. Drawing on in-depth interviews with young people who form same-sex relationships, the chapter aims to elucidate the ambiguities and intricacies encapsulated in the opening quotation from Vicky, a twenty-eight-year-old who hopes to become a parent with her civil partner.

Specifically, the chapter explores family relationships between heterosexual parents in middle age and nonheterosexual children in early adulthood. It asks whether lesbians, gay men and bisexual people, who are not currently parents themselves but may be at some point, talk about potential parenthood with their mothers and fathers – and, if so, how? What kinds of conversations are remembered and what emotions do these memories evoke? Who initiates the topic of grandchildren and in what contexts? Do experiences with families of origin influence nonheterosexual people’s visions of their future family life? And how do their current relationships with their parents affect their own family planning, whether it includes children or not? By examining a specific kind of intergenerational dialogue, the chapter reflects on how the concept of generation links to issues of sexuality, reproduction and kinship in contemporary Britain.

Revisiting Families of Origin

The meaning of the family has broadened in recent decades, comprising a range of family forms and practices. As a result, sociologists and anthropologists studying kinship in nonheterosexual contexts

often find it helpful to differentiate between the families that gay people come from, and the families that gay people create.

In her book *Families We Choose*, writing about lesbian and gay communities in the United States, Kath Weston observes: 'For years, and in an amazing variety of contexts, claiming a lesbian or gay identity has been portrayed as a rejection of "the family" and a departure from kinship' (Weston 1991: 22). Describing pre-1980s sexual minorities, she notes that 'people who equated their adoption of a lesbian or gay identity with a renunciation of family did so in the double-sided sense of fearing rejection by the families in which they had grown up, and not expecting to marry or have children as adults' (Weston 1991: 25). Emerging from this reading is the image of an insular generation of young people who, by becoming gay, are cut off from the past as well as from the future.

Ellen Lewin, one of the first scholars to study lesbian mothers, builds on Weston's observations. Writing around the same time, she finds that lesbian feminist popular literature, as well as scholarship documenting lesbian lives, rarely discusses lesbians' relationships with their own parents. For Lewin, 'the absence of discussion of these ties suggests that parents are unlikely to be supportive of one's choice to be a lesbian (conceived as a largely political choice), and that in any case their support is unimportant because they have little to offer to one whose life centres on being a lesbian' (Lewin 1993: 76). However, Lewin's own data show quite the opposite. In her study, lesbian mothers often regarded their own parents as their most reliable source of support. Surprised by this finding, replicated in her later work on gay fathers (Lewin 2009), Lewin points to continuities in kinship systems that are evident in nonheterosexual family life.

Since Weston's and Lewin's pioneering ethnographies, a number of more recent studies have addressed families of origin in the context of 'intentional' gay parenthood (e.g., Almack 2008; Goldberg 2012; Nordqvist and Smart 2014; Sullivan 2004). Unlike lesbian mothers in Lewin's study, most nonheterosexual people whose stories feature in this newer literature became parents when already in a same-sex relationship, or as 'openly' gay or lesbian (as opposed to having children from previous heterosexual unions). Despite the fact that the pursuit of parenthood in these cases is based on nonheterosexual reproduction from the outset – and hence families of origin could be expected to be even further in the background – findings from this research overwhelmingly echo Lewin's early discoveries. For example, in a British study of

lesbian mothers via donor insemination, Kathryn Almack notes that many women 'worked hard at commitments to families of origin' even when they had been disappointed with their parents' limited recognition of their own families (Almack 2008: 1,191). Abbie Goldberg, who studied gay adoptive fathers in the United States, also emphasizes the importance of familial bonds, concluding that most men in her study perceived families of origin as supportive and involved, especially after the men became parents (Goldberg 2012).

Reviewed chronologically, spanning a number of cohort-generations, studies of gay parenthood include fewer and fewer cases of separation from families of origin, although even in the most recent literature stories of exclusion are certainly still present. However, if we read these narratives carefully, it is evident that they are rarely black and white. Across the cohorts, it is unusual for parents to be consistently supportive or unsupportive of their gay offspring and of the families that the adult children create. Much more common are accounts of shifts in response from families of origin over time, sometimes taking unpredictable directions. It is this complexity of straight-parent/gay-child kinship ties that this chapter seeks to examine further.

Research exploring the 'lived experience' of lesbian-mother or gay-father families, as insightful as it is, gives only a partial picture of what it means to be a parent for nonheterosexual people and how one's parental status affects relationships with the wider family. In the existing literature, stories about one's journey to parenthood are usually told from the perspective of those who had reached the end of this journey – the narrators are already parents. Moreover, the very strong parenting desires of these couples and individuals, while enabling them to be among the first 'openly gay' parents in their local settings, are likely to introduce a specific dynamic into the relationships with families of origin.

At a stage when societies are still 'getting used to' the idea of gay parenthood as it becomes increasingly visible in the public domain, it is illuminating to consider how the majority of gay, lesbian and bisexual people who are not parents approach the topic, and what role families of origin play in these cases. It is especially important to hear the voices of young people who, while being 'of reproductive age', are likely to face not only dilemmas regarding whether their future families should and could include children but also challenges regarding communicating these dilemmas to others, especially their own parents.

The Future Intimacies Study

Data presented in this chapter come from a doctoral research project, *Future Intimacies*, which explored attitudes towards parenthood among a young generation of nonheterosexual people in Great Britain. Specifically, the study aimed to examine what gay men, lesbians and bisexual people, who are in their twenties or early thirties and have no children, think about becoming parents in the future. The project asked what prospective parenthood, or remaining childfree/childless, meant to these young nonheterosexuals, paying attention also to how they talked about these issues with their significant others and loved ones, including partners, friends and their own parents. In order to prompt people to generate narratives about something they might not yet have begun to put into words, in-depth semi-structured interviews were chosen as a method of data collection.

The generation of nonheterosexual people whose perspectives the project explored occupies a specific social and cultural space, geographically as well as historically. The majority of men and women who took part in this study were born in the 1980s and reached adulthood in the 2000s. To a large extent, this cohort experienced their late childhood and adolescence at a time when public debates about same-sex couples' parenting rights reached their climax and there was a noticeable shift in social attitudes towards 'nontraditional family forms' (cf. Hayes 1997; Duncan and Phillips 2008). In contrast to older generations of gay parents examined in existing literature, the young people in this study entered their adulthood when the legal possibilities for having children were either already in place or soon to be introduced.

In Britain, different pathways to parenthood opened up to lesbians, gay men and other nonheterosexuals in an exceptionally short period of time. Soon after homosexuality ceased to be legally defined as a 'pretended family relationship' (under Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, overturned in 2001), same-sex couples were allowed to jointly adopt (the Children and Adoption Act 2002), the rights of nonbiological parents were protected through a new form of relationship recognition (the Civil Partnership Act 2004) and it became generally easier to pursue parenthood through assisted conception (for example, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 replaced the reference to a consideration of 'the need for a father' with one of 'the need for supporting parenting', facilitating access to fertility treatment for lesbian couples). These

changes in law were accompanied by a growing presence of lesbian and gay parenting in the media, a more explicit acknowledgement of lesbian-mother and gay-father families by subsequent governments, and an increasing availability of information for prospective nonheterosexual parents.

This chapter draws on interviews conducted in England and Wales in 2012 and 2013 with people who self-identified as non-heterosexual. Twelve men and nine women were interviewed. The interviewees were between twenty-three and thirty-three years old, with a mean age of twenty-seven. Eighteen identified as lesbian or gay and three as bisexual. Thirteen were in a same-sex relationship (including two in a civil partnership), one was in a different-sex relationship, and seven were single.

There were three couples among the interviewees where I spoke with both partners, with one couple interviewed together. The interviews, all audio-recorded, lasted between one and three hours. Most interviewees were recruited via a dedicated study website. Information about the website was disseminated through multiple channels, including LGBT organizations and staff networks, Facebook advertising and personal contacts.

Most of the interviewees resided in urban areas, primarily cities, with only two living in rural locations. Three were from black and ethnic minority backgrounds; the rest identified as white (all but two were British). Five came from working-class families and sixteen had middle- or mixed-class backgrounds.

The interviewees had diverse family histories. Ten had parents who were still married to each other and living together, three had experienced the death of a parent, and eight had parents who were divorced or separated. The majority had siblings or half-siblings; five were only children for at least one of their parents.

Only two interviewees were not 'out' to one or both of their parents. Most described good relationships with their families and said that their sexual orientation was generally accepted. However, many had encountered at least some disapproval in the past.

The above description situates this analysis within a particular context of family relationships. Kath Weston wrote that: 'The longer I pursued my research, the more I became convinced that gay families could not be understood apart from the families in which lesbians and gay men had grown up' (1991: 3). A quarter of a century later, and writing from a different sociocultural location, this is very much the impression I have when thinking about the stories shared by the men and women with whom I spoke – even though the role

that families of origin play in these cases is not quite the same as that described by Weston.

In what follows, I discuss the four themes that were most prominent in my data, bringing them together in the conclusion.

When Not Much Is Said: The Role of Assumptions

The extent to which families of origin, including parents, featured in the interview narratives varied substantially. Not everyone had talked with their parents about their own 'family planning' or could recall doing so. For those who could, the topic had rarely come up. Some interviewees had a strong sense of knowing whether their parents expected them to have children in the future and what reaction they could anticipate should it happen. Others admitted that they had 'absolutely no idea' what their parents thought and how they would react if their son or daughter decided to pursue parenthood with his or her same-sex partner (or in any same-sex relationship if the person was single).

When parents had not articulated their stance on the issue, assumptions played an important role in the interview – they helped interviewees infer their parents' views. Sometimes assumptions had a dual presence in that they came from two directions. A common pattern was that the interviewee was assuming what his or her parents assumed about their son or daughter. As a result, when asked about their parents' views, interviewees often ended up talking about their parents' (assumed) assumptions, regularly using this very word. This made their reflection speculative but it also revealed the scarcity of direct communication about the topic between the two generations.

In some cases, parental opinions were inferred from casual comments made about the adult child's interactions with babies and toddlers or about his or her personality:

I'm sure [my mum] said something before, I can't remember ... I think they know it's possible ... And then there's these things like, 'Oh, you're really good to [your nieces]!' So, yeah, I think they would probably assume [that I'll have children] in that regard. (Gavin, 25, in a relationship)

I think that they know my character, so I think that they know I'll have kids at some point. They know my character, they know I love

kids. They know I'll be a good parent. They *definitely* know that ... It's just ... they're just thinking 'when'. (Sophia, 28, single)

Interestingly, three interviewees claimed to be more maternal or paternal than their heterosexual siblings, an observation that their family members apparently shared:

We always laugh because when my cousin tried to pass her baby over to [my brother], he didn't know how to hold it ... Whereas I was kind of like I knew how to straight away. And my mum always jokes, 'Oh, you'll give me grandchildren before he will'. (Patrick, 28, single)

For gay men like Patrick, more so than for women in this study, humorous situations like the one described above seemed to provide rare occasions when the topic of parenthood was indirectly brought to the fore. While on the surface perhaps trivial or insignificant, such anecdotes give meaningful insights into how, in contemporary Britain, the relationship between parenthood, sexuality and gender becomes even more complex when considered from an intergenerational perspective. Patrick's mother's comment is bittersweet. On the one hand, it appears to recognize the 'procreative potential' of a son whose gay identity is known and accepted. On the other hand, the 'prediction' that Patrick will have children before his brother does not seem to be treated seriously by either Patrick or his mother – after all, it is a joke. There is a sign of welcoming or even encouragement from the mother for Patrick to become a parent in the future, yet his 'gift of grandchildren' remains elusive.

When some interviewees spoke about their parents' views, their primary reference point was knowledge of how their parents' understood what a family is:

I don't know how my mum and dad would react if I had a child, to be honest with you ... 'Cause again, I think my dad especially, he's so ... traditional, in a way. And I think he would sort of be ... a man and a wife and all that, and a dog and a cat ... I think that's the sort of way of thinking his mind would work. (Thom, 23, single)

Even when parents were described as 'socially liberal', their ability to imagine their child pursuing parenthood in a same-sex relationship was questioned, as in the case of bisexual Gemma:

My mother doesn't *really* seem to consider girls an option on the grandkids front. Well, I don't think she doesn't, but I think ... her

default assumption would be that life would be easier, let alone what's there biologically, to be with a guy ... Yeah, there is the base assumption that that's the easy one and that's the normal one. (Gemma, 27, single)

At times, interviewees had a more informed sense of their parents' negative attitudes, but it was still unclear to them what exactly underlay parental prejudice:

My mum really wasn't that supportive of the idea [that my partner and I should have children]. She didn't *really* give a good explanation ... I think I don't want to know why she doesn't [agree with it], because ... yeah, I think that could be a little bit painful ... And probably for the same reason she doesn't want to [tell me]. (Sally, 31, in a relationship)

Sally's case demonstrates that, in situations where parents' lack of support has been communicated, it can be arduous, for both sides, to even begin speculating about what the other thinks, let alone move beyond assumptions. Sally implies that being aware of her mother's negative attitude is less painful than trying to understand the motives for the disapproval. Although the mother, according to Sally, 'really gets along' with the daughter's same-sex partner (and, indeed, encourages the couple to get married), parenthood remains a taboo subject, for reasons that are unknown.

Maureen Sullivan, who studied lesbian-mother donor-conception families in the San Francisco Bay Area, observes that 'because the categories of acceptance and rejection are so fluid, not only were [lesbian] mothers' expectations and reactions from blood kin often discrepant, but relatives themselves, mostly parents, moved from positions of shock and concern to becoming the most doting of grandparents' (Sullivan 2004: 128). Other studies also reveal that parents of the older generation, more often than not, seem to let go of their negative views once a child is born or adopted, sometimes astonishing the new parents with the unanticipated changes in approach (e.g., Almack 2008; Goldberg 2012). Yet cases like Sally's show that the awareness of parents' negative attitudes can be a barrier for people to act on their initial parenting instincts. Although likely to be one of a number of factors, this awareness can have a substantial effect on young people's family planning. As Sally pointed out later in our interview:

In all honesty, I did wonder, at some point I really did wonder whether that was probably the thing making me so indecisive about [whether

or not to have children] ... It's your mum, you know, you can't help it. Your mum, you know, *can* have a very strong influence on what you think, what you feel. So I don't really know ... how I feel about that.

Coming Out, Coming Around and Coming to Terms

My parents must have dismissed children for me. *The second* I said I was gay they must've dismissed that thought. (Scott, 29, in a relationship)

The impossibility of nonheterosexual parenthood was the most common assumption that parents seemed to have held. Although sometimes not articulated, as in Scott's case, at other times the assumption was openly expressed – often when the parents found out about their child's sexual orientation. As we saw in the previous section, it can be difficult to recall conversations that reveal parents' views about the prospect of their son or daughter having children with a same-sex partner. In contrast, it was very easy for men and women in this study to remember how they came out to their families (if they had done so), which usually happened in their late teens. Here, the topic of parenthood came up too, but in a very different way, as the two quotes below demonstrate:

I remember, when I came out to my mother, the *very* first thing that she said was, 'But you so badly want to be a mother.' As if, 'This is going to impede upon your ability to become a mother.' And I remember feeling at the time that she was being *so stupid*, that of course I could still be a mother, that there were lots of other options available to me, whether it be through adoption or IVF or whatever ... I'm sure I told her off quite immediately. (Katie, 31, in a civil partnership)

With mum, we [talked about parenthood] pretty soon after I came out. She was *really* angry and she was trying to sort of get me to apologize for being gay. And she was chipping and chipping away – I mean, I remember this in the kitchen – chipping away at me, saying that I depressed dad and everything and all of this. And she was like, 'Oh god, and what about grandchildren?! And what about marriage?! And us?!' I just snapped at that point. I said, 'I am *not* apologizing for being gay and you should *not* make me. This is who I am!' And I said, 'You are *still* going to get grandchildren – may not be in the way you envisage – but you are *still* going to get grandchildren and you

will love them just the same.’ And she kind of went, ‘Oh.’ She ... respected being put in her place, I think. (Becky, 25, in a relationship)

Both Katie and Becky gave vivid accounts of coming out to their mothers, who clearly saw parenthood as an exclusively heterosexual domain. For the mothers, judging by their reactions, being a lesbian was incompatible with having children. This belief echoes findings of many studies about gay parenthood and families of origin (e.g., Nordqvist and Smart 2014). However, what is less common in stories recounted in previous studies is the unapologetic attitude demonstrated by Katie and Becky during their coming out. Both women had strong desires to become parents in the future before they knew they were gay. At the time of telling their mothers about their sexuality, they seemed sufficiently convinced in themselves that being a lesbian did not preclude motherhood. Their handling of their mothers’ reactions, as they describe it, is firm and immediate. In a way, the young women ‘took over’ the emotional rollercoaster of coming out by ensuring that their mothers were not left under the illusion that parenthood was not an option for their lesbian daughters.

Coming out stories, especially when they involve different generations, are often highly gendered. It is thus not surprising that men and women gave largely different accounts of how their parents had reacted to the news that they were gay or bisexual. Based on these retrospective reports, it seems that it was rare for men to be ‘confronted’ about grandchildren upon the disclosure of their sexuality. Nevertheless, the issue of parenthood was often important for them to consider before coming out:

I’m an only child, which I think probably made coming out a little bit more difficult, ‘cause one of my considerations when I came out was that my parents probably aren’t gonna have any grandchildren. And I think when I came out that was something that probably concerned my mum as well ... But I think she sort of resigned [herself] to the fact that she’s not gonna have any grandchildren, and if she sort of ever mentions it, I’d sort of say, ‘You know, we never know what’s gonna happen!’ (Ollie, 25, in a relationship)

Ollie’s parenting desire may not be as strong as Katie’s or Becky’s, but his gender – the fact that he is a gay man rather than a gay woman – is also likely to contribute to the evaluation of his chances for future parenthood. The inability to give birth to a child makes it, generally speaking, more complicated for men to become a parent

in a same-sex relationship. This may also make Ollie less convinced than Katie or Becky that he will ever have children. Although he gives his mother a tentative hope of grandchildren, he believes that she has 'resigned' herself to a future without them.

There are two common narratives in literature exploring gay people's relationships with their own parents (where the former recollect their past experiences with families of origin). One revolves around the emotionally negative *coming out* – when parents find out that their son or daughter is gay, which more often than not (as we have also seen above) invokes feelings of sadness, anger or fear (e.g., Valentine, Skelton and Butler 2003; Weston 1991). Another narrative (and one that is relatively recent) presents a positive *coming around* – when parents learn about their gay offspring's parenting intentions, or when an 'unexpected' grandchild joins the family, and the overriding feelings are ones of delight and excitement (e.g., Goldberg 2012; Sullivan 2004). A frequent narrative in this study concerned an ambivalent *coming to terms* – with the fact that there will probably be no grandchildren (or anything that grandchildren may signify). This phrase was used by several interviewees, especially men, when they recalled how their parents had gradually come to accept what they perceived to be the reality of their son or daughter being gay.

Ollie, quoted above, like several other interviewees, thinks that his mother has come to terms with the fact that she will not be a grandparent. The phrase 'coming to terms' in this context has both positive and negative connotations. On the one hand, it demonstrates an increased acceptance of an adult child's sexual orientation and an acknowledgement that being gay is not 'just a phase'. It can also imply that the parent has developed an appreciation that not having grandchildren is 'not the end of the world', as another interviewee put it. However, the phrase also denotes giving up and resigning oneself to an undesirable outcome, which here means losing hope of ever having a grandchild. I suggest that, in today's British culture, coming to terms with future 'childlessness' of gay offspring, loaded with ambivalence as it is, constitutes another crucial milestone in the life course of many family relationships between gay children (some of whom *will* end up having children themselves) and their parents. Coming to terms, like coming out and coming around – although even more of a *process* than an *event* (and hence, perhaps, less of a conventional 'story to tell') – appears to be a reoccurring narrative whose importance should not be overlooked. The significance of this narrative is most evident in

stories of young people who, like Ollie, are only children. Not having siblings adds a new dimension to how nonheterosexual men and women talk about parenthood with their parents, as we shall see next.

Talking Biology and Genes: Family Lines, Family Names, Family Trees

Being an only child often carried an additional awareness of the expectation to become a parent in the future. Among the men and women who had no siblings, it was common to express feelings of at least some unease about the relatively small likelihood of having children due to same-sex couples' inability to procreate 'conventionally'. A usual scenario, according to interviewees' accounts (and in line with the 'coming to terms' logic), was for the parent to experience an initial disappointment upon finding out about their son's or daughter's sexual orientation, which then gradually lessened. However, the topic of grandchildren did not always arise at the time of coming out. Nathan, for example, became more conscious of the issue some time after he told his parents that he was gay:

My mum was very accepting of [me being gay] initially, but in further conversations it was, it came to light that she ... the thing that she missed most about it was the chance of having, um, direct grandchildren. And she certainly, in discussions I've had with her, she's very ... biological grandchildren is the thing. As much as she would respect it if I adopted or fostered or got into a relationship with someone who already had kids, it's the lack of the biological link that she finds hardest to deal with. (Nathan, 26, single)

Nathan's account makes it explicit that often it is not just *any* parenthood that is at stake when it comes to the young people's future families, but more specifically having children 'of one's own'. The prospect of having no 'direct grandchildren', and therefore no 'biological link' to subsequent generations, is something that Nathan's mother seems to struggle with, even though – as he points out later in the interview – it does not 'weigh on her mind' too much.

Concerns about signifiers of family continuity – including lines, names and trees – were frequently referred to in the interviews. In these reflections about lineage (and its potential breakage), the issue of sexuality also played a part:

As I've got older, I kind of feel like I want to, um ... It sounds silly in a way, but [I feel like] I don't want to – this is *one* of the reasons anyway – I don't want to stop our family tree, you know. I don't want it to stop at me because, you know, because I'm gay ... Because if I don't have kids, then, you know, I'm probably stopping kind of like our family name going. (Patrick, 28, single)

Patrick attributes a potential failure to continue his family tree to his being gay. Although he does have an older heterosexual brother, he feels partly responsible for keeping his 'family name going' – perhaps because his brother is not particularly paternal, as we have seen previously, and thus not a good bet to have children either. Although Patrick feels somewhat embarrassed to consider becoming a parent for this reason ('it sounds silly'), the awareness of his family tree nevertheless, as he says later, is the 'trigger' that makes him think about parenthood in the first place.

Sometimes having siblings brought a relief in that interviewees did not feel solely responsible for ensuring that their families had further generations – and, by extension, they did not feel 'guilty' about their sexual orientation:

I think sometimes people can get pressured to sort of have children because they wanna continue the family name or want their parents to have grandchildren. So in a way I feel quite, I don't feel bad about being gay in a way. Well, I've got the other two who can have children, so mum and dad will be grandparents one day. (Thom, 23, single)

Having biological children, however, was not necessarily seen as a way of 'making up' for being in a same-sex relationship or minimizing the 'threat' that being gay posed to the wider family. In fact, nonheterosexual reproduction could also be regarded as preferable precisely because of its potential to 'disrupt' the family tree.

In the earlier quotation from our interview, Gemma observes that her mother does not expect her to become a parent in a same-sex relationship. Since Gemma is bisexual, having children with a man appears to be an 'easier option' and thus the 'default assumption'. In contrast, for Gemma, who is currently single, it is more likely, if she is ever going to be a parent in the future, that it will be with a woman. The main reason for this is bad experiences from her previous relationships with men, and relatively good experiences of dating women. But there is another issue that Gemma bears in mind. Being with a woman gives a more obvious opportunity for her *not*

to be biogenetically related to her child. Gemma's brother has a form of autism that severely affects his social interaction with people – symptoms that seem to run through the rest of the family. Although hesitantly, Gemma admits that, for this reason, she would rather not continue the family line:

I get on very badly with my brother, so as shitty and as ableist as it sounds, I'm *terrified* of having a kid with my brother's set of special needs. And the possibility that I could have a kid without my own DNA ... actually made me a lot less scared of having children ... Beyond being freed from the gender roles, there is some element of, yeah ... being freed from my own ... genetics, [if I have a child] with a girl, um. Which appeals a lot to me. I *don't* think my mother wants to hear that because she doesn't really want to hear her own son described as something that I would not want to have. (Gemma, 27, single)

Gemma feels bad about approaching the prospect of parenthood in this way, noting that she would not share her view on this issue with her mother. In Gemma's case, the topic of biology and genes is particularly sensitive, but there is a similarity between her story and the accounts of the gay men quoted earlier. With the exception of Nathan who has actually talked with his mother about biological parenthood, the notions of family lines, family names and family trees are rarely discussed between generations – even though they often appear to occupy young people's minds. These concepts seem especially difficult to talk about 'prospectively', when men and women are in the early stages of family planning, and when whether they will have children – and, if so, how – often remains unknown, not only to their parents but also to themselves.

Of course, heterosexual people may face very similar dilemmas, especially if they do not desire or intend to parent, if they face infertility issues, or like Gemma, if they are aware that having biological children comes with an unknown genetic baggage. In these cases, talking with one's parents about a potential disruption of the family tree is unlikely to be any easier. Conversations may be filtered by similar 'biological silences', where little is said and a lot assumed about each other's attitudes towards biogenetic reproduction. Nevertheless, there seems to be a particular sense of 'awkwardness' when these conversations happen between heterosexual parents and nonheterosexual children. This becomes clearer when we consider the biggest elephant in the room – the method of becoming a biological gay parent.

Not Going into Detail: Outcome vs. Process

In their book *Relative Strangers*, Petra Nordqvist and Carol Smart report their findings from a comparative study about the experiences of heterosexual and lesbian couples who have had children through donor conception. They observe that, in many ways, ‘the process of going for donor conception in lesbian-based families was the complete anti-thesis of what it meant for heterosexual-based families’ (Nordqvist and Smart 2014: 53–54). While for straight couples the decision to use donor gametes was ‘shrouded in the despair of infertility’, for lesbian couples it was ‘simply a positive step on the road to having children’ (2014: 54). The authors note that the lesbian mothers’ parents often knew little about the procedures involved. This was partly because their daughters, unlike heterosexual women (who often turned to donor conception after years of unsuccessful IVF treatment), usually did not require the same level of support. However, lesbian couples also ‘did not always explain the process anyway, probably because with home conceptions it could appear to breach cultural rules of privacy too much’ (2014: 54–55).

Although speculative about the reasons why lesbians in their study were unwilling to tell their parents how (exactly) they were becoming parents themselves, Nordqvist and Smart draw attention to an important element of nonheterosexual reproduction – the unfamiliarity and cultural novelty of the *process* through which gay people have babies (even if some of the methods used are not really ‘new’). While most interviewees in this study were not ‘advanced’ enough in their family planning to seriously ponder these details themselves, some had a clear vision of how they wanted to become parents. In these cases, conversations with families of origin had also moved beyond the ‘whether or not’ question. However, talking about *how* the young people were going to add children to their own families was certainly no more straightforward.

Becky, who (as we saw earlier) reassured her mother while coming out that she *was* going to ‘get grandchildren’, was one of the women intending to pursue parenthood via donor insemination. In the following quote, she reflects on the extent to which her mother – who has become very supportive of her daughter’s plans – is aware of the process that Becky and her partner will be going through in order to start a family.

Becky: Mum’s quite ... difficult in that way. Like she can have deep conversations about some things but she kind of shuts down on other

things, and I still think this to her is like [a bit too much]. [laughs] She doesn't want to get into the nitty-hows, so she doesn't say anything. So she would kind of like go, 'Mhm', and she'd listen to what I have to say. She'd contribute a little bit and sort of say, 'Well, I'm sure you'll make great parents', and stuff. And she will have these burning questions – I'm sure she does – but she doesn't wanna know, 'cause I'm her daughter and stuff, and it's all a little bit, 'Uh ...'

Robert: Do you think she doesn't feel confident enough to ask these questions?

Becky: I don't think she would if I was with a guy, to be fair. I think the fact is, like there's the 'how' surrounding being gay as opposed to not – like it's pretty obvious how you do it when you're straight. [laughs] But, um, I think it's just because it's a kind, it's a sex thing, and it's, um, it would need a lot of kind of biological explanation, which I don't think she's prepared to envisage. It's like, 'I don't really want to think about them'. [laughs] Like she doesn't want to think about how my children are coming to being. [laughs] 'But we'll be perfectly happy and supportive when they do.' [laughs]

As she recounts talking with her mother about the couple's plans to have children, Becky keeps on giggling. Trying to make sense of why her mother does not want her to go into detail about how her children 'are coming to being', she suggests that 'it's a sex thing' – even though, clearly, neither she nor her partner will become pregnant through having sex. Becky makes a reference to heterosexual intercourse, but it is unclear whether this analogy serves to emphasize a similarity or difference. On the one hand, it seems that the 'rules of privacy', which Nordqvist and Smart mention, apply to intergenerational contact regardless of sexual orientation ('I don't think she would [ask] if I was with a guy'). On the other hand, though, Becky is sure that her mother has 'burning questions', because while 'it's pretty obvious how you do it when you're straight', it is not so apparent when you are gay.

Sullivan suggests that parents of lesbian daughters contemplating and having children through donor insemination have little, if any, conceptual preparation for the women's pursuit of parenthood. She writes: 'Parents' and other blood relatives' comprehension of the *idea* of gay kinship lagged behind the actual families that were being created. ... [Children] were not only born "out of wedlock" but born outside any context that meaningfully connoted family or kinship' (2004: 140). Becky's mother, like many other parents who are indirectly quoted in this chapter, seems to lack the kind of conceptual

understanding that Sullivan refers to, even though she is supportive of her daughter's parenting intentions. However, rather than trying to improve her 'comprehension of gay kinship', she prefers to focus on the outcome of Becky's family planning (future grandchildren), reassuring her daughter at the same time that she will be a 'great parent'. Thus, the mother gives Becky a vote of confidence to do what she sees as appropriate in her circumstances, while remaining oblivious about the process.

Although one can only speculate, Becky's mother may also avoid asking questions not because it is embarrassing to talk about how one becomes a gay parent, but because doing so could open a 'can of worms'. The decision to have a child through donor insemination, or other forms of assisted conception, brings up a whole new set of issues where prospective parents themselves are likely to have different opinions. Involving families of origin in what is already a complicated and intensive decision-making process may not be the best idea. This seems to be a perspective taken by Scott who, along with his partner, is hoping to have biological children via surrogacy:

Scott: I wouldn't involve – no, I said that badly – obviously they would be involved when they, when the baby is born and everything, but I wouldn't involve them when I was doing it, when we were doing it and organizing it. It's mine and [my partner's] decision. Like mum and dad, they made their decision when they wanted their first child, no one interfere–, you know, they didn't have to go to their mummy and ask her how to do, you know. It's nothing to do with their parents, it was their decision. This is *our* decision, and we'll do it when we want to do it and how we feel right, and they'll have to like it or lump it. And obviously as soon as the kid's born, it'll be lovey-dovey and, you know, very nice.

Robert: You know that, you're quite sure?

Scott: I'm very sure of that. Yeah, *very* sure of that.

Scott uses a different kind of 'heterosexual analogy': if his parents did not consult their parents with their reproductive choices, then neither should he and his partner. He downplays the fact that the way in which he plans to become a parent has no precedence in his family, emphasizing instead what the different generations have in common – they all negotiate a boundary of privacy between the nuclear family and the extended kin.

As we can see from the two cases, the limits on parental knowledge about how their gay offspring plan to start their own families can be imposed by either side: the parents (Becky's mother) or

the adult children (Scott). Both Becky and Scott seem comfortable about their parents' potential lack of involvement in the process of their pursuit to parenthood. But both are also certain that whichever route they take, and whatever decisions they make in the meantime, their parents will eventually accept their families and recognize their children as grandkids.

Conclusion

As the interview material presented in this chapter shows, the extent to which young nonheterosexuals expect parental support in the case of their own pursuit of parenthood varies widely and relies on different kinds of experiences with families of origin. While Becky and Scott, quoted in the last section, felt reassured that their becoming parents would not create conflicts in the extended family, others had reasons to believe that it could. Similarly, the prospect of not becoming a parent elicited various predictions as to how the lack of grandchildren would affect familial relationships. More often than not, ideas about the relative significance that interviewees' parents attached to their son's or daughter's future families were obscured by limited communication between the two generations. If the form of the 'gay family' (with a same-sex couple at its heart) was deemed unproblematic for one's parents, the way in which this family would form (and whether/how biology would be mobilized in the process) tended to produce an element of tension or discomfort.

The findings of this study present a picture of kinship that moves even further away from the dichotomous understanding of the relationship between homosexuality and family, as outlined by Weston in the chapter's introduction. The young generation of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people are certainly not 'exiles from kinship' in either sense – the ties with their families of origin are important to them and so are the families they hope to create in the future. Even if their visions of family life seem more flexible than those of their parents, and adaptable to various possible scenarios, the young people do not downplay the importance of family continuity – regardless of how likely it is that they see themselves as potential agents of its 'disruption'. This is consistent with recent studies of nonheterosexual parenthood and with those exploring same-sex relationships more broadly (e.g., Heaphy, Smart and Einarsdottir 2013).

This chapter develops our understanding of lesbian motherhood and gay fatherhood by paying close attention to the earliest stages of family planning – when it is not children but rather ideas about family life that are being conceived. These early ‘conceptions’, although sometimes recounted in research about lesbian mothers and gay fathers, are often overshadowed in the literature by current experiences of nonheterosexual people as parents. In many cases, involuntarily, participants in those studies may ‘adjust’ perceptions and interpretations of their position *vis-à-vis* families of origin over time in order to make their ‘parenting narratives’ more coherent. Stories of men and women presented in this study are by no means free from the influence of retrospection (as can be seen most clearly in the relative coherence of the coming-out narratives), but they nonetheless add a new dimension to what we know about parent-child relationships when the parent is heterosexual and the adult child is not. Methodologically, then, this chapter moves beyond the more conventional uses of semi-structured interviews to recollect the past or document the present by showing how the future, notwithstanding predictable difficulties, can be narrated too.

Due to the study’s aim to address, and contribute to, the literature on lesbian mothers and gay fathers, perspectives of young people with strong and moderate parenting desires were given more attention than those of men and women who did not want to become parents. Notably, though, in the interviews with the latter, families of origin featured much less prominently. Nonheterosexual men and women who were not interested in parenthood, and who saw themselves as unlikely to ever consider it in the future, seemed generally less reflective or concerned about their parents’ attitudes. However, due to a small number of relevant cases, it is difficult to say whether this relative lack of reflection was specific to this subgroup. Similarly, because of the small study sample and its limited diversity, making inferences about the role of ethnicity and class in these intergenerational relationships is equally problematic, although the effects of gender and relationship status seem more prominent.

Captured in the thematic sections of this chapter are four main findings. First, assumptions are as important as spoken words in informing the knowledge of parental attitudes. Second, children’s coming out is often followed by parents’ coming to terms with a future without grandchildren (unless children actively dispel this possibility). Third, issues of lineage and generativity are central to thinking about family (even if there is little talking about it). And fourth, culturally intelligible elements of parenthood (i.e., future

children) are brought into discourse in order to avoid talking about what is more complex, namely *how* the nonheterosexual son or daughter plans to become a parent. The overarching theme of the difficulty in communicating about reproduction, with its question marks about the future, points us in directions of further empirical enquiries. For instance, to what extent does it matter that parents and adult children talk about the latter's family planning? Does maintaining a positive dialogue between the two generations require a 'comprehension in gay kinship', to use Sullivan's words? And is the relative lack of 'interference' from parents into young nonheterosexuals' parenting intentions mutually beneficial or potentially alienating?

In the quotation that opened this chapter, Vicky seems untroubled by the rather minimal dialogue she has with her mother. Generally, men and women interviewed for this study did not complain about the low frequency, the short duration or the apparent awkwardness of the conversations they had had with their parents. As we have seen, such conversations are not easy and often neither the parent nor the adult child is particularly willing to initiate the topic of future families. This is not surprising and not necessarily a problem in itself. Nevertheless, considering that parental attitudes were important for many interviewees, how the two generations communicate about reproductive decision making seems to matter. It appears that once the topic comes up, what is and what is not said can have substantial effects. How parental feelings are expressed (or not) seems likely to influence the ways in which the adult child approaches the topic of parenthood. At times, ambiguity in the intergenerational dialogue may facilitate confusion and uncertainty about one's own feelings. In contrast, support and acceptance, even if not openly expressed, create a more comfortable environment for young nonheterosexuals to consider whether parenthood is something they wish to pursue.

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Chapter 2

THE POLITICS OF FERTILITY AND GENERATION IN BUGANDA, EAST AFRICA, 1860–1980

Shane Doyle

African societies have commonly been characterized as pro-natalist. Historians such as John Iliffe (2007: 1, 30–31, 69, 89–96, 125) have noted that fertility figured prominently in pre-colonial African ideologies, social organization, religion and art. The anthropologist Jack Goody (1976) has argued that differing attitudes towards fertility underpinned the division of the premodern world into two basic types of social systems, the African and the Eurasian. Africa, Goody claimed, was not historically characterized by settled agriculture, the production of large surpluses, significant social differentiation, or monotheism, and so African social life was not focused on the retention of property within the family by ensuring stable marriages between spouses of similar social class. Goody argues that Eurasian marital stability and inheritance systems relied on the restriction of pre- and extramarital sexual activity, especially by females, with legal and social controls being bolstered by the moral codes of monotheistic religion. Building on Goody's thesis, Caldwell, Caldwell and Quiggin hypothesized that instead African family life was organized around the expansion of the lineage, which 'places greater importance on intergenerational links than on conjugal ones and that gives great respect and power

to the old' (1989: 188). Given precolonial Africa's exceptionally high levels of mortality, cultural norms logically centred on maximizing fertility, thus accepting sex before and outside marriage, as well as promoting polygamy.

This depiction of precolonial Africa conveys an image of a continent whose attitudes and experiences were relatively homogeneous, and where reproduction was associated with maximization, tolerance, consensus and equity. But as Iliffe (2007: 69–70, 91, 96, 125) notes, fertility was so prominent in African culture because it was so fraught. In much of Africa barren women were the most despised of all social groups, men without children were condemned to permanent juvenility, and the childless were thought particularly prone to witchcraft. In many societies, meanwhile, women endeavoured to limit their fertility through prolonged postpartum sexual abstinence or breastfeeding in order to protect their own health and that of their existing offspring. Where disease burdens were heavy and nutrition poor, typically women's goal was to maximize the number of surviving children they might produce over their lifetime, rather than to achieve the shortest possible birth intervals. Finally, the acquisition of multiple wives was an intensely competitive process, driven by individual ambition or a desire to expand a lineage, but not resulting in higher fertility for a society as a whole. Polygamy provoked intense social resentment, as it meant that many poor men were never able to marry, and it tended to delay marriage for all young males.

This chapter will examine tensions around reproduction as they shaped the Ugandan society of Buganda in the precolonial period and then evolved through the twentieth century. When Buganda was first described by European explorers seeking the source of the Nile in the later nineteenth century, it was portrayed as one of the most powerful, centralized kingdoms in East Africa. The Ganda ethnic group quickly acquired a reputation for cultural openness, evidenced most famously in their early enthusiasm for Christianity, Islam and Western education. When Buganda agreed to become part of the new British Protectorate of Uganda in the 1890s, it was able to maintain significant administrative and cultural autonomy. Nonetheless, Buganda was regarded as the most westernized society in colonial East Africa, due to the exceptional success of cash cropping, Christianization and Western education, and the influence of Kampala, the region's metropolis. Ganda chiefs, evangelists and intellectuals developed their own distinct visions of an Africanized modernity, which focused repeatedly on the pressures exerted on

gender, generational, kinship and marital relationships by exposure to westernization and Buganda's position in the multi-ethnic state of Uganda. After independence in 1962 these concerns heightened, as Buganda's political primacy and then its economic prosperity were lost.

At first sight Buganda's reproductive history seems to fit standard models of fertility transition. Its high levels of literacy, medicalization and wealth were associated first with an increase in birth rates, and then fertility decline. Yet, as the discussion of change and continuity in intergenerational transmission of reproductive cultures reveals, the timing and motivations of fertility change were unusual here. Ganda culture was far from uniformly pro-natalist in the precolonial or postcolonial periods. Birth rates began to rise unusually late given Buganda's many advantages, while fertility limitation took hold in the exceptionally unpromising conditions of Idi Amin's Uganda. These distinctive patterns reflected tensions between grandparents, parents and the younger generation, between patrilineages and matrilineages, and between women and their partners. Buganda was distinct but not unique. As will be discussed later in the conclusion, fertility histories varied sharply across the region, due in each society to local generational politics.

Investigating how perceptions of parenthood changed over time within African societies is problematic due to the nature of the sources. The contemporary accounts of European explorers and missionaries are imperfect guides to precolonial social norms, given the partially implicit and gradual nature of their transmission, and the private, domestic context within which they were contested. Explorers' compulsive itinerancy, reliance on interpreters, adhesion to the relative safety of the *Grenzwildnesse*, and the suspicions they aroused as possible proto-imperialists, render the accuracy and representativeness of their descriptions questionable. While some did spend significant periods of time in the capital of Buganda, the rules of familial relations, inheritance and reproduction found at a royal court were inevitably atypical. This criticism equally applies to the missionaries who were present in the capital from the 1870s, although their close relationships with royal pages, typically drawn from commoner families in the countryside, did provide insights into the lives of relatively ordinary people. Retrospective historical and ethnographic writing by a number of these pages are the most valuable sources for the precolonial period, although, as leading figures in the chiefly and religious hierarchy of the colonial era, their depiction of the past was informed

by current contestations over land and clanship, and by a strong sense that the young needed to be reminded of the moral uprightness and self-sacrificial heroism of their forebears. Buganda is blessed with rich archival sources created by missionaries and the colonial, and to a lesser extent chiefly, administrations, and was the subject of an exceptional series of surveys by medical and social scientists, home as it was to the region's premier teaching hospital and the East African Institute of Social Research. Among other weaknesses, though, these sources are all affected by detectable bias in their discussions of parenthood and fertility. Colonial officials were fixated with risks of instability, missionaries with moral decline, chiefs with challenges to patriarchal authority, and researchers with the assumed psychological and social destabilization caused by the interaction of tradition and modernity. Moreover, these sources are richest at moments of stress, when pressure to pass restrictive laws accumulated, when the church marriage rate declined and when epidemics of child malnutrition, neurosis or STDs were detected.

In a quest to counter the dominance of negative and crisis-laden discourses around generation and reproduction, around one hundred elderly Ganda were interviewed. Their tendency to recycle normative, declensionist views of sexual morality and relations between old and young meant that the interviews were refocused on individuals' life experiences, which demonstrated much greater variation in past behaviours and attitudes than might have been expected. Almost all the interviewees were literate and had a clear sense of periodization within their life course. This is one of the most heavily surveyed areas in the world, due to the severity of HIV here, which helps explain why respondents were so remarkably open about their private lives. In addition, where people were interviewed among their peers within focus groups, often it was found that individuals were able to be more revealing, partly because their friends would correct their narratives, reducing the corruption of memory due to the process of forgetting and the natural desire to reorder or sanitize the past. This then is a study built on a diverse body of imperfect sources. They have been considered in combination, in part because chiefs, officials, missionaries and researchers were intimately aware of, and frequently influenced by, the writings of other actors. Oral histories have been crucial in helping to further contextualize the written sources, and also to provide a sense of the internal politics of the family.

Precolonial Reproductive Culture

Among the patrilineal Bantu-speaking societies of Equatorial, Central and Southern Africa, marriage has classically been depicted as being controlled by the lineage, with the desires of the two spouses, and the bride in particular, being of marginal significance compared to the strategic interest of the kin group. Marriage then is commonly understood as a process aimed at establishing or securing alliances between families or clans, whose durability depends above all on the production and survival of children. Yet, as Rhiannon Stephens (2012: 262–266) has recently argued, the rules of marriage and reproduction varied significantly across space and time in precolonial East Africa. In contrast to societies on the northern shores of Lake Victoria, senior wives within polygamous marriages in Buganda who happened to be childless could not confirm their status by fostering a child who would become their husband's heir. Instead, in Buganda biological, not social, motherhood was key, meaning that an heir could be selected from any of the relationships that a man formally recognized. That even a female slave could become the mother of the heir was reflected in the proverb '*Ddungu ayizze, ng'omuzaana azaalidde nnyinimu ddenzi*', 'On giving birth to her master's son, the slave woman says: the God of hunting has brought home his catch'.

This emerging concept of biological motherhood reflected Buganda's distinctiveness, and the forces that came to dominate precolonial Ganda society: meritocracy, mobility and competitiveness, all of which affected, and ultimately undermined, the influence of older generations over reproduction. As the kingdom of Buganda emerged and rapidly expanded around the seventeenth century, so the concentration of power and wealth at court facilitated an unusual level of both state interventionism and the dispersal of lineages. These developments in turn undermined clan control of marriage and sexual behaviour, and facilitated the development of a degree of tolerance of irregular reproduction. By the nineteenth century, royal centralization and territorial expansion had enabled chiefly patrons to rival clan leaders, lineage heads and fathers as providers of the means of securing a wife. Chiefs, ambitious for promotion and seeking to enhance their status and their capacity to meet royal demands, strove to attract and retain followers through the acquisition and transfer of women. Clients' readiness to shift their allegiance to a neighbouring chief who offered better terms, or to follow a generous patron who had been transferred to another chiefship, meant that Buganda's

population was remarkably unstable (Hanson 2003: 180; Médard 2007: 27–30).

The desire of senior kin to influence the marital and reproductive lives of the younger generation was limited but not completely eliminated by the unusual characteristics of the Ganda state. This was illustrated by early twentieth-century missionary-ethnographer Julien Gorju's listing of nine different forms of sexual or marital relationship that had existed in precolonial Buganda. Three of these demonstrated the ongoing significance of marriage in strengthening bilateral relations between kin groups. Women might be married off in order to settle a debt, a widow might be inherited by a relative of her late husband, theoretically for her and her children's protection, while the sister of a widower's late wife might be given as a substitute, to maintain good relations between two families. Another three were the products of new power relationships, a means of either chiefs satisfying their male clients or underlings winning favour with a patron. The last three categories required the consent of both parties: remarriage after divorce, living together without any formal ceremony and 'marriage based on love between the parties'. This latter form, *obwamateeka* [of law] or *obwesimire* [of consent], was described as the standard form of marriage in Buganda, 'a proper legal marriage', where a woman 'made her choice' of a marriage partner, or accepted a suitor's proposal, and full bridewealth was paid (Gorju 1920: 397–409). No doubt high-status marriages were often engineered by a couple's families, but the emphasis on sexual attraction in Ganda marriage and the opportunity for either partner to veto such arrangements were unusual, and reflected an evolving culture that tolerated the exercise of individual choice and recognized the ease of relocation for the discontented.

Parental influence over their children's upbringing and reproductive lives was limited not only by the state, but also by the institutionalized rights of the kin group. A man could not refuse the request to foster a child made by his parents or siblings. Fosterage was legitimized by Ganda cultural assumptions that parental child-rearing in isolation was problematic, because of the structural distance between fathers and sons, and the perception that mothers loved their children too much to discipline them adequately (Doyle 2013: 176). Paternal aunts were tasked with training young girls for marriage and teaching them sexual technique and correct behaviour in relation to child-bearing and rearing, a role that continued after the wedding. Paternal uncles played a similar, though less intrusive, role with their nephews (Int. PLGS 31 August 2004). New brides

were encouraged by the paternal aunt to become pregnant immediately upon marriage, while their mothers-in-law ritually encouraged them to produce as many children as there were fish in Lake Victoria. Some clans even used identical words to describe both menarche and marriage, and pubescent girls and wives. Yet the verbalization of patrilineages' innate pro-natalism was not backed up in Buganda by concrete efforts to maximize fertility. For example, new wives did not enjoy the indulgent treatment experienced elsewhere in the region. A Ganda bride was kept secluded, fed and free from work for just nine days after getting married, rather than nine months in neighbouring Buhaya (Gorju 1920: 435; Kisekka 1972: 167).

It is likely that this resulted from the prioritization given to a wife's physical labour within marriage, for in Buganda, unlike many neighbouring societies, women cultivated the land without any assistance from their husbands for most of the year. It may also have reflected tensions between the matrilineage, whose interest lay in protecting the health and honour of their kinswoman, and the patrilineage. Ganda proverbs give voice to this conflict, indicating that although having some children was highly valued, women with very large families were condemned for reproducing 'like a dog', while giving birth was described as 'a deadly thing'. Reproduction in pre-colonial Buganda was heavily medicalized, due to the management of fertility being a matter of great anxiety and in-laws and maternal relatives competing for control of women's bodies. Women were encouraged by female relatives to achieve very long birth intervals, ideally breastfeeding for up to three-and-a-half years, and attempting to avoid conceiving before their last child was fully weaned. Early commentators noted that the use of abortifacients in cases of 'shameful' pregnancy was widespread in Buganda, while interviewees stated that girls would often seek the assistance of their mothers or maternal aunts to terminate a premarital pregnancy without their father's knowledge. Senior female relatives also intervened when a pregnancy was desired. Pregnant women were forbidden by their mothers-in-law from consuming a variety of foods, which were held to damage the health of the foetus. During delivery women were given oxytocic herbs, often by their own mothers, to stimulate contractions, due to the belief that prolonged childbirth was proof of adultery. It is likely then that anxiety about subfertility and resultant intervention in the reproductive process may have formed something of a vicious circle. While this discussion has emphasized much that is distinctive about Buganda, it should not be assumed that other societies across precolonial Africa were free of the kinds of limitations

on generational power observed here. Elopement was a common strategy employed by the young against the obstructiveness of the old. Descent-group histories generally downplay the fissiparous tendencies of families and clans, while the state in precolonial Africa not uncommonly employed the violent potential of male youths against the entrenched authority of elders and clan-heads. Intergenerational authority and the institution of the family were not characterized by a precolonial consensual timelessness prior to the disruptions and innovations associated with the advent of the modern state and imported belief systems and moral codes (Cook 1921; Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Male Kisubi Kiwulwe, 4 September 2004; Iliffe 2007: 98–99, 119; Roscoe 1911: 49, 55–56, 96, 102, 237, 270).

Colonial Crises and Rising Birth Rates

European observers expressed concern from the start of the colonial period that westernization was changing Buganda's generational relationships and reproductive culture in unpredictable and, frequently, destabilizing ways. As the twentieth century began, British colonial officials worried that Buganda's apparently 'declining birth-rate, which under present conditions appears to be inevitable, means in years to come declining revenue ... and therefore from a financial point of view apart from a higher motive these people must be prevented from allowing themselves to commit race suicide'. Accordingly, when the great missionary doctor, Albert Cook, asserted 'that between 1897 and 1907 ... the incidence of syphilis [had] increased rapidly' at Kampala's Mengo hospital, he was believed. An epidemic of syphilis served a number of purposes. The mission hierarchy was reassured of the relevance of Cook's medical work by this association of disease with sin. Ganda chiefs found an outlet for their concerns about their weakening social control. And British administrators saw an opportunity to address the demographic decline, which seemed to threaten not only the moral justification for colonial rule, but also its revenue base. In response to Governor Bell's appeal to the Colonial Office for specialist help, Colonel F.J. Lambkin, one of the Royal Army Medical Corps' leading syphilologists, was despatched to Uganda, where he interviewed a number of chiefs, missionaries, administrators and medical officials. Lambkin laid blame for the epidemic primarily on Ganda women, described as 'female animals with strong passions, to whom unrestricted opportunities for gratifying those passions were suddenly afforded'. This

fitted well with local wisdom. Colonial doctors regularly bemoaned the ‘naturally immoral proclivities’ of Ganda women. Missionaries as early as 1896 worried that ‘there is danger of the freedom and liberty granted to the women becoming licence and laziness ... there are numbers of women who refuse to be married’. And Ganda men considered that ‘the probable immediate cause of the outbreak was the emancipation of the women ... from their strict surveillance to which they had hitherto been subjected’. This consensus depended on an agreement that female evasion of familial control over their sexual and reproductive lives was consequent on a generic modernization. Lambkin’s insistence that it was specifically Christianity that had liberated women from the constraints imposed by husbands, parents and other kin began a process of mutual recrimination that would continue through the colonial period. After the First World War some of the Ganda elite condemned secular, developmental colonialism, holding that ‘civilization, education and freedom are the direct causes of the appalling state of affairs as regards prostitution and promiscuous relationships between the Baganda men and women ... [They have] completely destroyed this moral code by removing the constant fear ... from the minds of the young generation of the Baganda’. Colonial officials became convinced that missionaries’ insistence on securing legal primacy for Christian marriage had upset indigenous rules of inheritance and deterred the young from marrying at all. And missionaries began to question chiefs’ enthusiasm for disciplining women through legislation and the courts (Chwa 1971; Doyle 2013: 82–87, 106–124; Lambkin 1907).

The centralized nature of the colonial kingdom of Buganda has created the impression that marriage, sexuality and reproduction were the subject of intense bureaucratic monitoring and regulation. Various laws were passed, heavily penalizing sex outside marriage, outlawing abortion, limiting the freedom of movement of independent women and giving legal primacy to Christian marriage (Musiisi 2001). But in practice chiefly enthusiasm for the enforcement of moral discipline was uneven. Despite outbursts of moralistic fervour during wartime and episodes of neo-traditional enthusiasm, the overall trend was for prosecutions for sexual offences such as fornication to decline steadily between the 1920s and independence in 1962 (Perlman n.d.). As was commonly acknowledged at the time, Buganda’s chiefs were in a compromised position when it came to enforcing the laws they had passed. Many of Buganda’s chiefly elite were widely known to be polygamists. Efforts to control prostitution were undermined by revelations that convicted sex workers were

closely connected to the kingdom's hierarchy. Moreover chiefs, the largest landowners in Buganda, generally tolerated women seeking to live free of paternal or spousal supervision, because independent women could be charged high rents since they paid no tax. Moral regulation, then, was constrained in its application by the practical politics of colonial chiefship (Doyle 2013: 111, 141, 171).

Buganda's legal records also reveal that the power of the patrilineage was increasingly challenged over the colonial period. Chiefly judgements in disputes over child custody, for example, ruled in favour of the mother and her family in the majority of cases, in direct contravention of customary law (Doyle 2013: 155). This innovation undermined perhaps the greatest emotional obstacle preventing wives from leaving an unhappy marriage, and also contributed to a new autonomy enjoyed by widows, who increasingly secured the right to live on in their late husband's home with their children. A gradual shift towards naming sons rather than brothers as heirs facilitated this development, and marked another step towards the prioritization of the immediate family over the lineage in Buganda (Int. NPNK 24 August 2004; Int. PLGS 31 August 2004). This growing social recognition of the ability of women to manage a household independently was related to the new economic opportunities for female emancipation that developed during the colonial period. A significant number of women inherited or bought freehold land on which they could live if their marriages broke down, others secured tenancies, while more found employment in Buganda's numerous towns and townships, usually as brewers, traders or barmaids. As early as 1921 only 69 per cent of women in Buganda were married, an exceptionally low proportion. By 1969 this had fallen to 61 per cent (Republic of Uganda 1973; Uganda Protectorate 1922).

The reluctance of many women to remarry when their first marriage ended, or indeed to marry at all, contributed to the anxieties about fertility decline that were expressed in the early colonial period. But after the Second World War the association of marriage and reproduction loosened significantly. Ganda norms had allowed the individual unusual freedom in this arena even before the European takeover. A child conceived outside marriage was fully legitimate in terms of clan membership, inheritance and succession, love matches were tolerated, and divorce was unusually easy to secure by pre-colonial East African standards. By the mid-twentieth century, however, as one missionary commented, the concept of free will and the prioritization of individual choice in marriage had strengthened, 'as the result of Christian teaching and rapid advance of education,

so that clan ties which formerly held families together are breaking down and personal responsibility and ownership are becoming more common, [while] ... taxation and freehold land tenure' intensified population mobility and further undermined clans' control of land (Archdeacon of Uganda 1940). Schooling and the development of a romantic print culture meanwhile encouraged the development of a culture of courting. As one informant remembered, in self-conscious emulation of courtship rituals described in imported magazines such as South Africa's *Drum*,

We would even decorate the love letters very well to make them attractive ... the flowers would make them read the letters while happy ... the handkerchiefs that were exchanged acted as a symbol of love ... So you would use about ten shillings and you would also buy her perfume plus bathing soap. And the girl would be yours ... We would marry because of love. (FGD Male Kisubi Kiwulwe, 4 September 2004)

Arranged marriage became relatively unusual, while condemnation of reproduction outside marriage reduced in severity. Growing opportunities in female education and employment created new reasons for young women to avoid premarital pregnancy, yet in a society fixated by subfertility, parents learned that in many cases a daughter who had conceived before marriage enhanced rather than undermined her marital prospects. Retrospective reproductive histories in the area around Kampala found that by the late 1960s the average age at first birth, 18.7, was 1.3 years lower than the age at first marriage. Tolerance of older women's desire to have children after divorce or widowhood also increased if they were considered financially self-sufficient. The 1969 census indicated that the age-specific fertility rate for 35–39-year-olds, a large minority of whom were unmarried, had risen by approximately two-thirds over the past decade. In the era of independence, around Kampala at least, single women constituted almost half of all mothers delivering in hospital, and they had had just as many children as married women of the same age (Doyle 2013: 269–270). Buganda's recovery from its long-established pattern of low fertility was due in part to the lengthening of women's reproductive lives in the late 1950s and 1960s.

Parents, kin and society grew more tolerant of unconventional reproduction because of a sense that the Ganda were being outbred. The competitive world of post-1945 nationalism and democratization heightened Ganda fears that their low fertility would facilitate their

political marginalization in a postcolonial Uganda, and might even cause their ethnic group's extinction. That these anxieties survived into the 1950s seems surprising given that Buganda's population was 2.6 times larger in 1959 than 1911. However, as was commonly known, most of this increase was due to immigration from neighbouring regions, and Ganda felt that they were being swamped by incomers with higher fertility. A chief in 1951 stated that immigrants had 'five children to one child of Baganda parents. If the government do not take steps there will be no land left for Baganda'. By 1959 immigrants officially made up nearly half of Buganda's population. The remarkable mobility of populations in colonial East Africa reshaped cultures of parenthood, in some cases provoking defensive, conservative reactions among both host and migrant communities, in others stimulating the development of hybrid attitudes towards reproduction (Richards 1951; Uganda Protectorate 1960).

Buganda's crude birth rate was 30 per 1,000 at the 1948 census, a very low level by post-war African standards, but 36 in 1959, and 41 in 1969 (East African Statistical Department 1950; Republic of Uganda 1973; Uganda Protectorate 1960). The increase in extramarital reproduction was one factor causing Buganda's birth rates to rise in the later colonial period. More important was a striking improvement in reproductive health and a significant reduction in mean birth intervals. Hospital registers, surveys and censuses indicate that rates of maternal mortality, stillbirth and secondary infertility (the inability of a mother to have more children) fell dramatically during the 1950s and 1960s. One reason for this was that repeated exposure to medical advice enabled women at risk of obstructed delivery to refuse oxytocic herbs given to them by female elders, who sought to ensure rapid, honourable childbirth by artificially stimulating contractions. Buganda had enjoyed an exceptionally high level of maternity provision since the early 1920s, due to the region's prosperity, fears of depopulation and intense competition between the rapidly expanding Catholic and Protestant missions. Although the clinics were initially viewed with suspicion, sustained pressure from chiefs, the colonial medical service and church leaders, combined with remarkable improvements in the quality of hospital care after 1945, saw the majority of women come to accept the value of biomedically-assisted birth. By the 1960s, 90 per cent of pregnant women in Buganda were under antenatal supervision, and 40 per cent delivered in an institution – exceptionally high rates by African standards. Women with narrow or malformed pelvises were referred to specialist facilities where caesarean section, vacuum extraction,

penicillin and blood transfusion transformed survival rates from cephalopelvic disproportion, ruptured uterus and other complications (Doyle 2013: 125–126, 262–264, 270–275).

The declining influence of the older generation also played a part in the reduction of average birth intervals by almost ten months between 1915 and 1969. In precolonial times senior relatives had discouraged women from returning to their husbands' beds for up to three months after childbirth. Breastfeeding, with its significant fertility-suppressing effect, was also ideally supposed to last for three-and-a-half years. Not all women could achieve the ideal, but still in the interwar period the average breastfeeding duration was two years. In the years that followed, however, the attitudes and behaviour of Ganda women, who were often literate or closely connected to urban centres, were shaped less and less by their mothers, mothers-in-law and aunts. They were being moulded instead by church teaching, marketing, their peer groups, late colonial Uganda's thousand women's clubs and exposure to biomedical publications in which local European doctors vernacularized public health messages relating to mothercraft. In the early 1950s it was found that the typical period of breastfeeding for women had halved in the recent past to around twelve months, due, so Western doctors thought, to 'semi-sophisticated Baganda' adopting bottle-feeding because of 'indiscriminate advertising of patent milk preparations, imitation of financial and educational "superiors" of various ethnic groups, and ... mothers going out to work in towns'. Postpartum abstinence also declined sharply, largely it seems due to its disparagement by missionaries who associated it with male infidelity. This accumulation of diverse pressures stimulated a marked generational change in normative expectations around reproduction (Doyle 2013: 264–266, 276; Jelliffe 1962: 413).

The colonial period ended as it had begun, with a perceived crisis in marriage, the family and intergenerational relationships. By the 1950s STDs were no longer the primary concern. Around the time of the Second World War European doctors in Uganda realized that a remarkable range of complaints had been misdiagnosed as syphilis. Relatively rigorous testing procedures indicated that STD prevalence was significant, but nothing like the 90 per cent levels claimed at the start of the century. Penicillin reduced the frequency and severity of infections, adding further impetus to the increase in fertility discussed above. Medico-moral concerns, though, shifted in focus but not intensity. Buganda acquired a new notoriety for possessing the most severe problems of childhood malnutrition in the

world. Medical researchers sought the ethnographic support of the newly-formed East African Institute of Social Research (EAISR) in order to explain the 'dysfunctional' parenting that was blamed for a society-wide failure to adequately feed and nurture children. EAISR was established in 1947 by the Colonial Office with the aim of serving 'the East African governments by its collection and arrangement of knowledge' (Mills 2006: 84).

Global encounters between diverse reproductive cultures occurred in many historical contexts. Uganda's experience is striking because the tensions that arose from this convergence prompted interventions from both medical and social scientists acting in the interests of the state. One of EAISR's central concerns was the monitoring of East Africans' endeavours to maintain core aspects of their traditional cultures, while responding to intensifying pressures to adopt world religions, produce for the market, participate in new kinds of political organization and embrace Western concepts of ethics, law and attainment. In the mid-1950s it responded to one of the major recurring themes of the colonial period, a perceived weakening of Ganda familial bonds. Colonial administrators, chiefs and the local press regularly bemoaned the worsening instability of Ganda marriage, the increase in female-headed households, reduced parental supervision of children and growing premarital sexual activity (Doyle 2013:157–165). When medical researchers argued that endemic childhood malnutrition seemed to be related to tensions between tradition and modernity, a group of EAISR anthropologists and psychologists investigated several aspects of the relationship between parenting and disease causation. Concerns with child neglect, including unsatisfactory dietary provision, caused Aidan Southall (Southall and Gutkind 1957: 66–67) to examine the strain that the urban family in Kampala was thought to experience due to marital instability and the large number of female-headed households. According to Southall the absence of a father figure was especially problematic in Buganda, in terms of children's psychological stability, due to the relative vagueness of its extended family relationships. The psychologists Marcelle Geber (1958) and Mary Ainsworth (1967: 420) meanwhile examined the impact of fostering on the Ganda toddler, finding that the trauma of maternal separation appeared to lead directly to severe unhappiness, frequently demonstrated through anorexia or bulimia. The anthropologist Audrey Richards surveyed a large group of Ganda schoolchildren, and found that more than half had been fostered, though mostly after weaning (Richards n.d.). If anything the incidence of fostering seemed to have risen in recent

years, as marital breakdown and mothers' involvement in the workplace had increased, and children were often sent to relatives who lived near good schools. Many boys stated that they valued their exposure to discipline, kin group networking opportunities, and custom, including that relating to marriage. Girls, however, were less positive about resurgent Ganda neo-traditionalism, in part because many of them hoped for a more self-consciously modern style of marital and familial life, less constrained by kin (de Oliveira 2014: 45–50; Summers 2005: 439–441).

Overall, Richards' work strengthened the perception that trauma was a common feature of childhood experience in Buganda. Ainsworth, Geber and Southall argued that the systemic inadequacy of Ganda child-rearing created a cyclical pattern of damaged children maturing into destructive parents. Researchers held that the severance of a wife from her husband and a child from its parents underpinned a variety of social ills: child neglect, inadequate sex education, the alleged inability of many Ganda to create and maintain relationships of affection (Ainsworth 1967; Geber 1958; Southall and Gutkind 1957). These hypotheses directly influenced medical researchers' explanations of the severity of malnutrition. A child-rearing manual written by the paediatrician Hebe Welbourn (n.d.: 36) for a mass Ganda audience stated that 'children who change homes several times ... never really trust anybody and seem to make difficulties in every home they stay in ... including their own homes when they grow up and marry'. In a later publication she argued that 'a large proportion of Baganda children do not establish strong primary maternal attachments', and that this 'probably underlies such increasing prevalent social problems as promiscuity and marital instability' (Welbourn 1963).

The tendency for tensions within families and between generations and sexes to be pathologized during the period of British overrule in Uganda tells us as much about colonialism and the Western presence in colonized societies as it does about African reproduction, marriage, parenthood and kinship. Colonial governments, aware of the fragility of their authority, were hypersensitive to threats to the stability of the family, regarded as a key ally in the battle against youthful radicalism, atomizing urbanization and detribalizing labour migration. The shallowness of colonial knowledge of subject peoples empowered experts – doctors, missionaries and social scientists – whose ability to diagnose and propose remedies for perceived crises in social relations granted them a direct influence over governmental thinking that would have been unusual in the metropolis. Many of

these specialists did possess an intimate knowledge of the Ganda, but their framework of interpretation was often shaped by contemporary social concerns in Europe and America, and by models deriving from Western experience, such as attachment theory, modernization theory, proletarianization and evolutionary assumptions based on female status (Cooper 2004; Russett 1989: 131, 142–144). It is perhaps unsurprising that colonial governments struggled to control interfamilial relationships, given the intimate contexts within which norms of parenthood tended to be discussed, and indeed the often implicit nature of local knowledge transmission. The severity of malnutrition in Buganda lessened in the 1960s, not because of any identifiable reduction in premarital sex or the number of female-headed households, but because of improved domestic hygiene and a more balanced weaning diet (Tappan 2010). What seems significant is the assumption by agents of the modern state and Western science that the application of external theories of change would enable the Ugandan family to be fully comprehended and rehabilitated. As the final section will show, Buganda's reproductive culture did not fit dominant models neatly during the era of fertility decline either.

Fertility Decline in Buganda: Poverty, Autonomy and the Family

Uganda is not a country usually associated with fertility decline in Africa. In 2009 its total fertility rate was the continent's highest, and had barely changed in half a century. Yet the national rate concealed sharp regional variation, with Buganda having substantially lower fertility rates than the national average (Population Reference Bureau 2009). Suggestive evidence of Buganda's fertility decline only emerged in 1988 with Uganda's first Demographic and Health Survey. This reported that while women aged 40–49 in Kampala had given birth to 7.8 children on average, the city's total fertility rate was only 6.2 between 1982 and 1984, and 5.9 from 1985 to 1988. Kampala's birth rates peaked at a high level in the 1970s but started to fall in the early 1980s. Fertility levels in the rest of Buganda reached their maximum in the early 1980s before beginning an uneven decline between 1985 and 1988. This narrative may suggest that Ganda suddenly became interested in fertility decline around 1980. In reality a long-running conflict between factors encouraging fertility limitation and those favouring maximization finally turned in the former's favour. Indeed, the take-up of birth control began in

and around Kampala in the 1950s, and steadily increased in popularity through the years of social dislocation, economic crisis and political insecurity that followed. That it has not attracted significant academic attention is because the decline in ideal and completed family size coincided with a rapid reduction in female infertility. The proportion of Buganda's women over forty-five who were childless fell sharply from 25 per cent in 1948 to 18 per cent in 1969 and below 5 per cent in the early 1990s. The average woman may have desired fewer children in the 1970s and 1980s, but far more women than before were able to have a family (Doyle 2013: 368–372).

Early explanations of fertility decline in Africa were influenced by demographic transition theory. Researchers at first concentrated on the role of education, the availability of contraception, and women's increasing involvement in the workplace in enabling reproductive decision making to shift from the lineage to the individual. They held that birth rates would fall in response to improvements in living standards, life expectancy and infant survival (Mason 1997). In practice, however, fertility limitation in many African societies coincided with worsening unemployment, urban poverty and a weakening of state medical and educational systems due to the introduction of structural adjustment policies. The motivations underlying fertility limitation in Africa accordingly reflected a desire more to maintain than enhance living standards and children's life chances. Caldwell, Orubuloye and Caldwell have argued that not only the context but also the nature of fertility decline was distinctive in Africa, holding that contraception would be used differently due to the sustained power of pro-natalism and birth spacing traditions. Rather than being employed as a means of stopping further pregnancies once a desired number of children had been achieved, which is typical elsewhere in the world, contraception would be used by Africans to delay the onset of reproduction and as a culturally-acceptable substitute for traditional birth spacing techniques. 'Women remain apprehensive of reducing the birth interval ... largely because they are apprehensive of relatives and neighbors' (1992: 218). More recently the work of Johnson-Hanks (2002) and Timaeus and Moultrie (2008) among others has added further nuance to our understanding of the African context by drawing attention to the apparent frequency with which fertility limitation was understood in terms of postponement until personal or social circumstances improved.

Postponement did feature prominently in Buganda's fertility decline in the 1970s and 1980s, but strikingly, it seems, so too did stopping behaviour. This unusual experience reflected partly Buganda's

distinctive reproductive history, and partly the extreme insecurity and economic decline of the 1970s and 1980s. Buganda was initially not so atypical in its experience of fertility limitation. It is not at all surprising that a number of women adopted family planning around Kampala in the late 1950s and 1960s. The majority of women here had been to school, levels of female employment were high, the infant mortality rate had fallen to around 75 per 1,000 and confidence in the value of Western biomedicine had increased over time. All of my informants spoke positively about the medical care they had received during and immediately after their pregnancies, and used terms such as 'logical' and 'modern' when discussing contraception (Int. HW 31 July 2008; Int. MGK 26 August 2004). What seems remarkable, on first sight, is that the number of family planning clients was ten times higher in 1976 than 1966, and rose rapidly in the grim years that followed. In 1976, with the economy in freefall and institutions disintegrating, perhaps one in seven women in the Greater Kampala region used modern contraception. Various sources indicate that many others were sterilized or aborted unwanted pregnancies, while abstinence, withdrawal and the rhythm method were also commonly employed. From the late 1970s state support for family planning increased. By 1988 a quarter of women in Kampala used modern contraception, while in the rest of Buganda 5 per cent used it and 49 per cent wanted to (Black 1972; FPAU 2007; UBOS and Macro International 1988: 32–52).

The early scholarly and popular perception that family planning was only for the elite was not true on the whole in Buganda. The behaviour of many prosperous urbanites, especially those who were male, was still shaped in the 1970s by what could be defined as classically rural attitudes. Thompson reported in 1978 that desired family size among men in Kampala rose with income, a profusion of children being associated with high status, especially within the kin group. What Thompson described as exposure to modernity did tend to lower family size, but a perception of threatened living standards was the crucial factor favouring family planning. 'The desire for a large family on the part of less affluent urbanites is incompatible with modern consumption aspirations' (Thompson 1978: 164–166). As early as 1971 a survey of lower-income, modestly educated women attending an urban state-run postnatal clinic found that the average desired number of children was a relatively low 5.5. Sixty per cent wanted no more children, 45 per cent had heard of family planning and 9 per cent had used an effective method, a very high proportion for this period in Africa. These were not elite women,

for mission hospitals provided a better standard of maternity care, and only twenty-three per cent of these patients had had more than five years' schooling. By 1977 surveys reported that twenty-five per cent of urban women stated that their ideal family size was one to four children. In peri-urban Kasangati the average desired family size was six, and two-thirds of women intended to seek sterilization once this ideal had been reached. Highly-educated women and the young were more favourable towards family planning, but support came from all social groups (Crocker et al. 1971; Namboze and Kande 1979).

Informants' life stories indicate that stopping behaviour reflected the aspirational and individualized nature of Ganda culture, and the shock caused by Idi Amin's impoverishment of this society, which had been the most prosperous in twentieth-century East Africa. No informants here were told by their elderly relatives to maximize family size because in Buganda family strategies had for decades focused on securing admission to the best schools and achieving formal employment. Husbands and their families might harbour pro-natalist attitudes, but Ganda women had for generations enjoyed unusual autonomy and were often skilled at evading familial pressure. In interviews all but one of the elderly women who had limited their fertility had done so once a desired family size had been reached. Some women wanted to cease child-bearing for health reasons. A few did so because they were 'fed up with giving birth' or found it difficult to raise a large family if their husbands were away with work much of the time. For most it was simply economic logic, whether in town or village, as the highly monetized nature of Buganda's economy devalued children's labour to an unusual degree. One man remembered that he had only wanted five children 'because it was useless having many who would just stay at home to look after my goats, without money to pay for themselves'. But often women emphasized that men's irrational desire for the status of a large family was not matched by their willingness to take responsibility for the costs of child-rearing. A number of women stated that they had decided to have no more children without informing their husbands, or indeed the older generation. One recalled that having had two boys and two girls, 'I decided to stop ... I thought we would best manage the few we had'. Another stated that her husband 'wanted more children but I could not think of any way out when it came to educating them ... it was my sole decision' (FGD Female Kisaasi-Kampala, 2 February 2008; FGD Male Bukoto, 24 August 2004; Int. MGK 26 August 2004; Int. SKKG 25 August 2004; Int. TNN 3 August 2004).

The character of fertility limitation changed after the economic and institutional collapse that followed Idi Amin's acquisition of power in 1971. In the 1960s the desire for fertility control expanded rapidly, so that it was no longer associated primarily with the relative elite. The most popular form of contraception requested from family planning clinics changed from the IUD to the pill in the late 1960s, though it is likely that both were used for postponement and spacing rather than stopping (Crocker et al. 1971: 235–238). In the 1970s the desire for fertility control affected all classes. That so many women chose to control their fertility by seeking sterilization during the 1970s partly reflected state underinvestment in and occasional condemnation of family planning. The same is true of induced abortion, which was the most common form of fertility control around Kampala at this time. In the 1970s it was estimated that around a fifth of all pregnancies in this region were terminated, presumably as a means of postponement more than spacing (Lwanga 1977). Oral sources indicate that women who aborted were by no means seeking to distance themselves from their mothers, but rather were maintaining habits of secrecy and strategic reproduction, often in opposition to the patrilineage. 'The girl with her mother would pull out the baby so that the girl's father would not get to know about the pregnancy.' 'These women, the very wise maternal aunties, would do the abortion so that the father and the paternal aunt would not know about it' (FGD Male Kisubi Kiwulwe, 4 September 2004; FGD Male Takajunge, 26 August 2004). The distinctive pattern of fertility limitation seen in Buganda in the 1970s was not only affected by problems of contraceptive supply. Bottle-feeding had become popular from the 1950s, but was abandoned due to the unaffordability and frequent unavailability of formula milk in this era. By 1982 all women surveyed in the Greater Kampala region breastfed for at least six months, a remarkable return to traditional practices, albeit in curtailed form, which contributed to an increase in birth intervals in Buganda in the 1970s (Karamagi 1985: 229).

Four factors seem likely to explain this distinctiveness. One is the economic decline in 1970s and early 1980s Uganda, which was more extreme than that associated with structural adjustment during later fertility transitions elsewhere in Africa, and which made the possession of a large number of children particularly problematic. Uganda was not unique, of course, given that structural inequality and insecurity have shaped reproductive cultures in many other societies, but this example shows particularly clearly that fertility attitudes were shaped less by the cumulative forces of modernization

and more by the intersection of evolving generational politics with a novel set of constraints. A second factor is the disruption in the provision of some family planning services during the 1970s, which seems to have stimulated interest in sterilization in part simply because ongoing contraception was so difficult to maintain. The third is the longstanding scepticism of many Ganda about the value of extremely large families which, when combined with Buganda's historic subfertility, appears to have encouraged a widespread desire to have some but not necessarily very many children. The fourth is the gender and generational politics of relationships in Buganda. At first sight Buganda seems an exceptionally patriarchal and gerontocratic society. It is not uncommon to see women kneel down to serve their husbands or male guests, or to adopt a soft, submissive tone of voice when speaking to them. The young, too, are supposed to physically demonstrate their subservience, by kneeling before their elders until adulthood and using honorifics and respectful tones when speaking. Yet men, often correctly, suspect that female deference is frequently superficial and manipulative, and that Ganda women, especially as they mature, act more autonomously than gendered norms should permit. And, as Carol Summers (2010: 175–176) has argued, Ganda culture acknowledged that youths played a key role in clan politics 'as inheritors and stewards, responsible for communal resources' that would sustain the next generation, and that the young, through their inevitable struggle to wrest control from the elderly, were engaged in a cyclical regeneration of the kingdom. The relationships between the generations in Buganda were not driven simply by the engine of rejection and displacement, nor indeed by wholesale cultural inheritance and replication. The relative tolerance of autonomous reproductive decision making that characterized 1970s Buganda was not only a product of the disruption caused by Amin's regime, nor even the Ganda's exceptionally intense exposure to biomedical provision, schooling and other forces commonly associated with the rise of individualism and weakening of generational control in Africa. Its roots lie in the precolonial period, which suggests the difficulty of assuming that all African societies will experience fertility decline in the same way.

Conclusion

This chapter has noted the limitations on knowledge of intergenerational relationships in the past, given the often implicit, intimate

nature of their negotiation. Yet a variety of sources indicate that a profound shift in reproductive decision making from the lineage to the individual has occurred. This began in Buganda long before the colonial takeover, and then gathered pace during the twentieth century, facilitating first fertility increase then, soon afterwards, decline. Yet fertility change happened fastest where the interests of the young coincided with, or reflected attitudes inherited from the old. Thus the increasing fertility of unmarried, divorced and widowed women in the 1950s and 1960s was accepted by elders, aware that a girl's marital prospects were now enhanced by a demonstration of her fecundity, and that the Ganda would be swamped by incomers if only marital reproduction was tolerated. Women often elected to adopt family planning alone in the 1970s, but their decision was shaped by an entrenched cultural scepticism about the value of very large families, and facilitated by models of discrete female autonomy learned from their mothers and aunts. This chapter challenges the assumption that the imperial takeover constructed a grand patriarchal alliance across Africa between colonial officials and local chiefs, which undermined female autonomy. In Buganda, legislation and rhetoric might support this universalizing narrative, but women often benefited from the application, or non-application, of colonial law, the colonial economy created new opportunities for female independence, and missionization and education offered alternative worldviews to those sustained by kinship networks. The state, here and elsewhere, was less consistent in its attempts to reshape the family than might be assumed, while individuals were most likely to respond to governmental interventions where these made sense within local generational relationships.

The generational politics of reproduction are of immense importance in modern Africa, but their nature has varied remarkably over space and time. This is true even among Buganda's immediate neighbours, societies whose political structures, economies and cultures are broadly similar. To the south, for example, lies Buhaya, perhaps the society in East Africa that resembled Buganda the most. Here in precolonial times fertility was so heavily managed that various sources indicate that premarital pregnancy was punished by death, while the power of the lineage was such that a woman was required to grant any of her male in-laws sexual access to ensure that her marriage would be fruitful. The influence of elders in reproductive affairs was reinforced throughout the colonial period as fears of heirlessness were deepened by generations of subfertility. Even in the era of decolonization young adults were pressured by

their parents to take full advantage of recent improvements in reproductive health in order to compensate for the older generation's inability to expand the lineage. In Ankole, to Buganda's west, agriculturalists were so pro-natalist that a family with only one child was incomplete and there existed thirty-three separate occasions when a couple was required to practise ritual sex. Ankole's pastoralists, by contrast, displayed a marked ambivalence towards the expansion of the lineage, fearing that milk might be diverted to feed children to the detriment of the herd. Polygamy and the remarriage of fecund widows and divorcees were discouraged, and female fertility's destabilizing power was expressed in a number of rituals (Doyle 2013: 34–45, 383). That significant divergence in attitudes and behaviour existed between these neighbouring societies, whose cultures and histories were so interconnected, suggests that the idea that precolonial sub-Saharan Africa as a whole possessed an essentially uniform sexually permissive and pro-natalist tradition that survived largely intact through to the present should be viewed with some caution. Certainly the diversity of local reproductive cultures and histories across Africa raises questions about the applicability of grand theories of modernization. This chapter challenges assumptions that Africa will follow demographic trajectories identified elsewhere in the world, and indeed suggests that Africa's thousands of ethnic groups might not fit conveniently into one continental pattern of behaviour.

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Chapter 3

CHANGING MOTHERING PRACTICES AND INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY URBAN CHINA

Michala Hvidt Breengard

People have different attitudes to how the baby should be brought up; even different grandparents have different attitudes. I know lots of fights about that, so it's not easy. And a lot of men will say 'you got the grandparents to help you so why are you still complaining?'
But actually I found that it's not easy for mothers.

(Lin Jie)

In the very first interview I conducted for my research project on mothering ideals and practices among well-educated mothers in Beijing, Lin Jie, a thirty-two-year-old mother of a ten-month-old boy, kept returning to the significance of grandparents. Initially I had no ambitions of studying intergenerational interactions, yet this aspect became central to all of the following interviews. It was emphasized to such an extent that I began to wonder what these troubles, and even fights, that Lin Jie speaks about, tell us about mothering in contemporary urban China. The intergenerational conflicts emphasize a changing mothering culture where different approaches to childcare coexist in the family. This might in itself not be surprising. Mothering practices encompass both the production and nurturance of children. Mothers do not simply replicate their own upbringing but adapt and rethink their motherhood in a given context. Even

though mothers' practices might not be intentionally transformed, they change, at least to some extent, from generation to generation. In urban China, the one-child policy and rapid economic growth have challenged and changed Chinese family norms, ideals of parenting as well as the value of children more fundamentally than in most other societies. China indeed presents one of the most radical examples of state engineering of reproductive culture in the world and is, as such, an interesting case to study the differences between former generations' childcare practices and what mothers aspire to perform today.

This chapter contributes to the understanding of intergenerational relations and normative parenting practices in rapidly changing societies. In the late 1970s, China's one-child policy was formulated in an attempt to reduce the rapidly growing population, which threatened new visions of a modern, competitive nation in the global world. The ambition was to foster a population that could compete with the highest norms of health and education on a global scale (Woronov 2009). Women were asked to reduce the quantity of children but improve the quality, so as 'to reproduce less in order to nurture better' (Anagnost 1997: 214). Several scholars have placed the Chinese population project in the frame of Foucault's notion of biopower (Zhang 2009; Greenhalgh 2009; Binah-Pollak 2014; Jing 2000). The centrality of the family in the Chinese state's aims of producing healthy children highlights the link between the general ambition of improving the population and individuals' desire for care. By the concept of biopower we might detect how the mere quantitative problem of the number of children was expanded by a problematization of the correct management of children (Foucault 1980: 172–175).

The one-child policy's emphasis on fostering 'modern' children in whom parents invest heavily undoubtedly has an impact on everyday practices of mothering and childcare. Scholars have found that as the ideal outcome of reproduction shifted from a large quantity to a supreme quality of children, an emphasis on new and more scientific approaches to childcare emerged, largely influenced by Western discourses on childcare (Fowler, Gao and Carlson 2010; Binah-Pollak 2014; Woronov 2006). Orna Naftali has shown how a new emphasis on children's rights (2009) and a psychological discourse on childhood (2010a, 2010b) developed over recent decades, and Harriet Evans found that from the late 1990s, women's magazines began to include sections on 'parents' schools', which educated women to care for their child through appropriate means (Evans 2010: 996).

In some respects, these studies can be placed in a long (Western) tradition of feminist work on the medicalization of motherhood. Medicalization covers, in the words of Adele Clarke et al., ‘the processes through which aspects of life previously outside the jurisdiction of medicine come to be construed as medical problems’ (2003: 161). Although some medicalization theories provide a simplistic, negative picture of reproduction in contemporary societies, holding a rather naïve approach to what is natural and sustaining a binary between ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’, ‘old’ and ‘new’, these theories have provided important insights into changing reproductive cultures. While I, to some extent, build upon this literature, my focus is not on whether motherhood has become more or less medicalized. Rather I am interested in the narrative construction of self implied in mothers’ emphasis on what is ‘new’ and ‘scientific’. This enables the close examination of their apparent rejection of the older generation, alongside their continual dependence on grandparents, and of how these narratives interact with normative expectations of motherhood. While the mothers in my study made distinctions between ‘old’ and ‘new’ knowledge, I understand these distinctions as part of narrative identity work that communicates something about the mother’s self and with whom or what they wish to identify (Faircloth 2009: 15; Yuval-Davies 2006: 202). These are stories that do not necessarily correspond to their actual everyday practices. Therefore, we should understand their distinctions of ‘old’ and ‘new’ as a desire to fashion a particular kind of mothering self and not as a simple rejection of grandparents or a judgement on the older generation as truly old-fashioned. In many cases the grandparents are also well-educated and live in urban areas – factors that have been seen as constituting a ‘modern’ life. Nevertheless, I argue that the younger generation’s longing for expert-led childcare approaches has influenced the intergenerational power relations in the family, which traditionally have been embedded in an order of filial piety.

China has a long cultural tradition of filial piety with obligations to respect the aged. Yet scholars suggest that contemporary children are valued by their parents and grandparents to such an extent that Chinese society has shifted its focus from the elderly to the young (Ho, Peng and Lai 2001; Chen, Liu and Mair 2011; Goh 2011). This shift has been echoed in the popular and academic debates on China’s spoiled ‘Little Emperors’ (Jing 2000; Croll 2006). In a thought-provoking article, Shen (Shen 2011) argues that a transformation of power relations in urban Chinese families has occurred not necessarily between women and men, but between generations.

She finds that power has moved from the old to the young, making the older generations appear almost as servants to their children. My empirical material to some extent supports these changes. However, I find that child-centred ideals coexist with respect for the older generation and that this coexistence causes clashes in everyday practices of childcare.

In an attempt to broaden the understanding of reproductive cultures in urban China, I will pursue stories of intergenerational encounters as they unfolded in my interviews with mothers. As I did not interview the older generation, my ambition is not to cover a full spectrum of intergenerational negotiations. Instead, I present stories of the younger generation, their thoughts and troubles, while I leave the stories of the grandparents to be told by others (Whyte 2004; Shen 2011). Three questions in particular guide the study: what conflicts occur between these two generations? What do they tell us about the changing practices of parenting? And how do these practices affect intergenerational power relations? I first present my empirical departures and methodological concerns. Then I move to the question of who the caregivers in these families are, finding that childcare remains a feminized, if not maternal activity. Following the notion of 'multiple caregivers', I explore how the younger generation of mothers attaches meaning to generational differences in childcare as well as the conflicts that appear in everyday practices of caring for young children. Moreover, I point to how the younger mothers' own childhood experiences of absent parents make them doubt the grandparents' knowledge. Finally, I discuss the changing power relations in the extended family.

Empirical Departures

The chapter emerges from a study of twenty-three interviews with urban, well-educated, Chinese mothers, working in white-collar jobs, the vast majority of whom had only one child, aged between three months and three years. Most of the women were born in the early 1980s as the one-child policy's first generation of only children. The interviews were loosely structured, recorded and transcribed in full. As I do not speak or understand Chinese, I conducted most interviews in English or with interpreters in cases where the mother exclusively spoke or preferred to speak in Chinese. I aimed to have an ongoing dialogue about my ideas and topics, which meant that I met up with several of the people I interviewed to talk further over

a coffee. These conversations were beneficial for exploring their recognition of topics that I picked out from my empirical material. I also worked with two students from Peking University as interpreters. They both had knowledge of gender studies and can be regarded as co-constitutive of the process of knowledge production. I encouraged them to take part in the interpretative work, asking about their interpretation of the person we had just interviewed, a topic we had covered, the place where the interviewee lived or something that had been said in the interview.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews are an approach that is flexible enough to grasp unexpected stories and complexities. I let my interviewees talk at length on topics about which I would never think of asking them or about which I could not immediately see any point in talking. I believe that an open approach is especially crucial when working in a context that is (for the researcher) unfamiliar. It allowed me to explore how intergenerational practices mattered in these Chinese families to a greater extent than I had anticipated. Most mothers were eager to discuss intimate details of their lives. One mother spent almost two hours telling me about her increasingly difficult relationship with her mother-in-law, starting from when her daughter was born two years ago. I left the interview touched by the tensions that she had described. Not all mothers had such profound troubles. Yet most faced challenges, and intergenerational disputes became one of the central perspectives I developed for understanding experiences of mothering among this group of women.

Who Cares?

In most of my interviews I asked the mothers to draw circles representing a normal day in their own and their child's life. In the drawing of the child's day, I asked the mother to include a note on who performed the caring task or activity. My motive for asking for these sketches was to understand the parental division of care. The drawings, however, came to illustrate how grandparents played a central role in childcare. Figure 3.1 shows a normal day in the life of Xu Hua's eight-month-old daughter Gaigai.

Xu Hua lived with her husband in the home of her parents-in-law, which also included a housekeeper. She was an entrepreneur who worked in her own tea shop. This made her both flexible and very committed to her job. During a normal day, her daughter spent

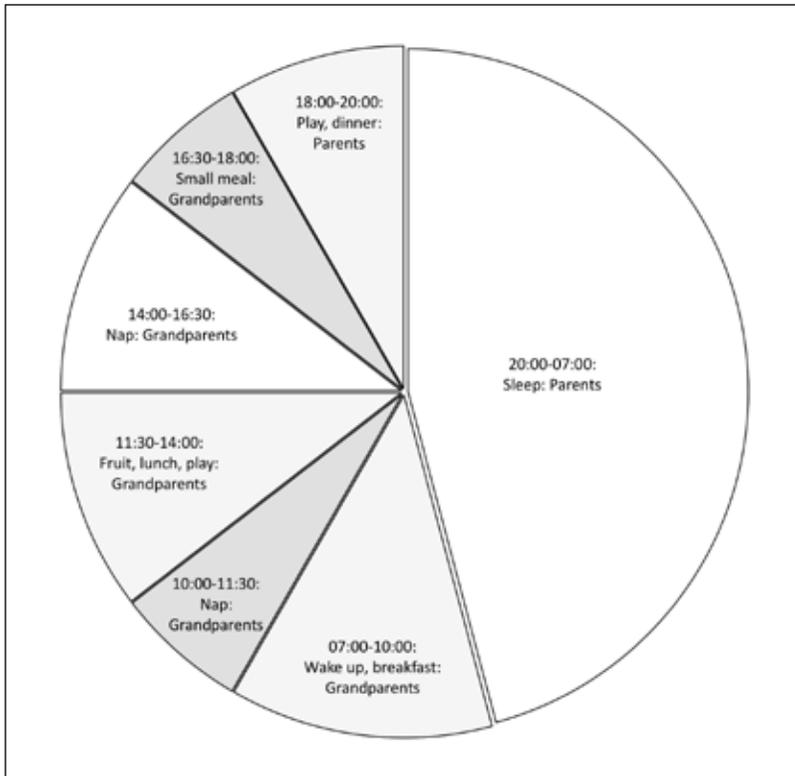


FIGURE 3.1. A day in the life of eight-month-old Gaigai

two of her waking hours with her parents, while the grandparents took care of her, played with and fed her for the rest of the time. As she was still too young to attend the public kindergarten, the grandparents were indispensable for managing the daily childcare tasks.

Generally, the mothers I interviewed talked about sending their child to kindergarten at the age of three, but there is little formal childcare available before children reach that age. Life in urban China, and especially life with a child, requires that both parents work full-time. While women comprise almost half of the labour force (forty-four per cent (Trading Economics 2012)) and additionally spend a lot of time travelling in the megacity of Beijing, there is a lack of institutional childcare for infants.

The intergenerational dependency in contemporary urban China challenges mainstream theories of modernization, which point to the declining role of the extended family and towards smaller nuclear formations. Intergenerational coresidence has been seen as a

sign of the persistence of tradition and thus is held in contrast to modernization (Logan and Bian 1999: 1254). Although the one-child policy has certainly produced smaller family units, nuclear family arrangements are not as prevailing as these theories predicted and coresidence of multiple generations is still comparatively common in modern China (Chen, Liu and Mair 2011: 11–12). Around forty-five per cent of adult children coresided with their parents in 2002 (Zhang, Gu and Luo 2014). However, public figures on coresidence are often misleading as many households do not register as such. Coresidence patterns among the twenty-two women I interviewed showed that only two had not been living with or depending on grandparents on a daily basis. Supporting Esther Goh's (2011) finding that paternal grandparents were most involved in childcare, the mothers I talked to were twice as likely to live with their in-laws as to live with their own parents. Although the inclusion of more caregivers challenges understandings of mothers as primary caregivers, this does not necessarily break with traditions that make women responsible for reproduction. Instead my research confirms the findings of other studies that show the older generation of mothers and mothers-in-law are more likely than their male counterparts to help with childcare (Yi and Wang 2003: 107).

The involvement of grandparents in childcare should not just be understood as a legacy of tradition. As Carrie Liu Currier argues, the decreasing fertility rate and resulting smaller families offer greater opportunities for including grandparents in childcare, as the older generation can adjust their circumstances more easily to help their only or few adult children (Currier 2008: 373). Grandparents are able to do so, as the retirement age in China is fifty-five for women and sixty for men. The persistent intergenerational reliance does not negate the existence of problems at the level of lived family life. John Logan and Fuqin Bian (1999) found a discrepancy between what people prefer and their actual living arrangements in urban China. A survey in Shanghai showed that while more than half of all children under three were mainly raised by their grandparents, most families were dissatisfied with this model (Zhang 2007). Xu Hua, the mother of Gaigai, articulated the ambivalences of their current situation and talked about how she would prefer the generations to live separately and for Gaigai to attend a kindergarten:

We are planning to buy an apartment. My in-laws are very traditional, they prefer that more family members live together so maybe they won't allow us to move even if we buy an apartment ... From my

own point of view it's better to live together just me and my husband, but according to the conditions of the family where my in-laws are very old and not in good health I have to take care of them. Besides, they love our baby very much and we live together in harmony, so it's not a problem to live together, but I would prefer to live separately.

While the grandparents were Gaigai's main caregivers, Xu Hua's words reveal that the intergenerational coresidence is not just a matter of helping Gaigai's parents but is also spurred by ideals of filial piety in which older family members expect their children to support and assist them in old age. In fact, children's duties to support their parents are to some extent a legal obligation (Evans 2008). While these ideals do not necessarily belong to the younger generation of mothers, they can be difficult to resist while simultaneously upholding harmonious family relations.

In Western societies the mother appears as the primary caregiver, with other family members in secondary roles. However, we need to be careful in applying this Western model to familial engagement in China, which often includes the extended family. That the newborn child needs care is obvious and cannot be changed through cultural interpretations of the child. However, who provides that care is not a biological fact (Moi 2005). In order to capture the Chinese care arrangements, I use the concept of 'multiple caregivers' suggested by Short et al. This suggests that care by mothers and others, such as grandparents, might coexist and the different sources of care might complement each other (2001: 919). This plurality is also captured in the so-called '4-2-1 model', which has been used by scholars to describe the family structure that emerged after the one-child policy. While this model often refers to the burden that single children may face in caring for their elderly family members, it also describes a new structure where four grandparents and two parents care for one child (Goh 2011). In the families I looked into the '4-2-1' pattern varied, as it was often just one grandparent, the grandmother, who cared for the child and often only for a limited period, after which institutional childcare and/or a nanny took over. Moreover, some did not live together with the grandparents, but lived nearby and depended daily on their help – a structure that has been termed 'the networked family' (Whyte 2004: 112). Arguably, these families challenge theories that predict the decline of the extended family. Although some women I talked to, such as Xu Hua, ideally preferred the nuclear family, the actual support of grandparents made their everyday life practically possible.

‘All This Is What My Mother Cannot Do’

In this context of the everyday practical negotiation of childcare between multiple caregivers, it is useful to examine in greater depth what caused the conflicts between younger mothers and the older generation. I begin with one mother, Li Jiaying, who worked as a junior researcher. When I first met her, she was very concerned about how her future career would unfold. After having interviewed her, I met with her again in spring 2014, when she immediately began to express her troubles in finding a new form of childcare for her daughter, who was nearing her third birthday. Her own mother, who had previously looked after the child, had left to care for her husband, who had broken his leg. In caring for her daughter, Li Jiaying now faced a choice between three options: her father-in-law, who already lived with them, hiring a nanny, or attending a private nursery. Her reflections introduced a hierarchy of possible caregivers, ascending from nannies to grandparents and then ‘teachers’, as she called the people working in the nursery. Nannies would not provide good enough care as they tended to be more concerned about not making the parents angry than about the child’s development. Li Jiaying exemplified this with the story of a nanny who worked for a family in her community and who strapped the child in the pram instead of letting it play. The reason for this, she said, was the nanny’s fear of a bruised and dirty child, an appearance that might upset the parents. The grandparents, on the other hand, would care, but sometimes too much, leading them to spoil the child. Moreover, grandparents seemed to lack a sensitive approach to children and could not stimulate the child. Instead, Li Jiaying talked at length about the attractiveness of the new nursery that she had finally chosen for her daughter. It seemed especially to be the teachers’ educated approaches that appealed to her. For instance, she mentioned how the teachers ‘introduced their curriculum to me, they said it’s based on Gardener’s eight types of intelligence, you know, they are from foreign, they say they are from Hong Kong, I had a doubt about that, but at least they are aware that there are things like that’. During our talk Li Jiaying pulled out a crumpled paper note from her bag. It was her daughter’s daily assessment report. Stating the name of the nursery and her daughter’s name at the top, the paper contained a schematic review of the child’s day. It stated how much she had eaten, drunk and slept, her temperature observed three times during that day, and recorded the eight times a teacher had inquired whether she needed the toilet. In a written statement the teachers

stated that the child had had a good day, how she had played and how her mood had been. While this can be read as an assurance of the nursery's competence, it also contains information about ways of approaching childcare that were understood to be desirable.

This raises the question of why this form of childcare is so appealing to mothers like Li Jiaying. Scholars have argued that scientific approaches stand as a global hallmark of modern mothering as well as a sign of being Western or internationally minded (Naftali 2009; Woronov 2006). I suggest that the mothers I interviewed drew on these symbols in their narrative self-making. Most of them read foreign childcare literature and many of them saw their encounters with me as an opportunity to acquire information on Western practices, asking me how mothers in Denmark, or more widely 'in the West', would feed, care for and educate their children. At the end of one interview, one couple asked if I would recommend a good educational course for their two-year-old daughter. In another, I was asked about breastfeeding practices in Denmark. While the desire for scientific approaches was often valued as a sign of Western modernity, expertise also worked for them as an objective assurance of good childcare and hence as a way to ensure their child's best possible care (see also Goh 2011: 5). One mother, He Lihua, who worked in an international I.T. company, for instance explained how she 'cherished the baby very much so I just took the doctor's suggestion'. Although most of these inquiries into Western mothering styles were formulated as something to strive for, the mothers did not admire Western practices without reflecting on them, but critically assessed different methods and often simultaneously followed Chinese traditions, such as postpartum rituals and practices of Chinese medicine. He Lihua told me that her husband, who was employed in the same I.T. company, had alongside his work decided to begin studying traditional Chinese medicine in order to care for the family. In another interview we exchanged views on whether my Danish mother faced joint problems because she had not appropriately performed any postpartum rites, and several mothers I talked to expressed concerns about the bitterness of Western medicine.

The mothers' stories generally revolved around their preparations to become a mother, how they obtained their knowledge and to whom they entrusted childcare. Mothers' reflections also explored the older generation's practices – often so as to distinguish between what they preferred themselves and what their mother or mother-in-law did. A thirty-eight-year-old mother, Wu Xiaodan, who owned a small company offering accountancy training, mentioned a range

of things that she thought her own mother, who lived with them, could not provide for the child in the same way that she herself could. These things encompassed a broad range of activities, from carefully choosing the child's food and sport activities to making the child enjoy listening to piano music. As she said, 'all this is what my mother cannot do'. Their stories about childcare were teeming with these distinctions, which were often expressed through a contrast between 'old' and 'new'. One mother, Bai Feifei, who was employed in an insurance company, expressed this, saying, 'We are both the only child in our family and our parents are very old. And the knowledge about childcare from our parents cannot catch up with the new ideas. They still hold old ideas. There is no help.'

The complaint of 'no help' should arguably not be understood in the sense of a lack of practical assistance – grandparents surely did help – but as an absence of desired knowledge, which meant that the mothers seldom turned to their parents for advice on childcare. Instead, the younger mothers consumed large amounts of expert knowledge. This confirms Ann Anagnost's suggestion that grandparents can help by taking care of the child, but they are not authorities on the parenting style that emphasizes the science of child-rearing. This is a style of parenting that, as she describes, 'addresses the subjectivities of modern parents who are, in turn, themselves disciplined to consume knowledge and commodities appropriately' (1997: 215). Wang Shu, a thirty-two-year-old part-time teacher and mother to an eighteen-month-old child, recounted how she would always compare the advice she received from her mother-in-law with 'the things that the doctors told me and what I read in books'. She most frequently followed the doctors' advice.

While mothers seemed to use the 'new' as a marker of modern or good mothering, I also wish to examine the meanings encapsulated in the 'old'. One meaning appeared to be lay experience, constructed as the opposite of the modern, internationally-informed knowledge. This was expressed by Zhang Mei, a twenty-eight-year-old mother working in a bank: 'I think the old generation is different. Now we get more international information through fast internet. So the way of thinking has been broadened. In the past times, the old generation only judged everything from their own experiences, some of which may not be correct.'

As Elizabeth Murphy argues, constructing childcare as an area of scientific expertise often works to make experience-based knowledge inferior (2003: 444). However, in the stories of the mothers I talked to, the 'old' did not just appear as experience oriented,

but as referring to ‘only the basic’. The mothers’ stories of gaining knowledge were positioned in contrast to what they described as the grandparents’ simpler approaches. Mothers spoke of how the older generation was too concerned with basic needs, such as warm clothes or fresh air. Nutrition was ‘reduced’ to categories of ‘hungry’ or ‘not hungry’; as Li Jiaying sceptically put it, ‘well, in their eyes the good way of raising kids is to avoid diseases, stay healthy and avoid crying’. One should understand this in the context of the younger mothers’ own upbringing in the early 1980s, when the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution coincided with the very gradual opening-up of China to international influences. Women at that time were often strongly oriented towards work, there was greater poverty and many faced a shortage of food (Goh 2011: 64; Yi and Wang 2003: 102). Several mothers described how their own mothers had just ‘got married and had a child’ without any notion of the more systematic approach that they themselves demanded. Sun Yi, a twenty-nine-year-old mother, who worked in a bank, told me:

Our parents don’t think that having a baby is a big thing. When they were pregnant, they just gave birth. It was a very easy thing [for them], no matter the pregnancy, the birth, the child rearing, it was very easy for them. Now it seems that everything is very complicated. From the beginning of pregnancy, you begin to prepare for it.

The ongoing preparations not only meant quite laborious activities, but they were also connected to a moral imperative of mothering. Lu Meili, a thirty-two-year-old mother of a four-month-old infant, expressed this: ‘In my opinion, you must have a lot of knowledge to be a good mother. If you have a lot of knowledge, your ideas will be different. In fact, a child is a mirror of the parents. When you raise a child, always keep improving.’ Lu Meili’s expression reveals several important points. As she establishes a link between child and parent, the mother’s knowledge becomes the foundation for the child’s future as well as of her parental worth. By constantly acquiring knowledge, the mother shows herself to be well-informed, responsible and thus competent in caring for her baby. Moreover, by using the word ‘different’, Lu Meili’s longing to become a good mother takes a distinctive form. If we understand the stories of inter-generational childcare negotiations as part of mothers’ self-making, we see how these distinctions play a part in constructing a certain type of mother subject. The stories of ‘new’ and ‘old’ can be read as a way of distinguishing themselves as more ‘modern’ than the former generation. These acts of distinction, however, can cause tensions.

The Older Generation's Absence and Lack of Experience

The younger mothers' desire to perform modern mothering does not, however, capture everything at stake. The mothers also doubted the older generation's competence in influencing their grandchildren's care because of what they described as a lack of experience. The mothers often emphasized the stark differences between the way that they were brought up and the ways they raised or wished to raise their child. This was, for instance, expressed by thirty-one-year-old mother Luo Yan who told me, while looking back at her own childhood:

They sent me to a nanny when they went to work and picked me up when they got home. When I was ill they sent me to the hospital and after I recovered, they sent me to the nanny again. That was what my father told me. What I can remember is that when I was four or five years old, I stayed in a small room [while her parents were at work], just like this one [we are sitting in a bedroom], they locked the door and my cousin played in the yard and I could see them through the door, but I could not go outside with them. That's the way I have been raised ... but nowadays, because we have just one child, the grandmothers will fight with each other to raise the baby, so our baby is really happier than we were, you know, has a good life, has a better life than we had.

A profound point in the stories of their own childhood experiences was generational differences in attitudes towards working life. In the Mao era, paid work had been a guiding principle for people's worth. Slogans such as 'women hold up half the sky' highlighted women as crucial agents within society. Women who were too absorbed by family matters were seen as selfish (Short et al. 2002: 34). Until 1988 women were only entitled to fifty-six days of paid maternity leave. A national regulation that protected female workers in 1988 stated that maternity leave should be extended to ninety days with fifteen days prior to delivery (Jacka 1990). In 2012 maternity leave was extended from ninety to ninety-eight days. While changing practical childcare provision, the extension of maternity also introduced new ideals of balancing work and family life. As He Lihua, a thirty-eight-year-old mother of two children, described: 'I think at that time their maternity leave was only fifty-six days, one and a half months, very short, they need to go to work, work very hard, you know my parents, that generation is a different generation, they worked very

hard, work first and family second, it's different.' He Lihua seems to recognize the former generation's practices in her mother-in-law's approach to her:

My mother-in-law, she just encourages me to fight more and to get a better position, earn more money. I don't think that's my best choice, because then I need to spend much more time [at work], I don't want to travel a lot, I need to stay at home with my kids ... She always says 'don't worry about your home, don't worry about your children, we will take good care of them, just go to work'.

Mothers' emphasis on approaching childcare differently from the former generation might be fuelled by their own childhood memories, which many described as marked by their parents' absence. Most of the mothers also recalled that their parents had been very strict, maintaining harsh discipline and authoritarian attitudes. Several mothers explained how they had in fact been raised by their grandparents. He Lihua interpreted this by saying, 'that generation is a different generation, they worked hard so they just left the kids with their parents, I was not raised by my parents'. By looking back from a contemporary, more child-centred culture to the earlier relative absence of parents, women's desires for a more intensive mothering style are increased. However, this absence can also stimulate their mistrust with regard to the older generation's childcare abilities. The thirty-four-year-old mother and university professor Gao Yun told me how her mother did not know how to take care of her grandchild. When I asked her what she meant, she explained that her mother had relied on her mother and therefore 'didn't get the time to practise, she is supportive and she will support other people, but she does not directly know how to handle the baby'.

These stories of absent or distant parents were told in both hurtful and loyal ways. Although some believed that they did not have a 'good relationship' with their mother, they did not express much anger or judgement – at least not to me, which is of course not the same as saying that they were not angry. Although they were able to contextualize the earlier childcare practices, it was difficult for younger women not to interpret them through the contemporary ideologies of more intensive parenting to which many of them aspired. Although they expressed an understanding of the specific and unavoidable historical circumstances in which they had grown up, the mothers opposed this way of taking care of children. In this way, individual memories, popular historical narratives, moral beliefs and

normative assumptions all coexist and interact in shaping individuals' lives, their familial support, and how practices of care are transmitted between generations.

Changing Intergenerational Power Relations

Studies of familial power relations often focus on the gendered dynamics between husband and wife, while neglecting other relations in the family. Yet previous research argues that in contemporary China generational power dynamics have been especially subject to change (Shen 2011; Yan 1997). Chinese societies have traditionally been organized around a system of filial piety, which places an obligation on children to obey their parents. From this it also follows that, when there are disputes, husbands must take their parents' side in familial discussions, so that the daughter-in-law is left in the wrong (Yan 1997: 204). While scholars (Binah-Pollak 2014; Naftali 2009) argue that the new scientific discourse on children has distanced contemporary childcare from former authoritarian practices, few have discussed how this change unfolds in intergenerational power relations. Here I argue that the mothers' use of expert-based knowledge to some extent offers them an opportunity to resist the authority of the older generation, so that the celebration of science is one concrete foundation of the destabilization of power. This is an aspect which is closely tied to, but not reducible to, the one-child policy. I approach the negotiations of childcare through the concept of power/knowledge in Foucault's twofold sense. According to Foucault, power and knowledge are inextricably linked. Practices of power always create knowledge and knowledge constantly affects power relations (1980: 52). Thinking about power and knowledge as entangled makes it possible to see how familial orders are destabilized, as an emphasis on scientific knowledge produces new subject positions in the family. Foucault's articulation of power is not in the sense of having power over somebody, but instead power is conceptualized as what offers the subject particular opportunities to act. While there is a tendency in theories of medicalization to see mothers as docile or passive (e.g., Apple 1994), I emphasize how the mothers in my study actively use scientific knowledge to empower themselves.

The mother, Gao Yun, experienced significant conflict with her mother-in-law, in whose house they lived. The disputes covered most areas of their cohabitation. Gao Yun expressed her concerns

about how her mother-in-law always cooked the same food for the daughter, invariably went to the same places, and never tried to challenge her conservative habits. She explained that this, however, had not been clear to her at first as she, and everyone else, regarded her mother-in-law as an expert:

She used to be a children's doctor so many people regard her as the authority, as an expert, so at the very first even my mom who is also a doctor, but a Chinese doctor, not specialized in children, would listen to her. We thought that whatever she said, it's correct. Well, my husband still thinks so, but gradually we began to think that she just has an opinion, she's not an expert in any sort of objective way, she just has her own ideas.

Gao Yun here reveals how elderly family members are not necessarily dismissed. Their professional status and education, here their position as doctors, can offer them authority. We can discern a conflict between the two grandmothers in which the Chinese doctor is positioned lower than the paediatrician specialized in Western medicine. The relationship between Chinese and Western medicine is highly complex and ambiguous. Western medicine cannot be assumed to be interpreted as always superior to Chinese medicine in practices related to motherhood (see Raven et al. 2007). However, what concerns Gao Yun is what counts as scientifically measurable, or as she puts it 'objective'. Here the Western-educated doctor appears as a greater authority, at least until she finds out that her mother-in-law fails to follow the neutral standards that she believes characterizes this form of science.

Like Gao Yun, several other mothers recounted how they avoided other people's 'opinions' as they were too subjective, too interfering and often contradicted the advice literature. Through their use of expert knowledge they became confident enough to challenge other forms of knowledge. As such, using the experts could be a strategy to negotiate with grandparents. In spite of attending a training programme, the thirty-two-year-old Ma Chunhua described herself as a full-time mother. After Ma Chunhua gave birth to her daughter, her mother had insisted that she followed the postpartum tradition of *zuoyuezi*, a tradition that tells new mothers to avoid a range of things such as showering or brushing one's teeth in order not to get cold, to eat 'hot' food, and to rest for the first month after birth. Ma Chunhua felt uncomfortable performing these practices and when asked about which of these things she specifically did, she instead told me how she tried to avoid them:

I really asked the doctor to be there when my mom was in the hospital, I asked them to come to the bed and give us the training and they came in the room and told us that as a mom I need to have a shower, I need to brush my teeth because it's better for the baby, so my mom thinks it's science, he [the doctor] should be good, it should be right ... So she just accepted it, even if she knows that traditionally we can't do that.

What Ma Chunhua expresses here is that she is not in a position to negotiate with her mother by herself. She therefore draws upon the position of the doctor – a position that her mother also recognizes as sufficiently powerful – to challenge her traditional principles.

The interview excerpts above show how mothers perform an empowered self by drawing upon certain systems of knowledge. That expert knowledge offers the younger mothers a way to empower themselves does not mean, however, that we should understand the older generation as powerless. Grandparents are doubted as competent caregivers, but this does not mean that they are immediately neglected or disrespected. Rather, the mothers struggled to negotiate with them in order to uphold harmonious relationships and a sense of themselves as good daughters and daughters-in-law. The repeated stories about grandparents made me aware that the older generation was not only important in the sense that they took part in childcare, but also that they could serve as a point of reference for good mothering. As Dorte Staunæs (2003) argues, demarcation figures are not necessarily powerless persons, because their potential as destabilizers can be extensive. Furthermore, the authoritative power of the older generation might be less pronounced than before the Chinese modernization project, but it has not disappeared. Although grandparents might be placed at the periphery of the celebrated mothering culture, this does not position them on the margins of all family spheres. The stories that Ma Chunhua told in relation to the first month after birth serve to illustrate this. Ma Chunhua reported how her mother took the initiative to move into the younger couple's apartment after birth, as 'she thinks she needs to look after me'. Ma Chunhua had not encouraged her to do so. She told me that she did not understand her mother's decision because they were not close and did 'not have a good relationship'. In fact, Ma Chunhua had already hired a nanny to help out. However, she explained that she saw no opportunities to prevent her mother, 'because, you know, she is my mom, sometimes I can't refuse her'.

Although my study corroborates Shen's finding (2011) that the power of the older generations is declining in urban China, Shen gives an impression of a strongly subjugated older generation without a voice. As I did not talk to the older generation, I do not argue that grandparents do not feel exploited or powerless. My findings, however, show that the younger mothers could not easily dismiss the older generation and that (especially) the mother-in-law is a central figure in the younger generation's childcare practices. The mothers were often deeply troubled by the presence of the older generation and often felt that they had no opportunities to resist their ideas. While the links between power and knowledge provide an insight into how mothers might assume new positions, it is too simplistic to work exclusively from this form of power in intergenerational relations. Although some grandparents took part in the power and knowledge negotiations, the power of the older generation might be better understood within another structure where knowledge is not necessarily the expression of power, but where status is determined by traditions, such as filial piety. Filial piety works as a one-way directed power that gives parents absolute authority over children (Ho 1996: 155). As Goh describes, filial piety upholds a hierarchical power structure in the family, in which the elderly, and men in particular, have absolute control (2011: 3). While being less linked to (scientific) knowledge, the emphasis on patriarchal obedience resembles the non-modern form of power, which Foucault assigned the authoritarian supreme master. The importance of filial piety alongside the strong faith in scientific knowledge suggests that traditional and modern powers coexist in contemporary urban China rather than eradicating one another.

Conclusion

The relationship between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law has been described as one of the most difficult in the Chinese family (Goh 2011: 54). I did not find that conflicts depended on whether a mother was talking about her relationship with her mother or her mother-in-law. Gender differences did prevail in these conflicts, however, so that negotiations about childcare took place with grandmothers and not grandfathers. While one might predict that intergenerational dependency would decline due to modernization, the one-child family has changed the importance of, but not decreased, intergenerational support. In exploring the stories of the

younger generation of mothers about intergenerational practices of childcare, it becomes clear that several matters are at stake. By using a semi-structured interview approach I opened up for stories of intergenerational conflicts and support that I, as a Danish researcher, had not expected. I believe, too, that working with interpreters also enhanced the cultural sensibility that is crucial when working in a foreign setting (Liamputtong 2010). Besides this, my analysis in particular emphasizes three concerns.

First, the younger generation of urban and well-educated mothers is highly attentive to scientific models of childcare, which they conceptualize as a modern and beneficial approach. They seek scientific knowledge to empower themselves as well as to negotiate care practices with grandparents.

Second, the mothers' distrust of the older generation is not only due to their categorization as lacking modern, scientific knowledge of childcare, but also because of the mothers' own childhood experiences, when parents were often not the principal caregivers. At the time of the younger mothers' own upbringing, women's identities were centred on being good workers, leaving less time for family matters. This means that they regard the grandparents' generation as having little or no practical experience of childcare.

Third, changes in how modern authority is negotiated between generations can partly be conceptualized through the close connection between power and knowledge. Through reference to Foucault, I explored how expert knowledge produces certain empowered senses of self. The mothers seem to use this empowerment to negotiate childcare in the family and to some extent challenge the authority of the older generation. However, while the younger mothers negotiate childcare from a paradigm of modern scientific knowledge, they also acknowledge the power of the older generation that is founded in a tradition of filial piety. Filial piety in this sense stands as a one-dimensional form of power, which is closer to what Foucault described as centred around obedience to the sovereign, 'the father who forbids' or delegates orders (1978: 85). Foucault suggests that '[t]he mythology of the sovereign was no longer possible once a certain kind of power was being exercised within the social body. The sovereign then became a fantastic personage, at once archaic and monstrous' (1980: 39). Following this interpretation, we might expect that the power of the older generation should decline as it meets new expert-led knowledge. However, while grandparents in some ways are understood to be 'archaic', they do not unambiguously occupy a position that makes them 'monstrous'.

Although knowledge becomes central to the younger mothers' narratives of self-making as a way to express their (be)longing to modern mothering, their sense of self is also constructed in relation to filial expectations. As Elizabeth Croll also points out, despite intergenerational differences, young people in many ways still adhere to filial obligations (2006: 482). Grandparents still have respect and power, which cannot easily be dismissed. While they might not be able to offer the sensitive, high quality care desired by the younger mothers, they are a great practical help and indispensable for managing daily tasks.

As such, Chinese family structures blur theories of modernization. On the one hand, the one-child policy has led to smaller family sizes, child-centred and scientifically-informed parenting – all traits that are seen to characterize Chinese modernity. Yet on the other hand, the older generation plays a crucial role as caregivers, even though they may lack the expert touch. This challenges theories of modernization that suggest linear processes moving towards the greater autonomy of the younger generation. Although the older generation is not supported by the same unquestionable honour taught by the paradigm of filial piety, the younger generation does not feel capable of simply rejecting them. Intergenerational practices of childcare are dynamic and multidirectional, thus creating ambiguities for mothers. They strive for the newest knowledge of childcare at the same time as they depend on and share practices of care with the older generation.

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Chapter 4

INTERGENERATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS OF NON-MARITAL PREGNANCIES IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

Ekaterina Hertog

The initial reaction of Junko, a forty-two-year-old college graduate in a full-time job, to her pregnancy was unambiguous:

At first I was happy I was pregnant. Very, very [happy]. It maybe sounds strange, but it was because I had never been pregnant before, I was so happy to be expecting a baby ... Only the father of the child already had a family, so marriage was [not possible]. I myself have had a divorce, so I felt married life is somewhat difficult [for me], but I had a strong desire to have a child. I was already thirty-three when I got pregnant. Gradually [I felt] I was getting old, so at first I honestly thought even if I cannot get married I will have this child.

As Junko had a full-time job, which she knew she would be able to keep after bearing a child, little seemed to stand in the way of her passionate desire to become a mother. Yet when she started thinking about her parents, her determination crumbled:

I could not convey my feelings to my parents. I got really distressed about it and just could not figure a way to tell them. Although inside myself I was sure what I wanted to do, I felt that without my parents' support I could not raise the child. Quitting my job was not an option. I would continue working, yet I could not imagine renting a

flat somewhere and raising a child alone. [To be able to have a child] I first of all needed my parents' support. Yet I could not bring myself to tell them about this pregnancy and this really worried me. [I felt] like I could not raise a child. I got really insecure and considered an abortion.

Junko's story illustrates several important aspects of the reality of being a lone, unmarried mother in contemporary Japan. Limited welfare provision means that the majority of Japanese single mothers have to work to support themselves and their children. Like Junko, many women need their parents' support to be able to combine work and childcare (J.I.L. 2003: 404; Wright 2007). Ensuring such support, however, is rarely easy, and as in Junko's case, it is rarely expected. Japanese people are still less likely to approve of a woman who 'wants to have a child as a single parent but ... does not want to have a stable relationship with a man' than westerners (the phrase used in the 2005 World Values Survey). Moreover, people aged over fifty (the grandparents' generation) are considerably less forgiving than their younger counterparts (Hertog 2011), and like Junko, women who become pregnant outside of marriage feel unable to even tell their parents, fearing such moral opprobrium. Yet when it comes to other sexuality and family-related norms, Japan is far from a conservative reproductive culture. Sex out of marriage is a common practice, marriages take place late in life (the average age of marriage is now close to thirty for both men and women), the divorce rate has been rising over the past few decades, and in that respect Japan is now comparable with many European countries. This background of relatively liberal sexual and family norms makes the low illegitimacy rates in Japan a particularly interesting puzzle to consider.

This chapter will investigate how parents' reactions to non-marital pregnancies affect the ways in which women resolve these pregnancies in Japan. I use the term non-marital in this chapter to refer to events, like pregnancy and childbirth, which happen to women who are not currently married and who do not have a prospect of marriage in the immediate future. For students of social change, studying the ways in which families negotiate non-marital pregnancies offers important insights into moral judgements in relation to reproductive behaviours. Although historically Japan had relatively high rates of non-marital births, these fell throughout the twentieth century and have stayed at or below two per cent since the 1950s (Drixler 2013; Hertog 2009). The factors behind this fall are complex and deserve a separate investigation. It is likely, however,

that the state's promotion of child-bearing within marital unions (Fuess 2004), and post-war economic change, which solidified gender-role segregation within the Japanese labour market and in households (Brinton 1993) played a part in encouraging women to avoid non-marital child-bearing. Furthermore, the easy availability of abortions, against a cultural background in which abortions are morally non-controversial, has given them the means to do so (Lefleur 1992; Norgren 2001). In many countries religion plays a key role in shaping the abortion debate. Yet in Japanese Buddhism, small children have historically been believed to pass easily between the realm of buddhas and *kami*, the human world, and back again, in the case of an early death. Given this perspective it seems less surprising that these days in Japan '(t)he focus is neither on the rights of the mother nor on the personhood of the fetus, but rather on the social life of the child, the welfare of the family, and the question of the social good more broadly' (Borovoy 2011: 1). The role of religion in this context is often a practical one: Buddhist *mizuko* rites offer a way of 'handling' the guilt and grief associated with having experienced an abortion.

Throughout the post-war years abortion has been the socially acceptable solution for non-marital pregnancies, so much so that in public sentiment it was virtually normalized as another means of contraception. As Japan was late in legalizing modern contraceptive practices based on hormonal treatments, and still has relatively low rates of adoption for these practices (Norgren 2001), the social acceptance and easy availability of abortion have been key factors enabling the country to maintain its low rates of non-marital child-bearing.

The rarity of childbirth outside marriage suggests that unmarried motherhood is a particularly costly step for any woman to take. As abortion is an easily available and socially acceptable alternative solution for non-marital pregnancies, women who have children in Japan without being married tend to base their decisions on careful deliberations. As we will see, the grandparents-to-be are often intimately involved in the process. The negotiations offer an illuminating window onto the nuances of grandparents' and their non-maritally-pregnant daughters' views concerning the acceptability of illegitimacy.

As already noted, we know from surveys (e.g., the World Values Survey) that the grandparents' generation in Japan strongly disapproves of women raising children on their own. These surveys, however, do not document any potential variation in parents' attitudes

depending on whether it is their own daughter who is raising a child outside of marriage, or somebody else. Yet as we know for example from the U.K., a parallel system of values, where grandparents condemn certain family choices, and yet end up supporting their own adult children in making these choices, is not uncommon (Smart 2005). Normative change can move not only 'forwards' across generations, i.e., from parents to children, but also 'backwards', with younger generations' norms and values influencing older people's. Japan is an excellent test case to observe this process because of the large intergenerational differences in values when it comes to illegitimacy.

Data and Methods

Qualitative methods were chosen for this project as these have been known to be invaluable in mapping out uncharted areas, particularly so when the subjects of the research are a tiny minority, difficult to capture with methods that aim at 'representativeness'. Non-marital pregnancies are a sensitive topic; non-marital births occur rarely and are highly stigmatized in Japan. In addition, it is virtually impossible for a researcher to distinguish mothers who had their children outside marriage from other single mothers, unless these women choose to identify themselves. These factors mean that face-to-face in-depth interviews are the most illuminating method for understanding the negotiation of non-marital pregnancy. In my wider research (Hertog 2009) I employed participant observation, online ethnography of unmarried mothers' chat rooms, and discourse analysis of public and popular culture to capture the everyday reality of single unmarried mothers in Japan. Discourse analysis of public and popular culture offered insights into images of unmarried mothers in the public consciousness, online ethnography of unmarried mothers' chat rooms and ethnographic observations of unmarried mother families (including volunteering in welfare institutions supporting such families) have helped me to detail the day-to-day concerns of unmarried Japanese mothers with children. While offering insights into welfare access, legal discrimination and child-rearing norms, however, these methods yielded limited information about the negotiations with significant others and the decision-making process these women went through when they found themselves unmarried and pregnant.

This chapter primarily draws upon sixty-eight in-depth semi-structured interviews with unmarried mothers and twelve semi-structured interviews with divorcees conducted in Japan between June 2004 and May 2005. To ensure diversity and avoid the risk of a uniformly-biased sample I used several ways of identifying and contacting potential interviewees. I relied on introductions from three lobby groups: Single Mothers' Forum (hereafter Forum), *Kongaiishi Sabetsu wo Tatakau Kai* (Association Fighting Discrimination against Illegitimate Children, hereafter *Konsakai*) and *Nakusō Koseki to Kongaiishi Sabetsu Kōryūkai* (Let's Eliminate Family Registry and Illegitimacy-Associated Discrimination Association, hereafter *Kōryūkai*). Active members of these three organizations introduced me to eleven unmarried mothers. Four more were enlisted through snowballing from these initial contacts. I also asked Forum, *Kōryūkai* and an internet chat room for single mothers (*Singuru Mazā Kaigishitsu*) to put information about my research on their websites. Through these advertisements, I recruited forty-one unmarried mothers to interview.

Twelve more never-married mothers were found in six Mother and Child Living Support Facilities (*Boshi Seikatsu Shien Shisetsu*). These facilities are welfare institutions providing free housing and general care to single mothers and their children. Only a small minority of single-mother families (around 4,000 of around 1.5 million in 2006) live in these facilities. Typically single mothers who are admitted have problems beyond simply being the sole breadwinners and child carers of their families, such as extreme poverty, homelessness, being victims of abuse and so on (M.H.L.W. 2006; Zenbokyō 2006).

When identifying respondents, I specifically aimed for diversity within the sample in terms of the following categories: age, income, education, employment type, and residence at the time the decision about childbirth was made. I interviewed women in urban and rural areas. The age of unmarried mothers varied from nineteen to seventy-three, but the majority of women (four-fifths of them) were in their thirties or forties, an age distribution similar to that of the sample of unmarried mothers in the Japan Institute of Labour survey (J.I.L. 2003). In terms of educational background, they ranged from junior high school graduates to women with doctorate degrees. Around two-fifths of the unmarried mothers I interviewed were employed full-time, about a third had various part-time working arrangements, a fifth were unemployed and four women were self-employed. This compared to a national distribution of 23.6,

41.5, 22.5 and 10.1 per cent respectively (J.I.L. 2003: 308, 326). The average income was 2.7 million yen a year, slightly higher than the 2.33 million yen a year estimated by the Japanese Institute of Labour in 2003 (J.I.L. 2003: 358).

I recruited a comparative sample of divorcees through the same avenues that I used to find the unmarried mothers. The age of the divorcees interviewed ranged from twenty-one to fifty-two and they were between fifteen and thirty-three when they had their first children. Their level of education ranged from junior high school to university. Some of them had only part-time jobs and some were employed full-time. Their average income was 2.5 million yen.

Family Reactions

For most of the unmarried mothers I interviewed their pregnancies were unexpected: results of a contraceptive failure, carelessness or a mistaken belief in one's own infertility. Only fifteen of the sixty-eight women planned their pregnancies.

None of these women shared these plans with their parents as they expected disapproval and were unwilling to face confrontation before they were sure they were actually pregnant. Thus the families of all the unmarried mothers I interviewed got involved in the decision-making only once their daughters were already pregnant. Parents played a very important role in the process. This is rather different from what we know, for example, about the United States, where Finer et al. note that fewer than one per cent of abortion patients say 'their parents' or partners' desire for them to have an abortion was the most important reason' (2005: 110; see also Edin and Kefalas 2005). Once it became clear to my unmarried and pregnant interviewees that the father of their child was not going to marry them, it was parental reactions with which the majority of them were most concerned. Even before the parents expressed their views, most women worried that their fathers would be completely against it, and kept wondering how they could make their parents understand.

Half of the women found it difficult to muster the courage to tell their parents about the pregnancy and delayed telling them for as long as possible. Concern about parents' reactions was shared by almost all women interviewed, so telling the parents involved a lot of strategizing, including deliberating over the means of communicating the pregnancy. Women whose pregnancy was undetected

by parents because they lived separately, had an easy pregnancy or did not gain much weight, often chose to avoid face-to-face disclosure. Rather they sent a letter or asked a relative to tell their parents. When Kumiko, a fifty-year-old self-employed university graduate, got pregnant at thirty-six she could not bring herself to tell her parents she was planning to have a child outside marriage. She waited until her younger brother went to visit her parents and gave him a letter to pass to them. Makiko, a thirty-four-year-old high school graduate, told her mother herself, but only in the sixth month of pregnancy, when abortion is no longer legally possible. She feared that if her mother 'understood earlier there would be a lot of trouble'.

Thirty-one out of sixty-eight unmarried mothers interviewed only dared to notify their parents when abortion was legally impossible because as Yoshiko, a thirty-year-old university graduate, explained: 'If I told them earlier they would have definitely made me have an abortion, I was expecting this reaction'. Having finally steeled themselves to tell their parents, few women expected a positive or even neutral reaction; many were preparing for the worst, some of them relinquishing any hope for parental support. Michiko, a twenty-eight-year-old high school graduate, remembered that her father was furious:

Michiko: 'Either you should have an abortion or get out of this house; choose!'

Hertog: Did you expect this?

Michiko: I expected that, so I thought I would have to leave. It is when my mother told me I could give birth that I was quite surprised. I thought she'd say 'have an abortion', she'd say 'go away' too.

While Michiko was pleasantly surprised by her mother's understanding, many more women saw their worst expectations come true. Parents of Akemi, thirty-six-year-old full-time employed high school graduate, were worried about what the neighbours would think, 'so they said they would like me to have an abortion. And if I did not, they would rather I left home. So I packed and left. Since then we have not really been in touch'. Akemi was neither surprised by this reaction nor found it particularly harsh. She commented: 'If an [unmarried] daughter gets pregnant just like that, no parent will say "how wonderful!"'

Unmarried mothers-to-be often based the decision to have a child outside wedlock on the presumption that they would have to

manage without help. Madoka, a twenty-seven-year-old dispatch worker with a high school education, ensured she would be able to support herself and her child, and then presented her parents with a *fait accompli*:

Realizing I was pregnant, I spent about a month sorting out things at work. I explained [my situation] at work [and was assured I could come back to work after a few months of childcare leave], I sorted out everything else and then went to my parents and informed them 'I did this and this and that, so now I am sure I will give birth'.

Generally speaking, parents who lived in big cities were more lenient, and those from rural areas were stricter and more prone to attach great importance to neighbours' opinions. Interestingly, there was no clear pattern of differences based on the parents' class, educational or professional background. The intergenerational interactions in this study, however, were profoundly gendered, with fathers tending to be less forgiving than mothers. My interviewees' mothers were rarely positive about the prospect of an illegitimate grandchild, but many of them reconciled themselves with their daughters' choices much more easily than their husbands. As often as not, mothers sided with their daughters and helped to talk the fathers round. According to my interviewees this greater tolerance from the mothers was to an extent due to their greater understanding of their daughters' feelings. According to a study done by the Japanese Institute of Labour, fifty-seven per cent of unmarried Japanese mothers had their children between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four (J.I.L. 2003: 302). This is the age when some women, especially those not in a romantic relationship, start feeling caught between the imperative to look for a husband and fear that while searching for a marriage partner they may lose their chance to have a child. Women's mothers often felt this even more acutely, as in their generation women married and had children much earlier than is common in contemporary Japan. The older the daughter, the more likely her mother was to accept her choice to give birth outside marriage. Tomoko's story illustrates how a desire for one's daughter to experience motherhood could trump a mother's opposition to illegitimacy. As Tomoko was approaching forty and was still unmarried and childless, her mother grew ever more alarmed. 'She kept saying "it would be better if you at least have a child ... even if you immediately divorce it is better if you marry and have a child" ... [Of course] she never encouraged me to have a child outside marriage'. Still when Tomoko, a self-employed university graduate, got

pregnant by accident at thirty-eight and thought she would like to keep the child even though there was no prospect of marriage, she met with little resistance. Her mother said 'Well, why not?'

Mothers' personal experiences with marriage also appeared to have a considerable effect on their reactions. When Kyoko's divorced mother did not particularly oppose her decision to have a child outside marriage, Kyoko was not surprised. 'She was a person who thought that a childless life is just not right. She felt even if this child is born outside marriage it is still better [to have it]. I think this was because her own marriage was a mistake.'

Fathers' reactions to the prospect of having an illegitimate grandchild were much more negative. Anticipating their reactions, many of the unmarried mothers-to-be first broke the news to their mothers and enlisted their support to mention the pregnancy to the father at the most opportune moment. As Yumiko's and Haruko's stories demonstrate below, these precautions were rarely sufficient to assuage the fathers' wrath. When she realized she was pregnant and had decided to keep the child, Yumiko, a forty-six-year-old civil servant with a university education, wrote a letter to her mother explaining the situation and asking her to tell her father about it in the best possible way. According to Yumiko her 'mother understood and agreed to think of how to explain it'. In spite of all their diplomatic efforts, Yumiko's father got extremely angry when he heard that she was about to give birth outside marriage. Refusing to listen to any explanations, he wrote to her saying that 'he does not want to see the grandchild, he does not recognize [this child] as his granddaughter. It was a terrible letter. I have never seen my father like that'.

Haruko, a thirty-nine-year-old university graduate in fixed-term employment, had a similar experience. She told her mother about her pregnancy and her decision to have a child outside marriage early on. Her mother, a practising Christian, was shocked and told her 'To be honest I do not know how to forgive you, although I must. The child, however, is innocent, I will help you for the sake of the child'. Haruko only dared to tell her father just before her son was born. After hearing the news he got extremely drunk and had to be hospitalized with alcohol poisoning. Hearing about this Haruko wrote him a long letter apologizing for her decision:

Soon the reply came back. It was a letter of notification of severing all ties with me. 'I do not think you are my daughter, do not think you are my child.' It was a letter severing ties. From then on he really refused to have anything to do with me for three years. Just before my

son became three we, for the first time, went to meet his grandfather. That was the first time he agreed to meet us.

Once a non-marital pregnancy was announced to the parents, they first of all investigated alternatives to out-of-wedlock child-bearing: a 'shotgun' marriage (*dekichatta kekkon*) and an abortion. For most parents (except two Christian families who opposed abortion) either of these was vastly preferable, and most unmarried mothers reported receiving a lot of pressure to opt for one or the other.

'Shotgun' Marriages: Striving for Ordinarity

In some cases parents did not just pressure their daughters towards marriage, but took the matter fully into their own hands. Two out of twelve divorced mothers I interviewed had their children within marital unions only because of the efforts their parents made to secure these marriages. Moreover in both cases it was reasonably clear that the marriages were unlikely to last, but still the women's parents found them preferable to having a grandchild born out of wedlock. Ai, one of the two divorcees, was twenty-seven at the time of her pregnancy, had a university education and an upper-middle-class upbringing. After a recent miscarriage she could not bring herself to have an abortion so she tried to secure a marriage. Her boyfriend, however, showed no desire to marry her. He told Ai that he wanted her to have an abortion and married somebody else shortly afterwards. Not knowing what to do, Ai turned to her parents for help. The rest of the story is quite dramatic:

[As a student my mother heard a talk about legal discrimination against illegitimate children which mentioned that to safeguard against such discrimination one should at least have a paper marriage before childbirth.] My mother, remembering that talk, thought probably in our case [a paper marriage] is also the only way. She sought a lawyer's advice, but he said we could sue for a certain amount of compensation only if the wife [of Ai's former boyfriend] got married knowing about me. But the more we heard about the case the more obvious it became that she did not know and in that case the law is not broken [said the lawyer]. 'It is impossible to press them to divorce from this side. On the contrary, they can sue us and as it will be disadvantageous, nothing can be done.' My mother got terribly angry and said the following to [the child's father]: 'If you at least talked to your parents or somebody else you could first have a paper marriage with my daughter and then the child would not be discriminated against as illegitimate. But because you got married, what will you do for us? Now there is nothing you can do apart from paying compensation!'

After this admonishment the father of Ai's child negotiated a divorce with his wife, married his pregnant ex-girlfriend, waited until the child was born, and then divorced Ai and remarried his first wife.

The second woman was Satomi, a twenty-one-year-old junior high school graduate who grew up in a working-class family and had her child at the age of sixteen. Satomi discovered her pregnancy only in the seventh month, when it was too late to have an abortion. The father of her child was not much older than Satomi and showed no interest in or ability to support a family. Still, Satomi explained:

... my parents and his parents met and registered the marriage papers. As we were both underage it was all arranged by parents. It was a shotgun marriage so no one was sure we would manage together but we decided to give it a try ... We never lived together, however; although we registered the marriage I stayed with my parents and he lived in his own apartment ... And then my husband did not work, got violent and continued having affairs ... in a year it looked completely hopeless and we separated.

Ai and Satomi came from very different backgrounds. Satomi's father was a plumber with only a junior high school education, her mother graduated from high school and stayed at home as a housewife and the family was always somewhat short of money. Ai's parents, on the other hand, were both university graduates; her mother went to Tokyo University, a rare accomplishment for a woman of her generation. With the father employed by a T.V. broadcaster and the mother working as a school teacher, the family was quite wealthy. In spite of the very different family backgrounds in the face of a non-marital pregnancy, both women were subjected to similar pressures and in both cases the families did their best to ensure marriages for their daughters. I will discuss the reasons for parents' strong wish to ensure their daughters only give birth within marriages below, but before I turn to that matter a few words need to be said about the other alternative to out-of-wedlock child-bearing, namely, abortion.

When Marriage is Impossible: Pressure towards Abortion

Few of my interviewees felt themselves capable or would have been allowed by their families to reject marriage when faced with a pregnancy. However, for more than half of the unmarried mothers I interviewed, marriage was out of the question since the father of their child was already married to somebody else. Only three unmarried mothers from my sample tried to push the men to divorce their wives. Most of those among my interviewees who had children

with single men did not pursue marriage because these men refused to cooperate.

When marriage was out of the question, parents almost invariably saw abortion as the best solution for a non-marital pregnancy and pressured their daughters towards it. This point is vividly illustrated by the story of Noriko, a thirty-nine-year-old full-time employed unmarried mother with a university degree. She had been dating a man for several years. When she turned twenty-six they were engaged to be married, and she discovered that she was pregnant. Happily, Noriko started preparing for a wedding. It turned out, however, that her boyfriend was seeing somebody else at the same time and he could not bring himself to marry Noriko. After lengthy and painful deliberations Noriko decided to have the child anyway. While there was a hope that Noriko would marry her son's father, her whole family was very supportive. However, when it became obvious that marriage was out of the question her parents altered their stance:

'we cannot force him into marriage if he is planning to marry another woman' ... and from the moment they understood my ex-fiancé was such an [unreliable] man they started pressuring me. 'Do not have this child!' They kept saying that until my pregnancy exceeded six months. Convincing them took more than two months ... only when I was more than six months pregnant did they give up.

Why Were Parents So Opposed to their Daughters Having Children Outside Wedlock?

A fundamental reason behind parents' opposition to their daughters having illegitimate children was the conviction that such children are destined to be underachievers and suffer from strong social prejudice throughout their lives. Given that the moral issues associated with abortion are focused on the welfare of the future mother and child and the effect on society in general, many of the parents believed abortion would be better for the child than being born outside marriage. Yuri remembered:

Of course [they say], 'What do you think about the child? Do you realize what a miserable situation your daughter will find herself in? Which discrimination she will face? You will not be able to explain to her about the father. Do you realize what a horrible thing you do raising a child without a father?' That is what they are angry about.

Many of the parents' concerns overlapped with those of their daughters (see Hertog 2009). Parents believed that a child needs a two-parent family to grow up in and a mother alone cannot properly replace a father as a breadwinner or provide the crucial male role model for her children. Also, both parents and daughters felt that, forced to substitute for a father, a woman will not be able to be a good mother. Unsurprisingly, given the older generation's greater conservatism, their belief in the importance of two-parent families for children was stronger than that of their daughters. The worry about the unborn child's prospects was mixed with a concern about the daughter, who, many parents feared, 'will just make it very hard for herself' by becoming a mother without being married. In addition to a general worry about the wellbeing of their daughter and her potential child, parents were much more sensitive to the stigma and shame associated with illegitimacy than their daughters.

This is illustrated by Asuka's story, which took place when Asuka's mother first came to visit her in the maternity ward where Asuka, a thirty-six-year-old university graduate, was recovering after childbirth. A nosy nurse loudly expressed concern for Asuka's 'poor child' and professed deep sympathy with the mother of a daughter who went on and gave birth to an illegitimate child. While Asuka herself was merely angry with the nurse and complained to the hospital authorities about this unwelcome intrusion, her mother was so embarrassed she never dared to visit Asuka in the hospital again.

The strong parental fear of stigma was reflected in their commitment to information management when they could not ensure their daughter's marriage or convince her to opt for an abortion. Some parents banned their daughter from visiting them with the newly-born grandchild. Others did not go so far, but invested a lot of effort into preventing the spread of information about their daughter's family situation. The parents of Kumiko, a fifty-year-old self-employed university graduate, were furious when they found out about her pregnancy:

They immediately said, 'Have an abortion! We will never forgive you!' But their attitude changed quickly too. They run their own business and they told everyone that I got married. Some relatives visited them at the time it seems and they told them I got pregnant and had a shotgun wedding.

One of the reasons why it was easy for Kumiko's parents to hide the truth is that they lived in Kyushu whereas she lived and worked in Tokyo. Haruko, whose son was six years old at the time of the

interview, told me that she did not mind telling relatives about her son, and so the close relatives from her mother's side knew. However, her father was finding it very difficult to deal with the situation:

He was a headmaster in an elementary school. He put both me and Daisuke [younger brother] through university. He was particularly proud that these were rather good universities. He had a family he was satisfied with. And then I had a child outside wedlock. This is a real minus, a real disadvantage for him. So he cannot talk about it. If he is asked whether I am doing well, he cannot answer anything but 'Aaah! She is working in Cambodia, she is a hard-working career woman!' The relatives on his side still do not know [about my son].

Unmarried mothers are held more responsible for their situation than divorcees. In cases involving divorced women, blame is often shared between husband and wife and this allows both the divorcee and her parents to reduce or even avoid stigmatization completely. Haruko described this perceived difference very poignantly:

My cousin on my mother's side is now thirty ... She got married and had a child, but when the child was about two years old she got divorced. The reason was that her husband started seeing another woman and so they separated. At that time I was told the following thing and it really freaked me out. I am a single mother, she is a single mother too, but the way we are seen, the way other relatives see us [is different]: Haruko became like that [a single mother], because she wished to, she decided that herself, but Yuko, it is as if she got into a traffic accident. In short, Yuko is not at all to blame. This way of thinking takes it for granted that only her husband is bad, because he started seeing another woman.

Given that disapproval of out-of-wedlock child-bearing is strongly correlated with age, it is hardly surprising that the parents of my interviewees feared condemnation by friends, relatives and neighbours of the same age. The parents were much less likely to meet understanding among their peers than their daughters were. The well-documented normative belief that holds parents responsible for their children's outcomes (Borovoy 2005; Fujita 1989; Ivry 2006; Jolivet 1997; White 1993) made them particularly sensitive.

In addition to normative pressures, the Japanese 'family register' (*koseki*) system encourages viewing child-bearing as something to be managed not only at an individual, but also at a family level, potentially promoting intergenerational power struggles over reproduction. The register system treats two generations (parents

and children) as a single unit, thus making the identities of parents and children interdependent (for a detailed discussion see Hertog 2009, Chapter 4). It is possible to see from a family register whether a daughter of a given family gave birth before entering a marital union, unless she takes steps to leave her parents' register prior to giving birth, and very few women are aware of this loophole.

The potential of family registers to stigmatize whole families for their daughters' choices has been reduced substantially in the past decades through reducing somewhat the level of detail of the information recorded and enforcing the confidentiality of the registers. As a result, the younger women in the sample were less concerned with keeping their family registers 'clean'. Most of my interviewees were in their thirties or early forties and few of them described the state of the family register as their main concern when they found themselves pregnant with no prospect of marriage. The women that felt the difference in the ways legitimate and illegitimate children were registered was unfair and believed it would be better if the situation was changed. Yet they were also likely to describe the difference as an administrative issue with little consequence for their everyday lives, as family registers are rarely used.

Nevertheless, the parents (who were mostly in their fifties and sixties at the time their daughters became pregnant) remembered the time when it was relatively easy for third parties such as prospective employers or potential parents-in-law to gain access to one's family register before making their final decision about employment or marriage. A history of illegitimacy in the family in those circumstances could have a dramatic negative effect on the prospects of all family members. This history of discrimination meant that all family members were interested in ensuring socially acceptable reproduction of their close relatives. Modern grandparents(-to-be) often continue to be influenced by the past discrimination and feel it is their responsibility to their daughters as well as the wider family circle to be involved in their daughters' family choices. Most parents actively struggled to manage their daughters' reproduction, opposing out-of-wedlock child-bearing by their daughters, believing it would only lead to suffering, both for the mother and the child.

In sum, most of my never-married interviewees experienced strong pressure to marry or have an abortion. This section has addressed why parents were so exceptionally sensitive when it came to the marital status of their daughters at childbirth. The question of why adult daughters were so worried about their parents' opinions

– with some considering an abortion in anticipation of parental reactions – remains open and is addressed in the next section.

Why Do Adult Daughters Attach So Much Importance to their Parents' Views?

This chapter is largely based on a sample of women who had children outside wedlock, in most cases against the wishes of their parents. This sample throws little light on how successful parents typically are in preventing their daughters from having children outside marriage. My interviewees, however, clearly demonstrated that daughters attach a lot of importance to their parents' views. The extent of their concern seemed somewhat disproportionate, especially for women in their mid-thirties who were in full-time jobs. Moreover, it seems reasonable to assume that my sample consists of daughters who were less sensitive to their parents' opinions, as, after all, they ultimately defied them.

Some of this concern with parents' reactions arose from the fact that on average it takes a Japanese woman a long time to achieve residential and financial independence. In their late twenties, only about fifty per cent of women consider themselves 'financially independent' or 'rather more independent than dependent on their parents', and in their thirties, forty-six per cent of unmarried women continue receiving financial help from their parents (Miyamoto et al. 1997: 64–68, 119). In 2005 an average of seventy-six per cent of unmarried women aged eighteen to thirty-four and seventy per cent aged thirty-five to thirty-nine coresided with their parents (N.I.P.S.S.R. 2005). Family formation usually leads to residential independence. However, single mothers' disadvantageous socio-economic environment means it is particularly difficult for them to achieve such independence. According to the *Longitudinal Survey of Children Born in the 21st Century*, twenty per cent of two-parent families with five-year-old children coreside with parents, while the corresponding figure for single never-married mothers is 55.3 per cent (Iwasawa and Mita 2008: 178).

Many single mothers not only find it difficult to afford a separate residence, but given their low incomes landlords often ask them to find someone who will guarantee their rents. In this situation being able to use one's parents as guarantors is a significant help. Even more women depend on parents for help with balancing work and childcare. Forty-nine per cent of mothers in full-time employment

with children aged less than eighteen months rely on the support of grandmothers in child-rearing (and for full-time employed mothers with children aged six months, the figure jumps to 57.1 per cent (M.H.L.W. 2003)). Forty per cent of single unmarried mothers in my sample received extensive support from their parents and most of these women believed that raising a child alone would have been impossible for them without their parents' help. For mothers of very young children parental support was often crucial for securing a job. Iwasawa and Mita's study (2008) has shown that coresiding with parents significantly increased a single mother's chances of having a part-time job in the first few years of her child's life.

Sachiko, a thirty-two-year-old full-time employed college graduate managed, to her surprise, to get a part-time job a few months after her baby was born and never had to face a long spell of unemployment after that:

I think these days when one is looking for employment the [employers'] condition [for hiring] is that there should be someone looking after the child if anything happens. I feel I was employed in the first place because there was someone [my mother] to look after the child. Even if I cannot go [home], there is someone instead of me there. I was always asked [about it]. Everywhere I went for job interviews I was always asked and because I could clear this point I was successful in getting jobs.

Child-rearing support was important for my interviewees for one more reason: in Japan children are believed to need a father figure to grow up normally (Hertog 2009). In single-mother families often women's own fathers were tasked with fulfilling this role. As Noriko, a thirty-nine-year-old university graduate explained: 'The grandfather plays a role of a father figure. I have a son, so he needs a father ... I get the grandfather to spend time and help me raise my son'. This common delegation of a paternal role to grandfathers made maintaining good relationships with them particularly important.

Securing their parents' support could be particularly difficult for unmarried mothers. According to Iwasawa and Mita (2008: 178), while seventy per cent of all single mothers coresided with their parents at the time their children were born, in the case of single never-married mothers the figure dropped to sixty-two per cent. The lower coresidency rate may reflect parental displeasure or fear of stigma, and may perhaps be the consequence of attempts to pressure their daughters towards abortions by threatening to give no support. In my sample of unmarried mothers, some women had to

wait for months or even years to be forgiven by their parents, and in the cases of a few women, relationships never normalized.

Finally, as already mentioned, parents were much more sensitive to stigma and shaming associated with grandchildren born outside of marriage. Several of my interviewees specifically mentioned that fear that they will make their parents suffer has contributed to their uneasiness about having a child outside of wedlock. Kaori, a thirty-one-year-old high school graduate, said for example that when she decided to carry her non-marital pregnancy to term she had first planned not to tell her parents anything because 'I was told by my parents long ago I should have a proper marriage. I felt sad to destroy [their dream]'. In sum, difficulties in securing parental support together with the strong need for it and a realization that their decision may cause intense shame to their families go a long way to explain why unmarried pregnant women were so worried about their parents' reactions to their choices.

Conclusion

In most industrialized countries over the past several decades the increase in child-bearing and child-rearing outside marriage has come to be seen as an unavoidable consequence of industrialization, modernization and concurrent change in social mores. Although Japan underwent most of the social and economic changes to which the growth of illegitimacy in the West is often attributed, the number of unmarried mothers there has remained minuscule. Most contemporary Japanese family trends follow those of Western industrialized countries: marriages happen later, cohabitation rates are growing, the birth rate is falling and the crude divorce rate is now close to the European average. Against this background the continuous strong association of marriage with child-bearing in Japan is striking.

This chapter analysed the intergenerational power struggles involved in the resolution of non-marital pregnancies, focusing in particular on the moral judgements that parents made when their unmarried daughters got pregnant. Japanese society stands out by the extent of the grandparents' involvement in and influence over their unmarried daughters' child-bearing decisions. Their involvement is encouraged by normative cultures and several state-level institutional structures that strongly benefit 'normal' two-parent families. In particular family registries have been shown to encourage family-level management of reproductive choices, while meagre

welfare support promotes adult daughters' economic dependence on their parents' support, especially when they need to combine work with child-rearing.

Grandparents' initial response to their own daughters' pregnancies tended to be negative and thus in line with the generally documented attitudes. Yet the grandparents in this study were revealed not to be moral automatons; their judgements varied in accordance with their own life histories and were open to change over time, i.e., we observe intergenerational change in child-bearing norms moving 'backward' as well as 'forward'. The responses of grandparents were highly gendered – talking about pregnancy outside marriage with grandfathers-to-be was often felt to be much more difficult, and many of the women approached their own mothers first and asked them to talk their fathers round. This gender difference was linked to men's and women's different experiences of family life in Japan. Grandmothers who themselves had had unhappy marriages were particularly liberal. A grandmother-to-be could also come to accept the idea of an illegitimate grandchild if she felt that this was the only way for her daughter to race against the biological clock and have any children at all. Grandfathers were slower to relent. Still, some of the grandfathers who had cut off their daughters completely upon learning that they had become pregnant outside marriage, ended up meeting, accepting and becoming involved with their grandchildren to the extent of providing them an alternative 'father figure'. Furthermore, it was not uncommon for the grandparents to attempt to resolve the conflict between their public abhorrence of illegitimacy and private acceptance of their daughters' choices through information management strategies, such as pretending their daughters had had hasty marriages and divorces, or that they were working elsewhere. This perceived necessity for deception speaks eloquently of their continued belief that one individual's reproductive choices can have an impact on the moral status of the entire family.

Grandparents' initially negative responses, in line with the generally hostile attitudes to child-bearing outside marriage among older Japanese people, may be an important factor contributing to the very low rates of child-bearing outside wedlock in contemporary Japan. Many women who find themselves unmarried and pregnant may feel like Junko, introduced at the beginning of this chapter. They feel they need their parents' support to be able to have children outside marriage and they may not have the courage to wait until their parents relent.

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Chapter 5

GRANDFATHERS, GRANDMOTHERS AND THE INHERITANCE OF PARENTHOOD IN ENGLAND, C. 1850–1914

Siân Pooley

An unprecedented proportion of fathers and mothers in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century England were raising children in the company of their own parents. This experience was becoming more common with each generation from the final quarter of the nineteenth century, as life expectancy rose and child-bearing became increasingly concentrated early in marriage (Anderson 1999). Yet older women and especially older men are conspicuous by their absence from much of what we know about the lives of fathers, mothers and their young children in these decades. This chapter explores how age, gender, place and class intersected in the passing-on of practices of parenthood within these multi-generational families. The analysis suggests that these relationships mattered in fundamental and multiple ways, but that working-class men's and women's evaluations of their own – and others' – parenthood were always centred on moral judgements about selfless adulthood. Not only did the presence of these men and women in later life have a lasting impact on the subjectivities of their children, and especially grandchildren, but grandparents' relationships with younger generations both sustained and fractured the socio-economic inequalities in whose shadows families were being formed.

There is a rich and long-standing literature on nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century British families. Over the last twenty years studies have built on the foundational research on the nuclear family and marital relationships by emphasizing four key characteristics: the presence and significance of wider networks of kin and ‘friendship’ (Davidoff 2012; Marcus 2007); the tensions, ambivalences and inequalities, especially of gender, at the heart of all familial relations (Clark 1995; Hammerton 1992); the emotional depth of familial and domestic intimacy as an integral part of masculinity as well as femininity (Roper 2009; Strange 2015; Tosh 1999); and the largely unproblematic gap with which men and women lived, between the moral principles that they often expressed vocally and the practices through which they lived their messy, contingent lives (Cohen 2013; Thane and Evans 2012). Research across the social sciences is increasingly demonstrating the significance of grandparents to the well-being of families (Chan and Boliver 2013; Long and Ferrie 2012), while historians have revealed some of the material and emotional importance of older men and women through analysing the autobiographical accounts of their grandchildren (Humphries 2011; Thane 2000; Thane 2010; Thompson, Irzin and Abendstern 1991). This chapter builds on this work by opening up some of the roles, practices and meanings of lifelong multigenerational parenthood as older men and women shaped the circumstances under which their children were growing to become parents.

Grandparenthood is approached here through a deeply contextualized, comparative study of three large contrasting localities in England. This allows us to consider – rather than to assume – which aspects of the multigenerational transmission of practices and values in raising children were peculiar to a particular place, class or gender, which patterns were common across England, and how this came to be so. The first locality, Bromley, was a small market town in agricultural Kent that, with the arrival of the railway from the 1850s, became only a twenty-minute train journey from London. The district attracted many comfortably prosperous families who lived in newly-built and increasingly suburban villas. In common with middle-class couples throughout England, these men and women substantially reduced their family size from at least the 1870s. This is compared to two localities that were dominated by working-class populations and norms. The town of Burnley in Lancashire grew around its cotton-weaving mills, which provided unusually well-paid opportunities for female and child employment. Many couples were unusual amongst the working class in reducing their fertility

from the 1870s. The third locality is Auckland in County Durham, where male employment was dominated by coal mining and heavy industry. There was little female employment available and average family size remained high until the First World War.

In the decades before 1914, it was rare for non-elite adult men or women to have the time or inclination to write about their families. Even if they had wished to, older generations often lacked the written literacy to do so. This means that the sources that allow historians to begin to consider how everyday working-class parenthood was practised and transmitted are inevitably patchy in their survival and often ambiguous in their meanings. This ambiguity is partly the result of having to read sources ‘against the grain’ from which they were formed more than a century ago: accounts that people offered to answer one set of questions are used to illuminate our own quite different ones; descriptions of the exceptional are used to interpret what was normal; and the narratives imposed by those with the authority to record and investigate cannot be assumed to be shared by those they sought to regulate (Samuel 1975: xiv–xviii; Peel 2012: 1–20). This chapter adopts this fragmentary approach so as to include something of the ineloquent and the mundane that suffused these most intimate relationships with meaning, significance and tension. Most of the sources considered emerge from the concerns of the state: through accounts of criminal court cases, through inquests that were reported in local newspapers and through the households listed in decennial census enumerators’ books. It should be noted that this focus on everyday practice recorded in state records allows us to examine the vast majority of the population, who were working class and therefore subject to state investigation and regulation in these decades. It neglects the most elite ten per cent of the population who seldom appeared in these records, but who more frequently and eloquently wrote about their familial relations in sources that were published and archived (Cohen 2013; Davidoff 2012). Insights from these state-authored sources are contextualized through comparison with the ways in which grandparenthood was recorded in published texts to which some of these men and women had access, as well as in the autobiographical narratives that people occasionally constructed from memory in later life, sometimes in published forms.

In exploring the inheritance of reproductive cultures, this chapter is structured around the two most widely used cultural tropes of grandparenthood. First, the extent to which child-rearing practices and values were divided generationally is examined, revealing

the power of cross-generational judgements about moral character. Second, the inequalities upon which these intergenerational relations were founded, but by which they were also fractured, are explored. This suggests the significance of the intergenerational transmission of practices of care between grandparents and grandchildren.

The War against the Practices of the Older Generation?

Middle-class advice writers constructed a novel generational narrative of how the transmission of parenthood was changing across the English-speaking world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Writers were ever more definite that they had identified a shift from a 'traditional' culture in which daughters learnt from, and sustained in adulthood, the practices of their mothers, to a self-consciously 'modern' outlook of contemporary young mothers who rejected the expertise of the older generation of women. Doctors were the most vocal exponents of this perceived shift. Dr George Smith's advice manual, *How to Feed a Baby* of 1907, was typical in opening by stating:

I am aware that books on this subject are looked upon with considerable prejudice by some mothers as interfering with their prerogatives, handed down from mother to daughter, generation to generation ... Their knowledge on the subject of infant feeding has until late never been questioned, but now war is being declared against the old, the time-accepted, and the prejudiced. The difficulty the young mother has in many cases to overcome is the advice tendered by her own mother and others. And what presumption lies in such advice given by a mother who has probably lost one or perhaps several children during infancy, whom nature intended, but fate forbade, to live! (1907: 4)

The 'war' against the ignorant, the superstitious and the dangerous was presented as a project of modernity, which was widely proclaimed in such elite-authored texts to be a generational phenomenon. Persuasive evidence – both personal and statistical – for the fewer children that 'modern' parents buried in infancy seemed to support this narrative of the shift away from the child-care practices of their presumptively advice-giving mothers. The rise of scientific infant care and the increasingly burdensome forms of working-class motherhood that it prescribed have been studied

extensively (Lewis 1980; Ross 1993; Wright 1988). Yet the relationship between this story of generational change and everyday practice within multigenerational families is far from clear. Grandfathers are notably absent in such didactic accounts, and how grandmothers responded to the younger generation of parents' supposed condemnation of the knowledge founded in their experience is not known. Further, it is apparent that what change there was in understandings of expertise and authority was slow. Post-war sociologists and subsequent analyses of oral history testimonies have concurred in arguing that mothers shifted towards placing greater trust in state-legitimated 'expert' advice only after the Second World War (Beier 2008; Davis 2012).

The fragments of working-class family life analysed here suggest that, in contrast to the narratives in advice manuals, generational conflict over child-rearing practices was rare throughout the period 1850–1914. It is difficult to substantiate this claim strongly since it is founded on the absence of evidence. Disagreements between husbands and wives about feeding, looking after, spending money on, schooling, disciplining or providing medical care for children are commonplace in surviving records. Yet generational differences in practices or attitudes to parenthood were seldom articulated as an issue that divided these three-generational families. As a result of the increased concern about infant mortality and the 'neglectful', 'ignorant' care that infants received, local authorities were increasingly active in the early twentieth century in bringing prosecutions against those who they believed were responsible for damaging the health or causing the death of a child. The records of court cases in which children became ill while in the care of a grandparent would be obvious contexts in which family members or expert witnesses had the opportunity to blame older generations' outdated, unscientific or inappropriate knowledge for the child's death. Yet in all of the cases where grandparents were mentioned in court, this attitude was never expressed. This was not because there were no attempts to allocate responsibility or because witnesses were loath to pass judgements on others' capabilities, as the following cases from Burnley in Lancashire indicate.

In contrast to the other studied localities, local philanthropic and state institutions in Burnley had been unusually vigilant in investigating and prosecuting cases of child neglect from the 1860s. The introduction of the 1908 Children Act across England and Wales established new offences with which parents, who were thought to be failing to provide adequate care, could be charged, including

through the absence of a fireguard (Hendrick 1994). On Good Friday 1909, Thomas Naylor, a labourer in a warehouse, went on a bank holiday outing to Blackpool, returning in the early hours of the morning. His wife had died two years earlier (B.M.D. 1907), so he was bringing up five children, aged between two and twelve years, alone. His mother, Margaret Naylor, aged around fifty-four and also living in the town, 'kept house for her son' that day while he went to the seaside resort. The verb used – to keep house – reveals the way in which this role was normatively interpreted. It was primarily about the complex labour of sustaining all the parts of a household – to metaphorically as well as practically keep a fire burning in the hearth of the four-roomed home – rather than being centred on the provision of specifically feminized, individualized childcare. This also highlights the need to explore how intergenerational interaction was gendered rather than to assume that mother-daughter bonds mattered most. Demographic circumstances in these decades made it practically necessary to mobilize intergenerational duties and companionship that crossed genders. In spite of a slowly increasing adult life expectancy from the late nineteenth century, families rarely had a choice about which grandparent to form a close relationship with. It was not until the interwar years that a grandmother who had followed a demographically average life course would expect to live to meet all of her grandchildren (Anderson 1999: 53), and it took longer for a grandfather, on average, to live to do this. The opportunity for most working-class families to rely on mother-daughter bonds in post-war Britain (Young and Willmott 1957) was thus a recent historical phenomenon, the product of transformative demographic change, not a feature of 'traditional' working-class 'community'.

Margaret Naylor's three older grandchildren took themselves out for a day trip, but while Margaret was lying down upstairs, three-year-old Florence fell in the fire and later died of her burns. At the inquest, Margaret was subject to intense questioning as to why she had allowed her granddaughter to fall in the fire, but the explanations that she, her son, the neighbours and the coroner sought to offer all related to her moral qualities and especially whether or not it was drunkenness that had prompted her to go to bed. No reported interest was shown in whether or not the grandmother was practically capable of looking after the children (when sober or drunk), her age or experience, or whether she understood recent child protection laws. While the coroner painted the fact that she had drunk a 'share of two pints at dinner time' as 'disgraceful' and suggested

that she had a reputation for drunkenness, her son defended her character. When asked ‘Has your mother been in the habit of taking drink?’, he replied, ‘No, but she likes her glass like anybody else. We can’t get drink off £1 a week.’ It was a judgement based on the moral character of the older woman, rather than her knowledge, which the authorities believed determined whether or not she was capable of providing childcare. In responding to this allegation and seeking to defend his mother, Thomas similarly did not emphasize her specific earlier experience in having raised her own family, but sought to present his mother as just ‘like anybody else’ in her habits. He resisted the gendering of moral virtues by instead speaking of the prized companionship that ‘anybody’ enjoyed through alcohol and the shared predicaments of chronic poverty that the ‘we’ of mother and son experienced.

Interestingly, although reported more briefly in the *Burnley Gazette* (24 April 1909: 8, 8 May 1909: 2), presumably because it was thought to be less sensationally interesting to readers, it was also the morality of providing care that was used to attack Thomas’s failures in his paternal role. It was alleged that ‘if the father could afford to go to Blackpool he should have taken reasonable care to provide something to protect children from fire’. As a relatively new form of popular leisure activity, trips to seaside resorts by groups of young bachelors were an accepted part of growing to working-class manhood, but this sort of leisure activity was more morally dubious when enjoyed by poor lone fathers. Good childcare – whether by men or women, parents or grandparents – was not about what carers knew or even how they practised it, but about the lax moral conscience that led them away from being attentive and selfless towards the children in their care. Perhaps partly as a result of their awareness of the dominance of this moral interpretation of the raising of children, both father and grandmother were reported as articulating to the courts the impact that the tragedy had on them. This was expressed by the father by his need to tell of his purchase of a fireguard within a day of his daughter’s death and by the grandmother through her description of her ‘deep sorrow’. Although a verdict of accidental death was recorded, the local authorities were not persuaded by the argument that Florence’s death was an accident for which no one was culpable, so successfully prosecuted both the father and grandmother for neglect under the 1908 Children Act. Each pleaded guilty and was fined ten shillings – half of Thomas’s estimate of his weekly household income. Within four months of this verdict, Thomas got married again to a younger woman and

Margaret died soon afterwards (B.M.D. 1907, 1909, 1911; Census 1901, 1911). At the most superficial level, this was a court case about how quickly those who cared for children responded to new, technologically modern, expert-driven and state-legislated norms. Yet all of the actors, including the elite coroners and magistrates, interpreted these new demands as resting on the already well-established, shared and uncontroversial belief that the practice of caring selflessly for children made fathers, mothers and grandparents moral. Choices that undermined attempts to strive for this character were dubious. Thus, even at the end of this time period and in localities that were most rigorously proactive in imposing new state-legitimated practices of childcare on parents, the model of generational divide did not seem to cross people's minds as a way of understanding changing parenthood or of explaining reproductive practices.

Compared to the number of court cases in which grandmothers were reported as having been 'looking after' children, there are relatively few cases in which grandfathers were recorded as being responsible for providing childcare. This could be interpreted in three contrasting ways. It could be a direct reflection of the rarity with which grandfathers interacted with grandchildren. Yet given that fatherhood was central to working-class men's intimate lives and sense of adult masculinity (Strange 2012), it would be illogical to place much explanatory weight on grandfathers' lack of involvement, especially given that we know that with age and infirmity men spent an increasing proportion of their days at home (Thane 2000). Second, it could be an indication of grandfathers' perceptions that even when children were nursed on their laps and were playing around their feet, the older men understood themselves to be substituting for a female relative rather than being held responsible for the supervision that they were providing. Or, third, it could suggest that families were aware that when facing a court case in which they had to explain their childcare practices, it was a better defensive strategy to identify a mother, aunt or grandmother as being in charge, a tactic that allowed the much less publicly-scripted, but routine, acts of 'looking after' provided by children, men and unrelated individuals to be hidden.

This is illuminated by one case in which a grandfather did provide evidence on how he looked after his granddaughter. In 1894 a young couple in their mid-twenties, again from Burnley, married: Wilson Palmer worked as a carrier and Ellen Hurley was a dress-maker. They shared a four-roomed home with Ellen's widowed

father, John Hurley, where their daughter Isabella was soon born. Ellen continued to work as a sewing machinist after Bella's birth, leaving the child in the care of her grandfather. However, in 1899, five-year-old Bella died and Ellen was prosecuted for neglect. The following court evidence on the care provided for the child was reported in the *Burnley Gazette* (26 May 1900: 6):

Dr Robinson corroborated and said that although the grandfather had attended to the child in every way he could, yet it did not receive the attention which it needed from the mother. – Wilson Palmer, the husband, elected to give evidence, and said his wife had been giving way to inhabitants [*sic*] of intemperance for some time. She neglected the child, but the grandfather gave it good attention. – John Hinley [*sic*], the grandfather, said the child had not been neglected. He had looked after it, and being an old army man he could do as well for it as its mother. He attended the child when it was taken ill and had carried out the doctor's instructions. – Defendant said she had not neglected the child, but left it in its [*sic*] grandfather's care, because she went out to work as a baby linen manufacturer at Mrs Walkdens.

It was typical of Burnley that none of the commentators implicated maternal work as leading to the neglect of the child. Indeed, it was by emphasizing the respectability of her own skilled employment that Ellen countered the condemnation of her character. About one-third of mothers in the town recorded themselves as being in paid work. This norm of highly-paid, regular female employment grew out of, but was not confined to, those employed in weaving sheds, but was exceptional across the nation. In the other two studied localities in County Durham and Kent only two and eight per cent of mothers respectively recorded themselves as being in paid employment in 1901 (Census 1901). Instead of making work culpable, the case again underlines the significance of the perceived moral weakness of turning selfishly towards drink, and thus turning away from striving for her child, as a marker of inadequate motherhood. Ellen Palmer was found guilty of neglect and fined twenty shillings.

Yet in contrast to the consistent, nationally-articulated and legally-enforced moral script that created a strong model of how a man or woman was a good parent – always most sharply, vocally and sensationally articulated in relation to mothers in the popular press – there was no agreement on how to interpret the grandfather's care. The doctor identified Bella's need for maternal 'attention', but he could not specify what the five-year-old lacked when in her grandfather's care. Before the mid-twentieth-century rise of theories of maternal

attachment, there was indeed no coherent, widely cited explanation as to why the gender, generation or blood relationship of a carer to a child mattered (Shapira 2013). What is most revealing, however, is that when John Hurley rejected the critique of how he ‘attended’ to his granddaughter, he founded his claims neither on his experience as a father of at least three children who had grown to adulthood nor on the domestic skills derived from his work as a ‘cook shop keeper’ only a few years earlier (B.M.D. 1894, 1895; Census 1901, 1911). Instead, he used his status as ‘an old army man’ to make claims to good character. When John had served in the army in Ireland and around the ‘East Indies’, he had been accompanied by his wife and children, but it would be surprising if he believed that any personal experiences of his own fatherhood would be immediately intelligible and persuasive evidence for the court. Instead, John used his pride in his own service to speak to the masculine ideal of the army’s reliability, resourcefulness and strength of character (Dawson 1994). He could thus sound convincing in explaining how he could ‘do as well for it as its mother’. Grandparents’ confidence lay in the evidence of moral habit, but that experience did not solely derive from their own parenthood. The knowledge of how to look after a five-year-old was assumed, but his moral strength to do this had been crystallized and made persuasive to others by his decades of serving the nation and regulating the empire. In the same way that fatherhood and motherhood were understood to be complementary – and thus essential to what allowed men and women to be conceptualized as fundamentally different – it was assumed that grandparenthood was naturally gendered. Grandfathers needed to explain their moral capacity to be the primary carer for children, while grandmothers had to explain if they had lost this moral virtue. Both, however, practised the habits of ‘attending’ to the young on an everyday basis.

It is thus clear that, irrespective of gender, the capacity of working-class older men and women to look after their grandchildren was taken for granted by their own family and neighbours, and accepted by elite and state-legitimated onlookers. This might appear surprising when placed in the context of publicized contemporary representations of older women. The popular press in these decades created frequent moral panics about shrivelled old women acting as paid ‘baby-farmers’ and using murderous, neglectful and ignorant practices to harm their charges (Bentley 2005; Grey 2013). This powerful script, however, was not made relevant when people made sense of familial care that lacked this mercenary, and

therefore always potentially selfish, basis. Working-class familial and local practices for raising children were diverse across England, such that quite different patterns of feeding, nappy-wearing or the gendering of parental roles were normative in the three studied localities (Pooley 2010). Yet elites within these localities understood these norms and, even when critical in principle, rarely thought that they had the power to work against them without parents' consent. Even following these exceptional and acknowledged private tragedies, the courts were unable to enforce reformed practice, but instead relied on press publicity, community norms and parental guilt (and a presumption of the material means to respond to this guilt) to effect change. The morality that underpinned the judgements, however, was shared more fundamentally across England than were the practices of care. Importantly, the working-class men and women to whom the principle of the centrality of selflessness to parenthood was being applied showed no signs of rejecting this moral code, but only sometimes disagreed on where the boundary to selfishness was crossed. These ideals of selflessness were actively taught to children in schools, Sunday schools, churches and especially homes across England, so as to cut across boundaries of class, gender and place in these decades (Brown 2001; Olsen 2014; Roper 2009). It was thus assumed that the practices through which one brought up a child were shared between familial generations. Even when elite child-rearing texts, powerful experts and the state were introducing new ways to provide for children and to regulate those who supervised them, there was little practical questioning of the capabilities, experience and necessity of the care provided by grandparents.

The War against the Power of the Older Generation?

The intimate, everyday practices of looking after children were not fractured by generational differences in knowledge or by the much more powerfully invoked cultural understandings of morality, but this did not mean that the transmission of parenthood between generations occurred seamlessly. The second cultural script of grandparenthood was again feminized and presented grandmothers similarly as a social problem. Older women were culturally and socially conceptualized as destructive women, capable of wielding the power to disrupt the marital harmony of the nuclear family. Such images of elderly women were of course far from new (Botelho and Thane 2001; Chase 2009), but in the nineteenth century older women's

power was understood to be founded more in the accidental results of their ineffectual meddling than their authoritative command or evil powers. Mothers-in-law figured in comic, misogynistic songs that compared the ‘uproar’ of married life, exacerbated by visiting grandmothers, to the ‘bachelor’s life’ when a man was ‘single and happy’ (Diprose 1884). Intended in a more serious vein, young women were warned in didactic texts against ‘helplessness’ soon after becoming mothers: ‘If her mother be living near, daily visits are implored; this intercourse leads to interference in household matters, and thus discontent is produced between husband and wife’ (Warren 1865: iii). While the first trope of generational rupture lacked practical purchase amongst working-class families, this gendered and generational negotiation of power did resonate with men and women, including among those who were unlikely to have read these didactic texts. Yet what made these intergenerational encounters particularly fraught was not the intrusiveness of grandmothers’ ‘interference’, but the families’ variously constrained material circumstances, which necessitated diverse forms of grudging dependence in adulthood. These patterns will be traced through the thread of the relations of power and dependency that developed between four generations of one working-class family before the First World War. They lived in the market town of Bishop Auckland in northeast England, a district where such intergenerational disputes were unusually frequent in records of schooling, criminal trials and inquests.

John Lieser was born in Germany, but by 1856 he had married Mary, an Irish woman, and settled in County Durham. There he brought up at least six children and worked as an ‘instrument maker’, while the older generations of both John and Mary’s families apparently remained overseas. Given that we have no quantitative measures of how engaged older men and women were with the lives of their adult children in these decades, it is useful to begin by considering the proportion of parents of children who were – unlike Mary and John – likely to have their parents (and indeed any kin) living nearby. In common with most parts of England throughout the nineteenth century, the populations of the studied areas were growing rapidly and were highly mobile. The specific chronologies of economic development in each locality determined the precise generational dynamics. In 1861 it was the coal-mining district of Auckland, where the Lieser family settled, whose population was most mobile. Parents who were likely to lack frequent face-to-face contact with their own parents predominated, such that fewer than

one-fifth of parents living with at least one child aged under twenty-one had themselves been born within the 60,000-acre registration district. Similarly, only just over half had been born within the county of Durham and ten per cent – like Mary – were migrants from Ireland. However, by 1901 more than twice as many parents had been born within the district, enabling much more prolonged intergenerational interaction and more stable ‘community’ norms to develop, especially between generations of mothers, who were less mobile than their husbands. By contrast, the suburban growth of agricultural Bromley occurred later in the century, so that while almost thirty-five per cent of parents living with children aged under twenty-one in the 1860s had been born in the district, this proportion had almost halved to eighteen per cent among their counterparts by the 1900s. As a result, within living memory, intergenerational interactions were experienced through opposite chronological narratives of change. The textile town of Burnley had developed fastest early in the nineteenth century, so that throughout the second half of the century around forty per cent of fathers and mothers had been born within the town. Extensive networks of kin and the presence of at least one grandparent nearby were thus more normal for young parents in the town (Census 1861, 1901). As these quite different localities suggest, there were few parts of England that could be considered to be stable, homogenous ‘communities’ over several decades in this period. Although it is possible that some of the migrants’ elderly parents had also settled in the same area, it is clear that intergenerational bonds and tensions were as vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the economy and of the resulting flows of migration as they were to demographic contingency. Migration mattered in shaping how these distinctive, localized cultures of parenthood were passed on.

These diverse experiences of migration were reflected in patterns of three-generational coresidence, which were also consistently highest in Burnley. This was in spite of the greater shortages of housing in the other two, later developing, districts. In 1861 thirteen per cent of working-class parents in Burnley were raising children while living with one (or occasionally two) of their own parents, contrasting with only five per cent in Auckland and three per cent in Bromley at the same date. Importantly, in both 1861 and 1901 mothers in Burnley who were recorded as being in paid employment were only two percentage points more likely to be sharing their home with wider kin than were those who did not record themselves as being in paid work, suggesting that these high rates

of coresidence cannot primarily be explained by working mothers' need for practical assistance at home. Rates of three-generational coresidence increased among grandmothers and their adult daughters in Auckland with the decline in in-migration (and were the source of frequent disputes), but among working-class families in Bromley in Kent three-generational coresidence was never accepted as anything other than a temporary, grudging solution (Census 1861, 1901). Nevertheless, in all three districts the day-to-day presence – either through coresidence or living within walking distance – of a parent was a haphazard and unequally available bond for men and women raising their own children, rather than an inevitably interfering female presence. Interestingly, cases of intergenerational dispute seldom reached the magistrates' court when adult children and their parents had been sharing a home. This is not to suggest that there were no tensions between generations, but that these were clearly managed privately or informally and thus in ways that are seldom articulated in the historical record. In order to find a way into understanding the negotiation of intergenerational power relations, it is useful to consider the two principal forms of unwilling dependency in adulthood that did generate disagreements that were sufficiently intense, prolonged or open to need resolution in a way that was publicized through courts and the press.

When multiple generations did live sufficiently nearby and for long enough to interact face-to-face while raising children, the youthful age of parents was the first common feature that was identified publicly as problematic by the older, younger or both generations. John and Mary Lieser's children grew up in a locality in which young people expected to marry early. In Auckland, age at marriage remained low and amongst some young people was falling in these decades, while the median age at marriage across England rose by about two years, reaching twenty-seven years for men and more than twenty-four years for women by the 1910s. This unusual reproductive culture was largely the result of the gendering of economic opportunities: muscular young men could earn relatively high wages from their late teens as coal hewers underground, young women had almost no local opportunities for paid employment and often sought to escape unpaid domestic labour in their parents' homes, and many of the owners of the large coal mines provided tiny, but independent, homes for their young employees on marriage as an incentive to young men to remain working underground. In 1861 fifty-nine per cent of women in Auckland in their early twenties had already married (Anderson 1999: 32–33). It

was thus unusual, but not extraordinary, when in 1886, at the age of fourteen or fifteen John's youngest daughter, Kate Lieser married a local-born coalminer, Robert Stobbs, two years her elder (B.M.D. 1886). By 1889 people still commented that they both 'looked very young, and did not at all present the appearance of having been married three years last July'. Their only child, Sarah, was born within a year of their marriage, so it is possible that Kate's awareness of her pregnancy made the marriage urgent. In reporting on problems that were articulated publicly within three years of the Stobbs's marriage, the local newspaper used the headline 'the sequel to an early marriage'. The journalist – like many middle-class state-legitimated commentators across England – framed the story as the result of the couple's shared youth on marriage. This irresponsibility was increasingly constructed as a social problem that was normally blamed on the moral recklessness of young men and women in not containing their ambitions for longer. Yet across England the challenge of negotiating autonomy between what rapidly became two generations of parents was made acute by the temporary lending of necessary money and furniture – especially the symbolically weighted marital bed or cradle – on marriage. It was rare for older men and women to be willing to continue for many months without their possessions, so it was the negotiation of the return of these objects that then became the emblems of much wider tensions in which grandfathers (who, if living, had ownership of these goods) were central players. It was thus the context of the chance to almost – but not quite – realize young men's and women's aspirations for autonomy that made these relations especially intense, as two generations of parents were forced into, often reluctant, contact through their simultaneous material vulnerability.

It was these inequalities in wealth that were part of a wider second source of gendered intergenerational tensions, amongst older as much as younger marrying couples: parents turned to their own parents when they were already dealing with periods of crisis in their own lives. In this case, within three years of the Stobbs's wedding, their marriage was in difficulties. Kate Stobbs accused her husband of both neglecting to financially maintain his family and of violence towards her. She was reported in the *Auckland Times and Herald* (24 October 1889: 5) as having given the following testimony in the local police court:

Complainant [Kate Stobbs] said it was three weeks last Friday since her husband brought anything into the house for her and the child

to eat, and they had not had anything to eat during that time except what her mother had taken them. Last Wednesday her husband took her by the neck and pushed her and the child out of the house. She went back afterwards and found all the things had been taken out of the house and the door locked. In the meantime she saw her husband and he said a stable was good enough for her and the child to sleep in.

Fluctuations in food, fires, furniture and front doors were the markers that signified the relative well-being of a marriage. Their loss was a feared, immediately legible, clue to onlookers, including to the couple's parents, that a marriage was troubled. As their relationship struggled, Kate made, and then withdrew, an allegation of assault against Robert, but asserted in court that, 'I am afraid to live with him; I am afraid of my life'. The young father and mother sought refuge in their respective parental homes, both of which were then within a few miles from their previous marital home. Yet as in the case of the much older Margaret Naylor whose moral probity was questioned because of her drinking, both the husband in his testimony and the landlord (who said he had evicted the couple because of the wife's 'horrible language – the worst he had ever heard') made Kate's moral failures culpable for the destruction of the family home. In their interpretation, it was not the irresponsibility of youth, but Kate's inadequate femininity and maternity that were responsible for undermining the home into which she had brought her daughter.

The defence typically built on these arguments for the culpability of failed youthful maternity by blaming marital breakdown on intergenerational relations between mothers and daughters. Robert Stobbs's lawyer argued that there was no failure on the part of the husband to maintain his masculine and paternal duties, but instead 'it was only a case of mother-in-law'. Understood as a routine problem of family life by the local court and reading public, the wife's mother was too present, too proactive and too influential for the necessary gendered inequalities of marriage to be sustained. Such intergenerational explanations were especially common in this coal-mining district where families were built on the expectation that wives and mothers had access to few resources except those that were supplied by their breadwinning husbands. So, in countering these accusations of routine feminized intergenerational meddling, the grandmother, Mary Lieser, spoke in court of her relationship with her daughter and granddaughter:

She had paid them visits, and found they had no food in the house.
On four different occasions she took them some food, on the last

occasion she took them a cake and 6d [pence] to buy some tea or coffee. Defendant [Robert Stobbs] had said he would starve her daughter in, as she had no home of her own.

Grandmother and mother thus created an emotive narrative of their shared intergenerational female victimhood in the courtroom: a child abandoned to sleep in a stable, a mother assaulted on her own doorstep, and a grandmother sharing her meagre earnings with the two younger generations so as to undermine the male breadwinner's weapons of starvation. Absent from this account – though perhaps evident from appearances in court or known by local readers – was the inequality between the relative comfort of Robert's parental home and that of Kate's. Kate reported that 'Her husband went to sleep at his mothers', a relatively spacious house of six rooms. It is typical that the home was identified with his mother, but the household was supported by the wages of at least three men, including Robert's father, all of whom earned high wages in the coal mines, and Robert could add his regular earnings to the household's budget. Kate, however, had no earnings. By then her mother, Mary Lieser, was in her late fifties and also living separately from her husband, working as a peddler, but not earning sufficient to pay rent to maintain a stable home. Thus, both husband and wife turned to their own mothers to deal with this familial crisis, in the same way that fathers and mothers did when coping with illness, bereavement and unemployment. Yet in spite of the fact that it was the paternal grandparent's home that offered the most secure household, it was through the narrative only of unacceptable mother-daughter relationships that these ties were held responsible for marital breakdown in court and made into a social problem for the readers of the press. The trope of the meddling grandmother intervening in her daughter's marriage was drawn on at times across England. It was, however, made especially resonant and relevant by men who sought to reproduce a model of parenthood with strongly gender-differentiated roles and freedoms that emerged most powerfully in particular economic, demographic and social contexts.

As one of the principal sources of support in dealing with the vicissitudes of life on the edge of poverty, the contexts in which the two generations of adults came into these most publicized – and presumably for some the most intense and remembered – contact were during these periods of perceived crisis. Yet it is important to finish by briefly underlining the importance of the youngest children in shaping how parenthood was passed on. Contemporaneous sources

rarely offered reflections by the children who were at the centre of these disputes about how to live as parents. Yet it is clear from snippets of everyday interactions that emerged in these accounts that it was children who were most commonly the intermediaries in these sometimes grudging and fraught relationships between generations in adulthood. While their own fathers and mothers were immersed in the demands of their own paid or unpaid labour to sustain their household, it was through the relationships between children and any surviving, nearby or coresident grandparents that a particular form of intimacy developed. Such relationships were founded in early childhood on supplying and sharing food, on running errands for and between the two older generations, and on spending relatively unregulated free time as an occasional, unremarkable and cherished part of the social life of their grandparents. An indication of the significance of these relationships in the contexts of greatest vulnerability is offered if we return briefly to the Lieser family. In spite of their publicized problems, Robert and Kate Stobbs followed the magistrate's parting advice and returned to each other, with their only child, Sarah. Yet whatever the problems of the grudging dependence with Robert's mother-in-law – or perhaps because of them – within a few years the couple turned to living in an explicitly interdependent household that spanned three generations. By 1901 four people from three generations were living in just one room: Robert, Kate, their fourteen-year-old daughter Sarah, and Kate's sixty-nine-year-old widowed mother, Mary Lieser. Mary died in 1905. The following year her great-granddaughter was born, seemingly the illegitimate daughter of nineteen-year-old Sarah. Sarah named the child Mary, perhaps a reflection of the centrality of the infant's great-grandmother's life to the stability and security of the home in which Sarah had grown to motherhood. By 1911, the household had constituted itself in a new multigenerational form: Robert and thirty-nine-year-old Kate were bringing up their five-year-old granddaughter, Mary, sharing their three-roomed home also with Kate's younger brother, a travelling showman. Their daughter, Sarah, had apparently married and moved to start a new legitimate family elsewhere.

Early parental mortality, family breakdown and large average family size meant that in 1901 eleven per cent of working-class children aged under thirteen were living without at least one of their parents, and three per cent lacked both (Census 1901). In seeking to avoid institutional provision, most of these vulnerable children relied on care from whomever in their family was willing to take

them in. In this way, grandparents were especially significant to the survival of these many, most vulnerable, children who lacked parents with the ability to maintain a stable home throughout their childhoods (Alexander 2010; Thane and Evans 2012) or to act as models of parenthood on which they might draw later in life.

Yet relationships with a grandfather or grandmother were also formative for children who did not lack parental support. First, it was through relationships with grandparents that many young children began to learn the practices and moral values of familial care. Boys and girls spent time in the company of, and consequently reciprocally attended to, their increasingly frail and often isolated grandfathers or grandmothers. Davin (1996) and Ross (1993) have argued that girls were moulded into motherhood through caring for their younger siblings, but these norms of providing care were also absorbed, practised autonomously, and given meaning for children in the presence of grandparents, irrespective of gender. Typical of this was the care provided for John Howe, an 'old man', who died aged sixty-four in Bishop Auckland, County Durham in 1901. At the inquest his nine-year-old grandson described how 'he visited his grandfather on Sunday last, and saw him both morning and afternoon. He was alone sitting by the fire. He ... took him some caster oil, ginger "snaps" and threepennyworth of whisky in the afternoon' (*Auckland Times and Herald* 11 January 1901: 7). The older man had both refused to access the state's welfare provision by entering the workhouse and had rejected the option of sharing the home of his married daughter, the wife of a fruit hawker. So instead she sought to sustain her father through the mediated care she could offer through her young son. These roles were partly taken on through children's own volition and enjoyment of their grandparents' company, but they were also often charged to be the envoys and representatives of the middle generation, who were more rarely and often less comfortably in the company of their own parents. Although importantly rarely conceptualized as such, the passing-on of one of the central aspects of familial care occurred not only between mothers and their daughters, but also across three generations and across genders.

Second, the idealized cottage of a childhood home was a common, nostalgic trope in popular culture throughout these decades (Diprose 1856; Wilkinson 1875). However, when the generation of children who grew to adulthood around the First World War reflected in autobiographical sources from the mid-twentieth century on why they had chosen to bear only two or three children and

how they had escaped the routine insecurity of their childhoods, grandparents were an especially emotive model whose lives they used to explain the parents they had grown to become. These older men and women were described not just as figures of drudgery and self-sacrifice, as their mothers often were, but as the representatives of a set of clearly articulated and remembered opinions, of 'saintly' lives lived in another era (Barlow Brooks n.d.: 33), of evidence for the malleability of moral and sexual norms, and of bodies and selves that were quite different to those this twentieth-century generation now thought normal. Harold Heslop's account of 1971 formed part of this autobiographical genre. He had grown up in County Durham from 1898, the son of Primitive Methodist pit foreman, but he recalled the contrast that he saw between his parents and his grandmother. He characterized – admiringly – the older woman as the 'most unreligious woman I have ever met', whose 'every spoken thought held a sexual urge' and who fruitlessly advised her daughter against allowing herself to experience more than five pregnancies. In writing from memory, he emphasized the generational distance that she represented, as a 'peasant bawd in her own right', and her distinctively aged features that had remained with him for life: 'I remember her face, an unknissed, unloved parchment made by the years' (Heslop 1994: 55, 82). Grandfathers as much as grandmothers figured prominently as – lovingly described – models of long-vanished parenthood. Of course, when this younger generation started to think of their grandparents in this way is unknowable. Yet it is clear that the reproductive cultures that they felt they had pioneered were understood by them to be malleable partly through their childhood interpretations of this oldest generation with whom they were intimate.

Conclusion

At the most basic level, it is clear that it is rewarding to think more carefully about lifelong relationships between parents and children, which continued to influence social practices, moral values and cultural choices long after a child's infancy. Given that in the decades that social history was developing as an approach, social scientists were charting the centrality of the mother-daughter bond to what they identified as the 'traditional' working-class family of the mid-twentieth century (Townsend 1957; Young and Willmott 1957), it is surprising that there is relatively little research on

relationships between generations of parents. While the power of older women was increasingly stigmatized and subject to misogynistic mocking in the popular and elite print culture of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century England, working-class men's relatedness and engagement with their families was largely written out of published scripts. In spite of this binary gendering of intergenerational relationships, it is clear that cultures of reproduction were not simply the domain of mothers and their young daughters, but understandings of the power of passing-on were integral to interactions between generations of working-class men and women alike, throughout their insecure lives. This suggests the importance of examining age and generation as lived, malleable categories, not solely as ones that were imposed discursively.

Although institutions of the state and civil society across England intervened in pioneering ways in the family in these decades and sought to create a generational change in practices of child-rearing, it was primarily through the local and intimate evidence of experience that grandparents, parents and children passed on, but also subtly altered, cultures of reproduction. Grandfathers and grandmothers, like parents, founded their knowledge of how to make the next generation on their own gendered moral worth, demonstrated by their habits and character, not by specialist child-focused knowledge. Instead of intergenerational rupture, it was fundamental and locally-textured insecurities – through the unequal distribution of resources, the diverse structures of labour markets and the uncertainties of migration, birth, marriage and death – that both necessitated the sustenance of relations of grudging dependence between generations and fractured these relations. As a result of these tense interactions between adults, the intergenerational transmission of practices of care between grandparents and children was crucial, not just in shaping child survival and subjectivity, but also in exerting a lasting impact on the fathers and mothers that children grew to become. This had important consequences for how the children who became the grandparents of the mid-twentieth century remembered the injustices of their own childhoods, shaping their later interpretation of the reproductive cultures that they had created and the narratives of generational change from which they constructed their own lives.

The practices of selflessly 'attending to' others were central to the moral framework of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century England. Judgements about how to live a moral life were not unconnected to the practice of reading the expanding number of

moralistic accounts that offered sharply-drawn, simplified and distant examples of virtuous and vice-ridden lives. Yet it was the complex, constrained examples of those to whom men and women were close that offered the models for forming intergenerational relationships that were most powerfully and painfully present. Learning when and how to care, as well as testing the gender-, place- and age-specific boundaries of when not to care, was an essential part of forming the self. Not only was it essential to the making of successively established – but often simultaneously maintained – relational, fluid identities as child, parent and grandparent, but it was also part of a lifelong, unequally demanding, struggle of establishing oneself within the contingent boundaries of moral manhood and womanhood.

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Chapter 6

FIRST-TIME PARENTHOOD AMONG MIGRANT PAKISTANIS GENDER AND GENERATION IN THE POSTPARTUM PERIOD

Kaveri Qureshi

This chapter examines postpartum convalescence as it was practised among a small group of young Pakistani women who were migrants or sojourners in London at the juncture of becoming mothers for the first time. Pakistanis are currently the third largest group of immigrants to the U.K., and London is their primary destination (Rienzo and Vargas-Silva 2013). Given the momentum of ongoing immigration from Pakistan, new generations of Pakistani migrant women in the U.K. are continually building their families away from their own natal kin, and often from their husband's too (Harriss and Shaw 2009). Anthropologists have noted that rural-urban and international migration tends to alter the structure of Pakistani families, with women building more matrilateral forms of kinship when separated from their in-laws and living close to their families in urban neighbourhoods (Qureshi 2015; Charsley 2013; Shaw 2004; Werbner 1988; cf. Vatuk 1972). In this chapter I consider how migration and such tensions in women's relations with their natal and affinal kin play out in the postpartum period. This is a time when women are temporarily entitled to return to their natal kin for delivery and convalescence: an important entitlement

and conduit for ongoing sociality and interaction with their families following virilocal marriages (Gideon 1962). The chapter explores what women do when their natal kin are not physically near, and how they and their families improvise, using technologies of travel and communication, within the constraints of ‘frontiering’ transnational kinship (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002: 12–13).

In Pakistani Punjab, as more widely across the Islamic world, postpartum convalescence is normatively practised for a period of forty days (Chesney 2007). An older literature identified postpartum seclusion or confinement with an ethnophysiology of pollution and impurity, reflected in restrictions from praying, cooking and sexual intercourse (Thompson 1985). However it can also be understood as a culturally-sanctioned rest period when women are the focus of attention, released from their domestic obligations and ritually restored to health. Authors have suggested that forty days of postpartum convalescence is rarely observed today, if indeed it ever was. In rural North India, Jeffery, Jeffery and Lyon (1989) show that women have to negotiate postpartum rest with their mother- or sisters-in-law, who would take over their duties at their marital home, and identify that forty days of inactivity is an unaffordable luxury in most families. In middle-class urban families, Donner (2003) argues that the culture of conjugal domesticity has changed and curtailed this practice as women no longer expect to return to their natal homes. In spite of this conditionality of postpartum convalescence on material and domestic circumstances and on the conjugal relationship, the young women in my study expressed a sense of entitlement to *challis din* (forty days) or *sawa maheena* (a month and a quarter) of help from their kin. Whether or not they were able to avail it, it remained a powerful referent.

In my ethnographic work with first-time mothers, I have found the postpartum period a very illuminating window onto family practices and intergenerational transmission. A literature on sibling caretaking has identified that in places like Pakistan and North India, where large families are common, children – particularly girls – are given caretaking responsibilities from an early age. Such studies argue that young girls learn appropriate models of motherhood long before they become parents themselves, by observing and copying their older family members and providing first-hand care to younger siblings, cousins, nieces and nephews (Seymour 2004; cf. Weisner and Gallimore 1977). Against this assumption about motherhood being transmitted in childhood, however, I emphasize here that there is a realm of embodied maternal practice

and subjectivity that is only encountered during the moment of transition, when women are faced with being the primary caretaker for their newborn. The postpartum period is a time when women learn very intensely how to mother an infant. Moreover, while work on transmission in childhood implies that girls are moulded seemingly insensibly into motherhood, I found women reflecting openly on their embodied knowledge and working to develop particular nurturing capacities. This calls for an interpretation of learning that sees people as sentient and not merely directed by their habitual formation.

The chapter also explores the gender dynamics of transmission. Recent studies have described white British and American men as sharing the tasks of care with new mothers and learning together with their partners, at least during the brief period of their statutory paternity leave (Miller 2011; Tomori 2009). But in the families with whom I worked, the presence and wisdom of the women's kin in the postpartum period could often be overwhelming. I consider how relationships across generations of women's natal kin may affect fathers' involvement in sharing tasks of care, as well as how fathers learn particular techniques.

Finally, the chapter takes issue with studies that examine migrant women's practices and orientations in relation to ideas of 'acculturation' (for example Homans 1982; Katbamna 2000; Maharaj 2012; Woolett and Dosanjh-Matwala 1990). In taking non-migrants in the countries of origin as the platform against which change occurs, such an approach fossilizes culture in the sending countries. By contrast, I take inspiration from feminist work that has argued for the inherent dynamism of the reproductive sphere in the places of origin as in the diaspora (Gedalof 2003, 2009). Here, my interest is in examining how migrant mothers and their families manage the postpartum period as well as how class and migrant cultures impact on the transmission of caring capacities.

Research Setting

The chapter draws from a study of migrant first-time mothers who I got to know over a decade of ethnographic fieldwork undertaken in East London, supplemented by shorter periods of fieldwork in Pakistan. Some of the mothers examined here are the daughters and daughters-in-law of women I worked with in 2005–2007 during my doctoral research into chronic illness (Harriss 2008), while others

are drawn from research in 2012–2014 on marital breakdown and divorce (Qureshi 2014). During the latter period of fieldwork I, too, became a mother, which meant that I was continually being offered interesting bits of advice about pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood.

These periods of research gave me the opportunity to observe and participate in the dilemmas of first-time parenthood with eleven women as the events unfolded over time. This method – participant-observation – has been argued to be the defining characteristic of anthropology. Traditionally, it involves year-long isolation from one’s ordinary life and immersion in other people’s. As Wallman (1984) observes, urban settings pose a problem for participant-observation, as it is rarely possible to live round-the-clock with people leading the busy and compartmentalized lives characteristic of urban societies. However, as she argues, ‘the proper criterion of the task is in the perspectives we bring to the analyses we attempt, not in the deceptively simple act of “hanging in”’ (p. 42). Through spending time with the women informally and in the context of their wider families, I was given glimpses into mundane aspects of everyday life and the brief, informal explanations that people offer while in the midst of what they are doing. The kinds of perspectives conveyed by informal conversations are different from the more coherent narratives that people accomplish in interviews. They offer insights into social life in the round, context, and a relational perspective. In studying parenthood, in particular, participant-observation also redirects our approach because it conveys so vividly the open-endedness of social life, which is arguably the very point for those people who are caught up in it (Bourdieu 1977). Although they look back over time, retrospective interviews tend to flatten this temporality. Interviews with mothers generate narratives such as ‘the baby got colic’, ‘I wasn’t producing enough milk’ or ‘the baby was allergic to washing powder’, and tell us about the meanings they attribute to what happens in their lives. But participant-observation makes it possible to see how these meanings are actually generated and negotiated at the time, how people repeatedly reinterpret a baby’s cries, weight or the spots on its chest.

The setting of my research is the docklands borough of Newham, a predominantly working-class borough in the East End of London, between inner-city Tower Hamlets and the more prosperous commuter suburbs of Essex. One of the most ethnically diverse local authorities in Britain, the borough is home to about 30,000 Pakistani

Muslims (Office for National Statistics 2011), mostly of Kashmiri and Potohari heritage but with an increasing number of families from Central Punjab, Karachi and Pakhto-speaking regions. Pakistani settlement in Newham reflects wider British post-war migration histories. Labour migrants settled in large numbers between the 1950s and 1970s, working in the declining dockland industries (Institute of Race Relations 1991). As the factories closed down and labour immigration was tightened, migration streams shifted in the 1970s and 1980s to family reunification (Stratford Community History 1996). Since the 1990s, migration categories have proliferated hugely. Marriage migration represents the largest stream of continuing immigration, but there are also substantial numbers in Newham who are on the student, work, asylum and irregular migration routes (Harriss 2006). At seventy per cent of births, Newham is currently the local authority in the U.K. with the highest percentage of births by migrant women (Rienzo and Vargas-Silva 2013).

The eleven mothers in this study had migrated to the U.K. through marriage, half to husbands who were British nationals and half to husbands who were Pakistani nationals but living in the U.K. on work or student visas. They were recent migrants at the time of fieldwork, and three have subsequently returned to Pakistan. They were aged between sixteen and twenty-six at their first marriage and between nineteen and thirty-two at their first birth, the later first births being to the three divorcees in the study. Six of the women were from cities in Pakistan and five from villages. They had between four and nine siblings, and seven had grown up in extended families compared to only four in nuclear family households. The women's own mothers had built their families in the 1980s and 1990s, a key period of transition in Pakistan's demographic history when a decline in marital fertility and an increase in contraceptive uptake first became discernible (Sathar and Casterline 1998). The majority of the grandmothers gave birth in hospitals and combination-fed their infants with breast and formula milk (see Khan 1991; Pakistan Medical Research Council 1998), reflecting their urban origins and the relatively privileged position of the families who are connected with the U.K. through migration. They are a set of women who in their own time were inclined towards, and had the resources to avail medical intervention in childbirth, and to adopt commercial nutrition.

In this chapter I provide descriptive accounts of the situations of just two of the mothers as they track over time. I have chosen these three because they illustrate very clearly practices of transmission in

the postpartum period. I attempt to convey a sense of the particularity of the women and their families, and of how they worked things out as they went along. Unless otherwise specified, the translations provided are between Urdu and English.

Guriya

Guriya comes from an urban middle-class family in Central Punjab and is educated to degree level; she is the niece of a woman who I got to know during my doctoral research in Pakistan. At the age of twenty-three Guriya married a cousin, also from Pakistan, and migrated to the U.K. to join him. Four months later she was pregnant. She worked until her twenty-week ultrasound scan and then spent the final months of pregnancy at home purchasing baby equipment and clothing from the internet. She did little by way of reading up about maternity and declined the offer of antenatal classes from the National Health Service, explaining to me, when I enquired why, that she knew everything already.

Three weeks before the due date Guriya's mother arrived from Pakistan, intending to stay until after the delivery. Telling me about her mother's upcoming visit, Guriya expressed an entitlement to support from her mother at this important time in her life, particularly given what she felt were greater difficulties for her in London than if she had been in Pakistan, where she might have had more domestic help. She explained the purpose of her mother's visit as primarily to help with the increasing burden of domestic work. After her mother's arrival, Guriya reported that on the first morning her mother had reprimanded her for cooking *parathe* (fried breads) for her husband's breakfast with her huge stomach (*pait ke saath*). Guriya said she had lectured her mother 'ammi, you have no idea how tough life is over here – I've been doing this all the way through my pregnancy!' She reported that life had got much easier with her mother's help. Things appeared difficult for Guriya's husband Ghafar, however, who was visibly uncomfortable to be living with his mother-in-law amid the pressure on space in their small flat. Guriya and her mother were sleeping on the double bed, while Ghafar was on a mattress on the floor, and he was quiet and subdued in his mother-in-law's presence. I overheard one of Ghafar's friends teasing him about how it could not be easy to live with his mother-in-law, at which Ghafar joked, with a conspiratorial look, that he would be relieved when the baby was born.

I heard Guriya's delivery story when I visited them at home ten days after the birth. Although Guriya had planned to go straight to the labour ward, in the event she managed to have a water birth, something that her mother talked about with amusement and a sense of novelty. Meanwhile, Ghafar described his assistance at the birth in heroic terms. He was the first man in his family to attend a birth and he said with awe that 'if my father had seen how much women suffer in childbirth, he would never have had so many children'. There was bad feeling between them over what happened the next night, however. Unusually in my study, Ghafar was offered the chance to stay overnight at the hospital, sleeping on a chair by the bed. Guriya had felt confident about her ability to look after the baby without any help, and had sent him home. But the baby remained awake the whole night; she could not pacify him by putting him on her breast, and she got not a wink of sleep, she said. 'I can only say I was thankful to Allah when they sent me home, and thank goodness that ammi was here, she did everything at home so that I could just concentrate on the baby.' Ghafar was abashed at not having stayed that night.

Guriya looked up to her mother as an authority in caring for her newborn son. After the delivery they had been prevented from washing the newborn by the midwife, who told them it was beneficial for the baby's skin to absorb the vernix. This was an unwelcome dilemma for the family, as Guriya was anxious that Ghafar recite the *azan* (the call to prayer) as soon as possible, a crucial ritual that would make the baby Muslim and bestow upon him full human personhood (see Shaw 2014: 89–91). Yet as Guriya explained, you should not recite the *azan* to a newborn covered in blood because it is *pleet* (ritually impure). Under the watchful eye of the midwife, Guriya's mother instructed Ghafar to recite the *azan* without first washing the baby. Guriya's mother was also imaginative in dealing with another cultural dilemma that arose out of childbirth in London. She had wanted to shave the baby's head as soon as they got back from the hospital, to remove the hair that had grown *in utero* because it, too, was *pleet*. In the absence of a *nai* (barber) accustomed to this delicate task, she instructed Ghafar to shave his son's hair himself using a safety razor. Ghafar reported that approaching his son's head with a razor was one of the scarier things he had done in his life.

Guriya's mother saw her primary duty as helping Guriya to convalesce. She prepared a particular set of foods for Guriya which were *taaqatwar* (fortifying), not too *sukht* (tough) or difficult to digest and

had a *garam taseer* (heating effect according to Unani and Ayurvedic humoral medicine, see Shaw 2000: 198–201). These included *yukhni* (lamb's neck or chicken and eggs shredded into a soup), *halwe* (a semolina pudding made with ghee, nuts and dry fruit) and *pinjiri* (a sweetmeat packed with jaggery, nuts, dry fruit and spices like *ajwain*). She told me that these would help strengthen Guriya's body by replenishing the blood lost during childbirth and bring on a strong supply of breastmilk, which would help Guriya's body go back to its original shape. She forbade Guriya to eat cooling foods as these would build up fat around her middle and, she told me, Guriya had already put on too much pregnancy weight. She instructed Guriya to keep her scarf over her head even at home, to cultivate *garmaish* (heat) and have hot showers. On the third day, she also demonstrated to Guriya how to massage her breasts to bring on the milk as quickly as possible.

In the ethos of helping Guriya recover from her ordeal at the hospital, her mother also took charge of the baby. Guriya's mother encouraged her daughter to breastfeed, explaining that breastfeeding was how babies develop *mumta*, a particular kind of love for mothers. However, she also fed the baby formula milk, as she had done with all six of her own children. Guriya's mother felt that formula milk was harmless and also practical in allowing the mother to get some sleep, to feed the baby in public or in front of male family members and visitors. Guriya accepted this advice, and indeed later on, when her son started refusing the bottle, she became frustrated that he was overly fond of the breast.

I noticed that Guriya and her mother passed the baby between them at particular moments. If Guriya's mother was feeding the baby from the bottle and he would still not quiet down, she called Guriya saying *ab tumhara kaam hai*, 'now he wants what only you can give him'. At other times, if the baby was with Guriya and he would not quiet, Guriya passed him to her mother and, in her mother's capable hands, the baby would often calm down. Guriya was grateful and made relieved comments such as *ap ne us ko kaise chupp kara diya*, 'goodness knows how you managed to quiet him down'. In this way Guriya's mother modelled techniques of handling, swaddling, rocking, patting and whispering lullabies and Arabic verses that did pacify him. She had a particular way of holding the baby that struck me as peculiar. She held his head and shoulders in the palm of one hand and his bottom in the other, as if displaying him to the outside world, instead of holding him in her lap or cradling him in her arms. When I tried the technique I found that it put the baby's weight

uncomfortably onto the upper arms, and I never saw anyone else cradling a baby like this. But Guriya held her son in exactly the same way.

As the weeks went by, the baby settled into a routine. When he woke in the morning, Guriya's mother would take charge of him to let Guriya get some more sleep. She massaged the baby for half an hour with olive oil before giving him a bath. The massage was aimed at 'opening up' (*kholna*) the baby. During the long months in his mother's stomach, she told me, his limbs had been folded tightly together, and babies need to be taught how to open themselves up. When Guriya was holding the baby, her mother urged her not to be idle but to keep working on beautifying him or 'making the head' (*sir banaana*). She was emphatic about this because while she had been out and about in London she had seen some babies with heads that were flat on one side from the baby turning its head in its sleep. She warned Guriya that her baby's head would become *dhinga* (Punjabi: uneven) if she did not continually push it into shape by pressing on his forehead with two fingers. She also pinched his nose to try and make it more thin and refined, and pushed at his upper lip in with one finger as she thought his gums stuck out too much. Rather than physical development being hard-wired into the baby, it was the *maan ka kaam* (mother's job) to sculpt and teach its clay-like body.

Guriya's mother had been supposed to return to Pakistan two weeks after the due date. When the time came, however, Guriya decided that she wanted her to stay longer, so Ghafar postponed her return flight so that the customary period of convalescence could be observed. Guriya's mother was anxious to get back to Pakistan, mindful of how difficult it was for Guriya's father to manage at home without her, but Guriya pleaded *challis din to ho jaye pehle*, 'let me have forty days at least'. Thanks to her mother's extended stay, Guriya's case was the most comfortable of the first-time mothers in my study. She got more sleep and had to deal with shorter periods of incessant crying than the other women. It is fruitful to see this as a form of 'kin-work' in the sense used by di Leonardo (1987). The Italian-American women in di Leonardo's study talked about cooking family feasts in a similar way to how Guriya's mother saw staying at her daughter's house. This is work done to respect kinship ties across households, and it is work, in the sense that Guriya's mother recognized that it was taking away from her domestic tasks back in her own home in Pakistan. However, it is also kin-work in that it actually *produces* kinship, in terms of the powerful shared memories, intimacy and interdependencies that derive from face-to-face contact.

Carsten (1997) writes similarly of the visceral sensing and creation of kinship constituted through coresidence, shared substance and touch. Postpartum convalescence is a particularly productive form of kin-making as it occurs at a moment of generational transition, as in Guriya's case where she was becoming a mother in her own right at the same time as her mother was becoming a grandmother for the first time, and as the newborn was becoming a full person.

Guriya's case also demonstrates practices of passing-on among women with great clarity. Up to the point of the delivery, Guriya showed no signs of apprehension about becoming a mother. She told me that she knew everything about looking after young children and even that she preferred newborns to older children. However, the night she spent alone with her son on the postnatal ward was an ordeal that shook her confidence and made her appreciate all the more her mother's long experience with babies. As Baraitser (2008) has argued, newborns do not always respond to care as they are expected to, and being with and taking the primary responsibility for an unpredictable and implacable baby can be utterly bewildering. Like the other women in my study, this disorientation motivated Guriya to search for authoritative knowledge in particular ways. She looked to her mother as an example. She observed intently the ways in which her mother held, comforted and quieted the baby and imitated these skills. She listened to and largely accepted her mother's advice and its underlying assumptions.

The active nature of this process of habituation is worth considering. Bourdieu's (1977) understanding of habituation as the laying-down of the set of 'durable dispositions', 'structuring and structured', that provide a person's bearing in the world has been extremely influential. However, I suggest that Mauss's (1973 [1935]) inception of the concept may allow us to understand the intergenerational transmission of motherhood rather better. Mauss's choice of the Latin word *habitus* was precisely to capture the 'acquired ability' or what he calls 'the *exis*' of the body (73). Ingold (2000) critiques Mauss's work on the *habitus* for assuming an instrumental approach to the body as being put to work by a controlling mind, preferring Bourdieu for grasping how practical knowledge is actually 'generated within contexts of experience in the course of people's involvement with others in the practical business of life' (162). However Asad (1997) takes the opposite opinion and sees in Bourdieu a failure to put the mind into the body. For Asad, Bourdieu's formulation of the *habitus* does not allow the subject any reflexivity about their bodily learning. Instead, Asad appreciates that Mauss

does not treat the body as passive but rather, as the '*self-developable* means for achieving a range of human objects – from styles of physical movement ... through modes of emotional being ... to kinds of spiritual experience' (47–48). Guriya's keen attention to what her mother was doing and mimetic development of these skills show us the directive, rather than unconscious, character of habituation, and of her using her body as a self-developable means to producing a pliant, healthy and beautiful son.

The following examples of Maryam and Reema show that transmission between generations could be less straightforward and where, in the absence of experienced women, men may take on a greater role in sharing the tasks of care and learning together with their wives. The following examples also illustrate the diversity of what is passed on between generations of women in different class and migrant cultures.

Maryam

When I met her, twenty-eight-year-old Maryam had been married for two years and her husband Mohsin was in London as an I.T. student. After Maryam announced her pregnancy, she confided that they had been trying to conceive since the early days of their marriage but found it difficult because of her *kamzoori* (weakness; a complicated description referring to her thinness as well as physical strength). She was the only woman in the study who talked to me about her apprehensions over becoming a mother. She had witnessed her older sister failing to breastfeed her children because of inverted nipples, which had made it extremely painful, and she had the idea that early motherhood was a demanding business. She wanted her mother's support, yet her mother was often ill with her diabetes and hypertension and did not want to fly to the U.K. Maryam therefore decided to return to Pakistan a month before the delivery, and for Mohsin to join her there for a fortnight around her due date. This was an option that none of the other women chose because of their concern to stay with their husbands and their worries about the safety and cost of maternity services in Pakistan. Because government hospitals in Pakistan are reputed to be of low quality and only for poor people, it would also be necessary to go to a private clinic, as Maryam did, and pay a considerable fee.

I heard through a friend that Maryam had delivered a healthy baby girl, but the baby had developed 'colic', which the friend

described using the English term, and now Maryam was struggling to cope. Gottlieb (1995) identifies 'colic' as a category that interprets incessant crying as a medical condition, and points out that there are other commonsensical approaches to calming a fussy baby out there in the world, as patterned by people's cultural assumptions. However we conceive of the condition of incessant crying, what interests me here is how the urgency of interpreting their newborn's stricken cries sent first-time mothers flying to experienced women for help.

When Maryam returned to London after forty days at her mother's she was still in the midst of understanding her daughter's unfathomable distress. It was a week after the birth that her daughter began crying uncontrollably. Maryam said that at that time she feared she might have 'postnatal depression', acting out how she would push the baby to her mother and say 'ammi, you look after her, I can't, this is beyond me, too hard for me'. Her mother and other women in the family diagnosed insufficient milk because she was at that point breastfeeding her daughter exclusively, and they worried that she might be too *kamzoor* (weak) to breastfeed. The crying thus came to be defined as a problem of the baby's hunger. Maryam described the women in her immediate family as offering little practical help. Maryam's elder sister, with her inverted nipples, had only breastfed her sons for a few weeks. Her principal role in the events was to sit back, as Maryam acted out to me, and marvel that 'feeding a baby is an incredibly difficult business', *bachhe ko feed karaana bahut mushkil kaam hai, bahut mushkil kaam hai*. I asked after Maryam's mother. She said that even though her mother had many children, all she could say about it was, 'you were all very easy, none of you had any problems'. Maryam said she had tried to probe, 'there were quite a few of us, we can't all have been angels', but her mother could not remember much. The main way in which her mother and sister had helped was by simply by rocking the baby whilst she screamed at her lungs' capacity.

The colic had dominated Maryam's experience of the first two months. 'I was so desperate that I would follow any old *totka* (tips) I was given'. Among the relatives who visited in the weeks after the birth was a number of what she called *tajerbakaar auraten* (experienced women) who gave her alternative diagnoses and *desi totke* (indigenous tips or knowledge) for her daughter's crying. She was advised to avoid foods like cauliflower and chickpeas, which are famous for their 'gassy' effects and might be passed to baby through the breastmilk. She was told to drink hot water infused with *ajwain* or *sonf* in the interest of settling her stomach and through it that of

the baby. They also recommended Woodward's Gripe Water. Maryam said she had followed all these *totke* even though she doubted the logic because she herself had not been experiencing 'gas'. She had also been told that the cause of the feeding problems could be *nazar* (the evil eye). She had been given *desi totke* for counteracting *nazar* involving ritual healings with green chillies, salt and invocations. But Maryam's mother disapproved of these, saying *hamlog to suratien parthe hain*, 'we read Quranic verses over the baby instead'.

This range of diagnoses and remedies offered by the women of Maryam's extended family reflects its socially heterogeneous composition. Maryam's parents had lived their adult lives in Rawalpindi, but came from a large family in which some branches were urban and professional whilst other branches continued to pursue rural agricultural livelihoods. Maryam's mother's objection to ritual remedies based on the personalistic diagnosis of *nazar* was a claim to educated religiosity. The women of her family transmitted diverse techniques of care, but these were ordered along lines of rural-urban and professional status, and the approach favoured by Maryam's mother was oriented to purist Islamic ways of strengthening the baby and towards medical intervention.

Maryam's acceptance of her mother's orientation was apparent in her application of what she had learnt in Pakistan, now that she was back in London. She was trying to adopt a regime of feeding the baby every three hours. She said that in the early days she did not trust herself to be producing enough milk, and she used to offer her daughter the breast every time she cried, thinking she must be hungry. If she did not quiet, Maryam would then offer *topfeed* (formula milk). In Pakistan she had she tried to limit this to just one or two bottles in a day, but since she'd returned to London she found herself giving more: 'I've just stopped counting or trying'. Just before she left Pakistan she had gone with her mother to a paediatrician, who said that the baby was probably not hungry all the time and it could in fact be because of the constant breastfeeding that she had developed colic, because every time the baby fed she would get 'gas'. It was the paediatrician in Pakistan who had instructed Maryam to limit the feeds to every three hours. Maryam was now trying hard to act upon the advice, although she found it impossible to ignore her daughter's terrible cries. In the middle of telling me all this she suddenly looked up and asked me 'What are the signs that a breastfed baby is hungry?' At the time, I did not know what she meant. She explained that her daughter was always sucking on her hand but she did not know whether she was hungry or just sucking

for the sake of it. Another of her London friends had told her that the midwives can tell you signs of when a breastfed baby is actually hungry, and she was wondering about these.

The next time I saw her, Maryam seemed happier and more rested. She had found a health visitor at a baby clinic who had told her about the signs of a breastfed baby:

She explained to me about how you should look to see whether the baby's jaws are moving and then you can tell that they're feeding properly, so now I'm confident that she should be getting enough ... In Pakistan, the midwife only showed me how to do it once, at the hospital when she was born, she put her to my breast and then told me a few points and sent me home. Ammi never breastfed us and my sister never managed it even though she tried, poor thing, so I couldn't get much from them. Here, they explain it so much better!

At a tea party at our mutual friend's house, I observed that Maryam's husband Mohsin was helping quite a lot with the baby. He had been faced with the realities of his daughter's almighty colic only after Maryam returned, as he had been back in London by the time the drama began to unfold in Pakistan. Mohsin had invented a way of rocking the baby that seemed to soothe her, which involved holding her in his palms at arm's length and swinging her up and down in long loops. In the section of the living room where the men were sitting, Mohsin's friends were criticizing him for this rocking method and telling him that if he held the baby in his hands the whole time, she would get used to it and become clingy. I believe they were not disapproving of his involvement in this aspect of care, as I saw many men taking pleasure in holding their own and others' young babies, so much as discomfited by the elaborateness of his technique, and they set upon instructing him about the more effective and efficient ways of quieting a baby that they thought they knew. Meanwhile, in the women's section Maryam was also up against dominant gendered models of parenthood. Our friend's sister-in-law asked Maryam the age of the baby and about her experience of motherhood so far. Admitting her lack of confidence in the role but no hint of her earlier ambivalence, Maryam joked that she'd spent the first six weeks in Pakistan where the responsibility was very shared (*zimedari bahut hee shared thi*), 'I've been here on my own for a month, so my real experience of motherhood began only a month ago!'

The third case illustrates a family that was less affluent than Guriya or Maryam, and how first-time parenthood was made harder by their straitened circumstances.

Reema

Thirty-one-year-old Reema was from a village in Potohar. She had migrated to London to marry a distant relative but the marriage had not worked out. Her second husband Rayaana, whom she had sponsored from Pakistan, was doing a low-paid job. When her time came they had neither the money to call Reema's mother from Pakistan, nor the money to send Reema there. Reema was very anxious about childbirth. She was trying to prepare herself for it but little things could set her off. The last time I saw her before the delivery she reported a phonecall with her mother-in-law in Pakistan: "Are you ok *beta* (child)?", "Yes ammi, everything's fine" but then my mother-in-law began to cry, "In these days anything terrible can happen". I told her, "Ammi stop it, I'm scared enough as it is!"

When I visited Reema after the birth she was visibly worn. Only Rayaana had been there at her delivery, and she said he had been even more scared than her. Their son had been born via forceps and an episiotomy. Thinking back to Guriya's dilemmas over the *azan*, I asked Reema whether Rayaana had recited the *azan* and whether the midwives had objected to them washing the baby. Reema said the first thing they did after the delivery had been to phone Reema's mother in Pakistan to give her the good news, and they had asked her advice then on this matter. Reema's mother suggested they wait until the midwife left the room and then wash him as quickly as possible and do the *azan*. After they returned from the hospital an 'auntie' came to stay with them. She was no 'blood relation' but a friend of Reema's mother, who came from the same village and had married in London and was living with grown-up children of her own. The auntie did the cooking, prepared *yukhni* and *halwe* for Reema and helped her manage with the baby. Reema was immensely grateful for her help, but when the auntie's husband complained about her absence she departed, three days after the birth, and Reema was understanding about that too.

Rayaana had asked the auntie to show him how to make the fortifying *yukhni* and *halwe*, and he had tried to cook them a few times. Reema appreciated these little acts of care, but she judged him incapable of managing the routine cooking. So, Reema said, she had resumed the normal domestic load just five days after the birth. She complained:

The way my sisters and my *bhabhian* (sisters-in-law) have people looking after them for the whole forty days ... They're able to

completely rest. My *nand* (husband's sister) didn't even set her feet on the ground for any purpose except to go to the washroom. And still she complained of exhaustion! They have no idea how difficult my life is over here.

I saw bags of unopened *mewa* (dry fruits), almonds and cashew nuts in the kitchen; Reema said her mother-in-law had sent them from Pakistan, but she was too busy to make anything with them. The women of her family had obviously tried to do whatever they could at a distance, advising them and sending things that might be useful, but the techniques of strengthening a mother's body and capacities could only be transmitted through hands-on practice, and this Reema and Rayaana had to manage on their own.

This was tested when, two weeks in, their son, too, developed colic. It began with Reema worrying about his increasingly erratic feeding patterns. She told me:

Yesterday, literally the whole day he was crying. I just don't know whether he's getting enough. Before, he used to feed for forty-five minutes to an hour at a stretch, but now he feeds for only five to ten minutes and then he falls asleep and then an hour, an hour and a half later he wakes up and wants another feed.

This had been going on throughout the day and night, and Reema was utterly exhausted. She had spoken to her mother in Pakistan, who had recommended drinking infusions with *ajwain* and *sonf*, 'You know, these Pakistani *totke*'. She was also worrying over her son's appearance, asking whether I thought that his skin had become darker and whether his head was flattening on one side. He also had little red spots on his chest, and she worried he might have an infection. When I next visited four days later, he was feeding only for five minutes. Reema was agonizing over what this meant. 'I do everything I can to keep him awake but he just comes off the breast and then half an hour later he wants more.'

By my next visit, Reema had been able to discuss all these worries with the health visitor when she carried out a routine home visit. The health visitor had weighed the baby and reassured Reema that he was doing fine on breast milk, and that there was no need to start supplementary feeding. She said the baby had a little colic and recommended giving him Infacol. She demonstrated techniques of holding him face-down on her lap, to stretch out and soothe his stomach, and said that the spots on his chest were nothing to worry about. The health visitor also inquired 'Don't you have

any family support, any experienced woman you can turn to, who can reassure you about these small things?’ and patted Reema on the hand saying, ‘Don’t worry, these things will come with your own experience’. Reporting the conversation to me, Reema laughed self-deprecatingly at herself, and commented that even though she had plenty of prior experience of looking after children ‘When you become a mother yourself, you see it differently. It’s much harder than it looks!’

Conclusion

The three cases discussed in this chapter demonstrate that the inter-generational transmission of parenthood is a lifelong process beginning with one’s own childhood experience, memories and hands-on exposure to small children. Apart from Maryam, the women in my study expressed confidence that they were good with babies and knew how to look after them. However, in the aftermath of their first birth they found that there was a difference between looking after other people’s children and being the one primarily responsible for an unpredictable newborn. Women cannot learn everything about motherhood before becoming one, and Baraitser (2008) is insightful in insisting that something very powerful happens at the juncture of that transition too.

The immediacy of the challenges posed by new motherhood tested the women’s capacities and made them turn to their mothers and other experienced women for help and for authoritative know-how. Postpartum convalescence was therefore an important entitlement as well as a time where multigenerational networks of women engaged intensely in transmission. Within the constraints of material circumstance and family composition, the women’s families strived to overcome the dispersal resulting from migration and travelled to ensure that a new mother had live-in help from one of her own natal kin. As we saw in the concerns expressed by Guriya’s mother and Reema’s auntie, this was seen by the older women as kin-work in the sense used by di Leonardo (1987). They were labouring outside their own households, and they juggled to provide help as well as manage their routine domestic obligations. But their presence and rallying round over these difficult days generated strong feelings of intimacy.

For the new mothers, postpartum convalescence was an entitlement to being cared-for at the same time as learning how to care

for their newborn. Through acts of nourishment, massaging and demonstrating techniques of care, older female kin strengthened the bodies and maternal capacities of first-time mothers. I have emphasized the keen attention that new mothers pay to the authoritative example provided by their female kin and drawn on Mauss to conceptualize habituation as a deliberate mimetic process of learning, and of the body as the self-developable means for doing so. His interest in the acquisition of bodily techniques, in bodies that 'know what they are up to' (1973 [1935]: 78) is useful to think about the capable and practised hands of experienced women like Guriya's mother.

In contrast with the new mothers, the first-time fathers in my study were less involved in learning techniques of care. They were unlike the white British and American men described in recent studies, who appear to share the tasks of care from the moment of the birth and learn together with their partners, at least until the end of their paternity leave. Marginalized by the overwhelming presence and wisdom of their wife's kin, the men in my study were minor protagonists in the first days and weeks of their babies' lives. However, we also catch glimpses of the men engaged in caring relationships, nurturing their wives, taking turns to provide care, working out how best to placate their colicky babies. The material suggests that international migration, with its strains and absences, may produce situations in which men become more involved in care and where, in the absence of authoritative maternal wisdom, new mothers and fathers learn together in the postpartum period. I also gave instances of men being the recipients of transmission, as when Ghafar took advice from Guriya's mother or when Rayaan learnt how to cook *halwa* and *yukhni* from Reema's auntie, as well as receiving advice from experienced fathers among their peers, as when Mohsin was ticked off by his friends for his elaborate rocking technique.

There is a final thread in this chapter concerning the complexity of what is passed on across generations. Among the women's older kin there were diverse techniques for dealing with the challenges of early motherhood, inflected as we saw by class and migrant cultures. This was illustrated clearly by Maryam, who had two generations of women in her immediate family who had eschewed breastfeeding and relatives from rural and urban areas advocating very different approaches for dealing with the vulnerabilities of newborns. It is therefore vital that we work out new understandings of cultural change that do not caricature the countries of origin as places of

cultural stasis. As Gedalof (2003, 2009) argues, reproduction is inherently a site where replication and innovation are inextricably intertwined.

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Chapter 7

INTERGENERATIONAL MYTHSCAPES AND INFANT CARE IN NORTHWESTERN AMAZONIA

Elizabeth Rahman

This chapter is about the perinatal practices of a small group of Amazonian Indians, known as the Warekena, who live along the minor tributary of the Rio Xié in northwestern Brazil. The chapter discusses their perspectives on raising infants, and reflects on change and continuity in how they care for babies. The material presented here is based on fifteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in the Brazilian municipality of São Gabriel da Cachoeira (between 2010 and 2011) and twelve months specifically in and around the mid-Xié River community of Tunu Cachoeira. The fieldwork was undertaken in the company of my husband, our son who turned five in the field and our daughter, Sofia, who was born during fieldwork. We lived together with the Warekena following, as much as we could, the rhythms of community living and their subsistence lifestyles (see Gow 1989). ‘Being there’ (Frykman and Gilje 2010) is the well-known Malinowskian method of participant-observation, a method that has the potential to yield in-depth, holistic and emplaced knowledge about people and the places they live in (Malinowski 1922: 10; Stewart 1998: 6).

The chapter describes the hydrocentric lifestyles of Arawakan Xié River dwellers and their specific ways of caring for children. The

Arawakans have a long history of interethnic contact, subsuming other groups and disseminating their ethos throughout the continent via the region's extensive waterways (Hornborg and Hill 2011). This chapter begins by detailing the riverine landscape, one that is formed by mythic ancestors and elucidated by way of an extensive mythscape, but one that equally informs contemporary practices – including how to care for babies. It moves on to detail one specific practice, that of bathing babies, which involves prolonged splash-washing often in rapid river currents. Building on what is known of ancient and contemporary Arawakan cultures (Hill and Santos-Granero 2002) this bathing technique is identified as a 'sedimented practice', an idiom which Heckenberger (2002: 199) has used to explicate the specific 'cultural schemas' of Arawakan sociality and one that elegantly conveys the heavily sedimented black-water rivers of the region to which the Arawakans are intimately entwined. In this context it also describes how Xié River dwellers come to consubstantially take on parts of the landscape thanks to particular, intersubjective, techniques of care. In phenomenological writings, 'sedimentation' describes how people come to incorporate their history and society, including the specific techniques acquired and practised over time which come to constitute their very make-up and which facilitate the execution of mindfully dexterous techniques (Merleau-Ponty 1962 [1945]; Ingold 2001). I also argue here that the specific technique of bathing babies allows Xié dwellers to embody their status (Toren 1999) and their hierarchically-dominant position *vis-à-vis* other ethnic and regional groups (i.e., those from the Makú linguistic stock) who contrast with Xié River dwellers because they live in the interfluvial forest.

The second part of the chapter turns to consider historical discourses, told by Xié dwellers, which narrate the Warekena's emergence from remote, temporary residences in the forest, to the banks of the main waterway, just over a century ago. These recount a dramatic change in lifestyle (from nomadic hunting to horticulture, fishing and sedentary riverfront dwelling) and raise the question of just how longstanding practices linked to the river, such as rigorous splash-washing, really are: historical narratives question the *longue durée* of 'sedimented practices' in Arawakan sociality. Considering the transmission of caring techniques from one generation to the next necessarily brings forth these questions of continuity and change, but the chapter seeks to reflect upon specifically Amerindian ways of representing and living with these changes, and importantly, the relevance of the stories that are told about them.

Throughout the chapter, words prefixed with G. are in the Géal language (a modified form of ancient Tupi) and words prefixed with P. are in Portuguese.

Myth and History

The stories that we tell about ourselves are just as important as the way in which we tell them. Lévi-Strauss (1966 [1962]) famously distinguished between two quintessentially distinct forms of narration: myth and history. He thought of myth and history as characteristic of two different types of society and their divergent ways of thinking about the relationship between the passing of time and one's place in the world. History, as we know it, is based on a genealogical model of ancestry, in which chronology determines a linearly successive narration. Lévi-Strauss suggested that the construction of historical narratives in societies such as our own reflects a form of consciousness driven towards accruing pegs along a line such that our current state may be presented as the pinnacle of progress at a given point in time. Mythic thought, on the other hand, focuses on the recapitulation, incorporation and adaption of the generic, rather than the particular, features of history. It glosses over the specifics and looks for and explains reoccurring, basically equivalent, common experiences that form part of human existence. Societies whose dominant narrative form is history he labelled 'hot', reflecting their heated preoccupation with progress and the special place this value holds in our imagination. Mythic societies, such as those of lowland South America, he called 'cold', encapsulating their quiescent acceptance, as well as their openness to others (Lévi-Strauss 1966 [1962]: 233–234). The two narrative forms reflect as much the types of societies they characterize as the types of people who constitute them (Viveiros de Castro 2002).

Lévi-Strauss's project was to investigate two supposedly opposed ways of understanding the world. But the plethora of distinctive Amerindian narrative styles (some incorporating the most recent historical events and particularities of knowledge and experience not directly witnessed) and their contemporary coexistence (see Hugh-Jones 1988) make it highly plausible that both historical narratives and myth also existed before the advent of colonial empires in Amazonia. Even their otherwise convincing and contrasting classification (myth defined by an archetypic or mythic time that directly informs and is informed by lived practice, and history as a

lineal and accumulative temporality) does not entail their mutual exclusivity. Mythic narratives include history, but Amazonian oral histories also have mythic features (see Hill and Wright 1988). In spite of this, there is something particularly contingent about myth.

One of the key features of narratives of the predominately mythic kind is that their narrators can poetically incorporate the new by linking specific events to their generic equivalents. Thus Lévi-Strauss maintained that myths endure and appear timeless only thanks to their constant transformation and their ability to incorporate a range of newly encountered peoples and their things, including powerful 'white people' (non-Indians and Europeans, e.g., Hugh-Jones 1988). In this latter example, the category of the 'powerful other' remains an important value despite the fact that the people occupying that position have since changed from other Indians to Europeans (on the history of interethnic slavery, see Santos-Granero 2009; for more on the interface between European and indigenous slavers, see Wright 2005).

Gow's (2001) analysis of Piro myth elucidates Lévi-Strauss's (1970: 16) assertion that myths in Amazonian societies are 'instruments for the obliteration of time'. Gow (2001: 11) states, 'myths generate the appearance of stability, an illusion of timelessness that cannot be affected by changes in the world, but they do so by means of their ceaseless transformations, which marks their very historicity as objects from the analyst's point of view'. The object of mythic analysis is, for Gow, to identify those elements or idioms which are enduring and significant to the lived worlds of the people who narrate them. While for some people, the category of the powerful other is an important one, Gow argues that the Piro see kinship as important to their project of 'living well'.

Living well or 'the good life', a common indigenous idiom throughout lowland South America, is based on joyful care, co-residence and acceptance of continuous change (see Overing and Passes 2000). In the face of history, mythopoesis (i.e., the active and poetic reforming of the mythic narrative) is a means of periodically restoring the equilibrium that allows one to 'live well'. Among the Piro, theirs is the history of becoming and 'living well' as 'civilized people'. Historically this involved establishing kin relations with Peruvian nationals. Becoming 'of mixed blood' was essential to Piro ethnopoesis and this allowed Gow (2001) to argue that myth provides solutions to new problems by modelling these on previous (social) transformations explained by myth. In this way, the past (and certain myths) are made relevant to the present. Further, kin

relations for the Piro are ‘implicated in the landscape’ (2001: 51), since the physical environment is laden with memories of both the caring acts of kin whose labour benevolently transformed certain localities into bountiful groves, as well as the sites of dead ancestor souls, which are dangerous and should be avoided.

The potency of the past, in the form of the dead ancestors whose contemporary presence is respected, forms part of the vivacity of the animate environment that pervades all aspects of life and people’s accounts of it. In northwestern Amazonia such sites also form part of an elaborate mythscape littered by mythic motifs that punctuate the riverine environment, and in so doing, recall myth.

Hydrocentricity of Place and Persons

Xié River dwellers live in the Amazon basin, in the microregion known as the Upper (Alto) Rio Negro. This region of northwestern Amazonia is formed by a dense expanse of tropical forest, floodplains and waterways defined by the upper course of the Rio Negro and its effluents. There are some 35,000 indigenous peoples living here, who can roughly be divided into twenty-four distinct ethnicities, with nearly as many languages. These languages and ethnic groups can be classified into three main linguistic groupings: Arawakan, Tukano and Makú. Arawakan and Tukano groups are particularly associated with riverfront dwelling, whereas Makú groups live primarily in the interfluvial forest. Makú are sometimes servile to Arawakan and Tukano groups, providing the latter with game in exchange for other products (Silverwood Cope 1972: 103), and are also periodically incorporated by them, making ethnic borders fluid and versatile (Santos-Granero 2009: 210–232). The Warekena, with whom I worked, are Arawakan. The fact that Arawakan Warekena live in riverfront locations is significant in terms of their particular lifestyles, the way they raise their children and their access to other peoples, their goods and services, including those of the ‘white’ (or non-Indian, *G. kariwa*) people.

Arawakan groups living on the geologically ancient, nutrient-poor soils of sandy black-water rivers, such as the Atabapo, upper Casiquiare, the Negro and Xié, have lifestyles seasonally informed by the flood plain and the particular ecosystems of these rivers. During the summer season (November to February) the weather is much hotter, drier, the rivers are lower and water rapids are exposed. Summer is the time of plenty: the lower water levels



FIGURE 7.1. The Xié River. Map drawn by the author with assistance from Michael Athanson at the Bodleian Library.

make fishing easier than in the winter and Xié dwellers have a sophisticated and varied fishing technology, including the use of weirs at the seasonal crossover. Little boys will spend hours playing in the river currents and appear as deft at navigating their bodies through the flows as the fish themselves. Children in this way parallel the little fish (*G. pira miri*) caught at the seasonal crossover in the rapids, and babies bodies (*G. pira miri*) bear nearly the same name as their fishy counterparts.

Xié dwellers make canoes of varied dimensions, or commission them from other river residents. With three to four days’ canoe travel, powered by an outboard motor, the city of São Gabriel da

Cachoeira can be reached. Here a variety of resources can be accessed, including biomedical healthcare. Health teams also travel upriver to carry out periodic health checks and in order to vaccinate local communities. Health teams may be accessed for various illnesses, but rarely are they sought for reproductive health matters. Xié dwellers consider themselves to be highly knowledgeable in the matter of giving birth, caring for and raising healthy children – activities that should all unravel in this hydrocentric environment if people are to live well (G. *kue katu*) in it.

Hydrocentricity is a term that has recently been used to describe the particular set of sociocultural traits and the lifestyles of Arawakan groups such as the Warekena's Venezuelan neighbours, the Wakué-nai (Hill 2011). Their hydrocentric social organization is thought to have been key in dispersing the Arawakan culture in the region and beyond. One important hydrocentric feature is the contemporary and historic process of mythscaping, manifest by extensive 'mythscapes' – detailed cartographic knowledge manifest in topographs elucidated by mythic narrative (and pointed out in daily life).

Mythscaping has been identified as one of the defining features of the Arawakan ethos, as it maps hierarchy onto the land, elucidates access and rights to specific locales and in this way enables the perpetuation of Arawakan sociality. Further, its ethos is often legitimized by allusion to ancestral places of mythic emergence, which are also sociopolitical centres (e.g., the Aiary River's Hipana rapids, see Wright 2013). As a ritual process mythscaping is thought to have provided, and to continue to provide, a blueprint that allows Arawakan cultures to expand and occupy new lands, pushing out local groups or including and incorporating them within a hierarchical framework of relations (Zucchi 2002). Often describing routes of (historical) migration (Santos-Granero 1998), a corpus of ritual narratives are chanted at specific sites so as to make distant and past landscapes present and contemporary (Hill 2002) in ways that perhaps written histories do not.

The mythscapes of Xié dwellers describe how particular places in the riverscape acquire their form and elucidate a range of topographs and petroglyphs (Figure 7.2) along the river's course. Thus some of their mythic narratives describe how the 'culture hero' (so-called, as the proclaimed originator of many key traits and contemporary practices) Napiruli or Nhiaperikuli came to this new land and what he did when he arrived. Mythic narratives and their associated topographs tell how Napiruli chased the celestial 'great snake' (G. *Buya Wasu*) up the Xié River. As the snake escaped from

Napiruli, his great body literally carved out the landscape and, as one discussant informed me, ‘made the map’ of the region (e.g., Figure 7.3). Today the *Buya Wasu* seasonally manifests in the river during winter, when the waters are fuller (fatter) and during which the snake is said to have eaten the river’s fish population, leaving its human inhabitants wanting. Later mythic cycles describe Napiruli’s misadventures with animist riverine agents, which he pacifies and plays with, generating new locales as he does so. Some of these locations are ‘doors’ to the subterranean homes of ancestral animal spirits (G. *maiwa*) who mitigate access to fish populations today, and others are their petrified form (e.g., rocks with the form of a turtle or jaguar). These are often avoided or well-respected areas whose potency can negatively affect people who pass them. Others are fortifying places.

Salient topography of the mythscape details contemporary practices, indicating where the first woman menstruated and what ritual was performed in order to secure and fortify her health. They show where the first birth took place and where the first woman sat in the cool waters of the flooded forest in order to give birth for the first time. The mythscape also describes how postpartum *couvade* (post-birth observances) practices and perinatal caring praxis came into being, including where babies were bathed (Figure 7.4). As such, for those who live along it, the Xié River emerges



FIGURE 7.2. The Xié River and its mythscape.

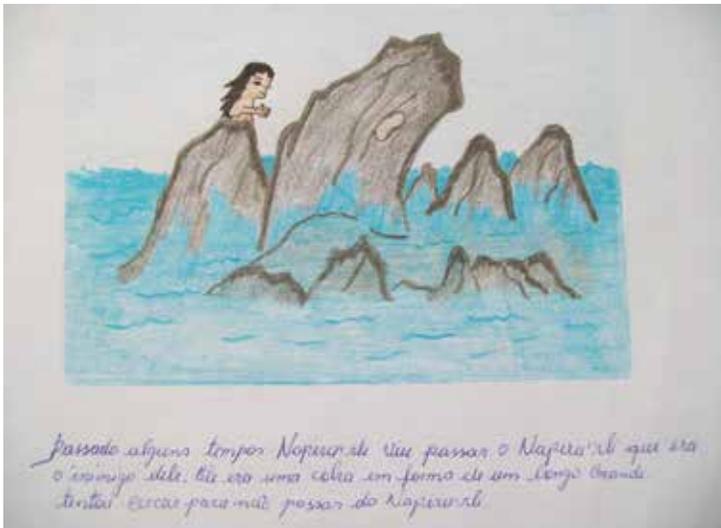


FIGURE 7.3. The Xié River and its mythscape

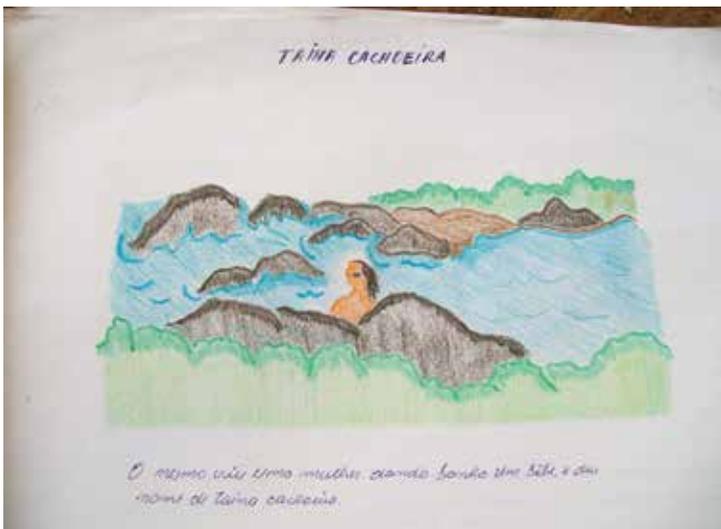


FIGURE 7.4. The Xié River and its mythscape

[These three pictures are the outcome of a project instigated by a Tukano teacher working in the lower-river community school of Campinas. Fifty pictures sequentially describe Napiruli's upriver journey along the Xié and his encounters and misadventures along the way. These gave rise to the riverscape as we find it. The pictures were collated into an unpublished booklet entitled 'The Warekena's Evolution'. The teacher granted permission for the author to photograph the pictures for academic use and publication.]

as a timeless but contemporarily potent background on which the foreground of existence plays out today. So the question of generational change and reproductive cultures emerges from this context, a context that orientates and guides contemporary practice as much as it feeds back into mythscaping praxis.

Hydrocentric Perinatal Care

According to myth, the first pregnancy was the result of a sorcerous attack inflicted by Napiruli's unruly enemies. Napiruli's enemies used malicious sorcery in order to impregnate his wife, Amaru, with a snake. Amaru's abdomen grew as the day of birth drew near, but she had no vagina or birth canal since her nether regions were still closed shut. While suffering from the pain of the child impounded in her womb, she managed to maintain a cool-minded composure, as did her husband, who instructed her to sit in a wintertime, waterlogged lake. Here, using his deft shamanic skills, he performed a blessing and turned the fallen leaves in the lake into fish. One by one they attempted to perforate an opening (the vagina). Finally, the *G. jacunda* – similar to the piranha fish – bit an opening, and another penetrated all the way up, forming the birth canal from which the baby could emerge. This provoked the healthy underwater birth of the Amado, a fish or snake-like being, who shot out into the water's depths unseen by his mother. Today there is still a danger that the baby growing in the womb is not or may not become a proper human being. Only proper human care can make it so.

Proper care is epitomized by pre-birth, birthing and post-birth observances and includes, but is not limited to, periodic rituals such as those of infant naming (Hill 1985). In daily life too, being mindful of how one lives is necessary in order to live well (*G. kue katu*) and healthily with others, and others include the growing foetus, who it is hoped will become a proper person. Xié dwellers' myths, including that of childbirth, describe experiences of full, hot and piercing pain and the cool states required to counteract them. Foetuses, pregnant mothers and neonates are considered 'hot', full of blood and vital energy, which needs to be channelled in order to ensure proper growth. Being 'hot' is a full person, mind-body complex that conveys fiery tempers and the hot-headed, as well as sweaty somatic and fired-up social states. Thus during pregnancy the onus is on cultivating a cool environment in which the foetus can grow. Hot, full, bloody and its opposites are constantly brought into balance, not as radically equilibrated opposites, but rather as

a finely attuned and resonating medium that is part of living well. These become particularly pertinent questions during the perinatal period, when new persons are emerging and the pursuit of balanced relational states must be even more closely and finely tuned.

Thus in their heated pregnant state, women avoid more of the same by staying away from the burning out of canoes, the sweat of men's communal work and the use of 'hot' fish poison, all of which would have negative consequences on the fruit of men's labour. They bathe frequently during pregnancy in order to counteract their own heated condition and cool down the growing foetus. Bathing also facilitates foetal growth: water penetrates the abdomen and adds substance to the foetus, contributing to the place of dwelling by producing (amniotic) fluids in the womb. During delivery, breaking water is a sign of a healthy birth and demonstrates that the foetus has been properly cared for (in the womb as a result of its mother's frequent bathing). Paternal mothers-in-law, who normally attend a mother's first or otherwise complicated birth, explain that mothers with 'dry' births, that is, mothers who fail to produce water in quantity before delivery, experience a slow, drawn out labour due to the lack of sufficient lubrication, and their babies are also more likely to be born in a dangerous position (other than head first). Insufficient bathing during pregnancy is often the cited source of these complications.

Expectant mothers demonstrate their steadfastness by carrying out their tasks, normally an increased production in manioc bread to sustain their post-birth diet, purposefully and resolutely. This is demonstrated through the rapid cleaning of utensils used for the production of manioc flour and including the prompt washing of the manioc press after the manioc mass has been expressed. Such diligent and decisive cool-minded action is to do with the embodiment of the particular qualities that the mother herself requires for childbirth. In this context, healthy childbirth is for the birthing mother an art form, a practice for which her total life experience has prepared her. It is also thanks to the specific advice given by the mother/mother-in-law, and aimed at generating mindful states of being and 'a global visceral awareness' (Farb et al. 2007: 319; Hughes et al. 2009). The mother's ability to embody this quality will affect the ability of the child itself – its own early potency (*P. força*, *G. kimbawa*) – to wilfully facilitate an easy passage along the birth canal: in the first case babies are said to become crunched-up in this position and in the second, babies, like their mothers, will be indecisive about either coming out or staying in (the womb),

producing a drawn-out labour. Finally, food restrictions, often followed by both parents but more stringently followed by the mother, necessitate a degree of self-control.

During birth at home a mother is expected to stay silent, seated and to maintain her cool. She sits on a stool and is silent throughout the proceedings. In their sum, following these guidelines and properly caring for the foetus facilitates its growth and the ease of delivery. The coolness I refer to is not only a cool physical environment, but also a stylistically relaxed, upright and assertive bodily posture and mind stance, on the part of the carer, which aids the growth of infants. During the transition into motherhood cool-mindedness is cultivated, thereby enhancing a mother's potential to assume her new status as a cool-minded person able to care effectively for others.

There are, however, certain instances when mothers find it hard to keep their cool, and this is considered legitimate when sorcery is suspected. As myth also recounts, women fall victim to sorcery when afflicted by a jealous affine, and this can have some serious consequences for childbirth: delays, breach positions and haemorrhaging, leading to death. Some shamans, or other relatives, may also warn a woman that she is likely to be the victim of sorcery. If a woman suspects she will become the victim of a sorcerous attack, she will seek shamanic blessings during pregnancy. Such a decision is often evaluated according to her and her coresidents' suspicion of affinal envy, their coveting, greed and ambition, which can sometimes only be confirmed and definitely detected by a suitably qualified visionary shaman. In these circumstances, they are prepared to go to hospital if they need to, so travelling to São Gabriel is an increasingly viable option for those who have relatives living in the town and a home in which to stay.

In their home communities, shamans and other specialists may conduct minor surgery, but they say they lack the knowledge about how to cut a baby out of a mother's womb without mortally injuring the mother. In hospital women have the possibility of a caesarean section. The decision to perform a caesarean section during a long, drawn-out and complicated birth is regarded as an extreme but excellent technological intervention that frees the mother from near-certain death associated with this type of lethal sorcery. However, there are instances when mothers go to the hospital because a visiting health professional, suspecting a complicated birth, has advised them to do so, even when Xié dwellers have no reason to suspect sorcery. Such advice and the biomedical conception of risk

is resented, and if they choose to follow it they are unhappy if their birth turns out to be normal and routine, and are disappointed by the attitude of medical professionals whom they describe as ‘white’ people who sometimes ‘just don’t know’.

Medical professionals are deemed to lack the knowledge to facilitate a normal birth. Their lack of physical presence and continuous monitoring of the birth, their unwillingness to physically hold and support the birthing mother (as a woman’s husband does at home), as well as making women lie down, are all factors indicative of this want. At home, women exercise their steadfast strength together with their husbands, and demonstrate their cool-minded endurance by remaining silent and composed in the face of their pain by being *G. kirimbawa* (potently strong, or mindful). By contrast the hospital environment, which also attends to military wives, does not promote this norm: lying down and hearing the screaming shouts of others, they are deprived of this possibility to be *kirimbawa*. Women also complain about the post-birth diet. Cold drinks and heavy foods, including game, are inappropriate postpartum as these substances radically diverge from and fail to nurture the mother who is in a ‘cold’ postpartum state. A further commentary of inept neonatal care is baby-bathing, which is infrequent and done with warm water in the hospital.

Baby Bathing

In their home communities babies are bathed in a basinful of cold river water immediately post-birth by their grandmother. It is the first thing that happens to them after the umbilical cord is cut. They are then bathed every four to five hours, and throughout the night when they wake. They are always bathed before (breast)feeding. And a week after birth, when the umbilical cord falls off, they bathe with even more intense frequency and duration.

A newborn baby under three months, which is observed to have its eyes open – ‘looking’ – for more than five minutes is, for a Xié dweller, just asking to have a wash. Further, stating an infant’s desire to be splash-washed is synonymous with stating the child’s listlessness and desire to sleep: ‘when the baby keeps waking up, it means he wants to be bathed’. ‘He’s hot’, the mother will exclaim when their newborn writhes in its hammock, and bathing is the preferred cooling technique (Mauss 2002 [1934]). Washing is thought to cool the baby down, after which he returns to the warmth of his mother’s breast and then directly to his own hammock surrounded by a nest of blankets ready for sleep. Babies are

nearly never heard to cry and splash-washing is nine out of ten times the chosen remedy for crying. As a technique, Xié dwellers recommend splash-washing to encourage babies to have long, drawn-out naps as well as to augment personal strength, and their somatic firmness and bodily fat – issues to which I will return shortly. However, as it became clear over the course of my fieldwork, the baby does not just want to be wet, cleaned or cooled by the water, the baby wants to be splash-washed.

Newborn babies are not submerged, made to recline or dunked in water, as submerging or reclining the baby in water would cause it a serious shock. Rather they are splash-washed, and splash-washing begins immediately post-birth in a basin at home. On the baby's birth, river water is immediately fetched and transferred into the washing basin. Post-birth the baby has no direct contact with the mother: a female relative, often the mother-in-law, who supports the child one-handed, her right forearm and hand securing the baby across the chest in a forward-slumped seated position on her lap, will prepare to bathe the child. She places her foot in the basin full of water and transfers the baby (draped over her forearm) onto her submerged foot. Resting on his or her grandmother's foot,



FIGURE 7.5. Splash-washing next to an ancestral rock

the baby's buttocks are only half submerged by the shallow water. From this position the baby is ready to begin bathing.

With the free (right) hand, water is cupped-up from the basin and dribbled down the baby's exposed back with increasing speed and frequency, changing from a delicately administered trickle down the washer's fingertips to vigorous, hand-fully-cupped splash-washing,



FIGURE 7.6. Splash-washing next to an ancestral rock

as water is splashed over the head and dribbles down the baby's face, chest and legs. This technique is invariably accompanied by a 'brrrrin' trumpeting noise – as the washer forcefully expels air out between her vibrating lips. If the baby whimpers, it is consoled with back-patting and the washing continues. As the splash-washing increases in vigour, the 'brrrrin' sound becomes louder. Splash-washing continues for around fifteen minutes. The baby is then removed from the water, dried by a cloth, breastfed and laid to sleep in its hammock.

Home splash-washing continues throughout the first week of life, until the baby's umbilical cord falls off (four to five days after the birth), an indicator that the baby and mother are now ready to bathe in the river. This prompts the G. *iyumi* (post-birth) ritual, which inaugurates river bathing and protects him from the malign water spirits associated with the *maiwa* (ancestral animal spirits). From here on the baby will be splash-washed in the river: seated either on the lap of the washer (mother, father, grandmother or other close female kin), who sits submerged on a rock in the water, or held against the washer's thigh as she stands (see Figure 7.5). Such everyday caring practices are integral to creating kinship in terms of the 'multiplication of identical entities' (Gow 2000: 49; also see Carsten 1997: 7). A variation of this technique is also used: the baby is held with the washer's right arm across its chest and the baby's buttocks are supported with the left hand. The lower body is then made to move rhythmically back and forth in the water. This technique is accompanied by the washer making a 'shwee', 'shwee' sound (see Figure 7.6). Sometimes both techniques will be used, one after the other. The washer is almost always the mother, grandmother or older female kin, but I have also seen elder male siblings bathe a baby in this way, as well as the infant's father. All babies, regardless of gender, are splash-washed frequently.

Babies are washed because they 'want to be raised/grow/brought up' (P. *querer criar se*, G. *re-yukirai*) and are understood to solicit and crave these particular techniques of care. This enables them to 'grow into social maturity rather than being trained into it' (Strathern 1980: 196), as caring becomes, in these contexts, a mutually responsive intersubjective relationship (see Toren 2001). Water is then both the precondition and the condition for proper growth: water in the womb is evidence of pre-birth baby bathing – something that the baby will want to continue, having 'acclimatized to it' (P. *acostombrarse*). Post-birth, the more frequently babies are bathed, the quicker they will grow and the stronger they will become. This

is especially true if the weather is warm, for fear that the baby will become 'dry' or 'thin' and crisp and brittle (that is, hard like bone, rather than firm as full or fat). Fatness (being *P. gordo*) is a desired characteristic of babies (also see Ewart 2000: 288) and it is part of what makes the developing *pira miri* (G. *pirá/a* = fish/body; *miri* = little) a source of delight and wonder. One woman pointed to her four-year-old son, and observed how 'hard/firm' and 'strong' (G. *kirimbawa*) he was as he bathed frequently (as a baby). Xié dwellers appear to be referring to a certain firmness of form, muscles and sinews, which develops in tandem with socio-moral qualities and dispositions – the developing upright moral character of growing infants.

Water is cited as cooling and refreshing, and we begin to get a sense of how infants come to be imbued with the cool qualities of the water. In local terms, the nearest we get to this concept is in the hardening of the body, where hard qualities are not only physical, but are also associated with the cultivation of inner calmness. These embodied moral dispositions mean that water contributes to the 'substantive make-up' (Ingold 2000: 144) of infants, cooling down their heated states, making cool-minded and cool-bodied persons. Such an orientation to the properties of the river is not a given, or a natural consequence of physical contact, but requires the enactment of a specific technique – splash-washing, as it impacts on one's thermic register.

In the context of high rates of flu and pneumonia, health professionals are wont to comment on the danger of early morning bathing. This is particularly the case in neonatal river baths, which nurses associate with the high incidence of neonatal mortality. Of course, such comments are very much at odds with customary praxis: early morning bathing for an expectant mother is described as and equated to a *P. vacina* or *vitimia*, i.e., like a preventative inoculation or a vitamin supplement, so often prescribed during pregnancy, and postpartum it is an essential part of infant growth. This contrasts to Xié dwellers' attitude to infant inoculations, which are regarded with ambivalence. I suspect that this is because they are seen to be hot and piercing – too much of the same, and conflicting with the already too-hot and piercing vital energy of babies (like cloth nappies with pins that I used for Sofia and which they verbally objected to as being 'a bore' for infants). Nonetheless, inoculations are also a means to incorporate some of the powerful technologies of 'the whites' and by so doing acquire some of their shamanic capabilities (evinced by their technologies).

Finally, the mythscape mnemotechnically records splash-washing as an ancient person-forming technique that Napiruli –when he first explored the river – observed to be taking place at specific locales along its course: culture hero Napiruli sees a woman bathing her child this way as he travels up the Xié River in a location that bears the name ‘the baby’s waterfall rapids’ (see Figure 7.1). This indicates fast-flowing rapids as an appropriate ‘sphere of nurture’ (Ingold 2000: 148) in which the baby can be raised. The rocks that form the rapids are also cold and stony reminders of the ancestors, imbuing their mythic cool qualities that help to secure the well-being of river dwellers today.

From Forest to River: (Re)orientation to Hydrocentricity?

The mythscape makes a whole range of practices appear timeless. Since the culture hero Napiruli did these things, it appears to suggest that Xié dwellers have always washed their babies so. However when we trace oral narratives, we find that the past century has seen changes in the social make-up of these groups, changes that have not solely been informed by the burgeoning Brazilian nation-state, but rather guided by an autopoetically incorporative openness to others. Guiding this, I have suggested, is a logic at once pragmatic to the shifting dialectics of power and to an equally adaptive humoral logic (cf. Butt-Colson and Armellada 1983) that guides the incorporation of new techniques and the people who perpetuate them.

Xié River dwellers’ narratives point to a time, only some hundred years ago, when Warekena were not as hydrocentric as they are today. They describe not having fishing technologies, and living in inaccessible dwellings rather than on the riverfront, and a far more nomadic lifestyle. Members of the prestigious Tunu community-dwelling Warli clan recounted a series of narratives describing these changes to me, which I audiotaped and committed to paper.

The Elders of the Past and the Taming of the Early Xié

In the early eighteenth century there was a large village lying on a minor mid-river tributary of the Xié River. It was headed by a chief known as Meru or Monoribu and was surrounded by smaller settlements. Darikawana, Meru’s cousin, lived a good distance upriver, along another minor tributary, and these tributaries formed the respective centres of their distinct territories.

The narrative tells how these two groups were engaged in the then-typical warfare practices of ‘the ancient elders’ (G. *kuxima*). Relations between these two groups of affines became embittered when Darikawana, and then Meru, captured each other’s family and sold them off into slavery. In return for these slaves they received firearms. The story reaches its climax when Meru attempts to avenge himself on Darikawana, but in a final confrontation Darikawana defeats him. Darikawana kills most of Meru’s allies and those still alive fall under his rule. Darikawana is an historical figure who is mentioned in Stradelli’s (2009 [1890]) account of the region, where he is described as a renegade leader unwilling to conform to state rule.

The second part of the legend of Darikawana tells of the taming of the Xié’s fierce forest-dwelling population who were largely domesticated through contact with immigrants to the Xié. The Tunu elder Luís told me how during this time, in the mid to late nineteenth century, an unnamed ancestor migrated upriver, along the Xié. He had come from the lower Rio Negro, seeking the river’s seasonally abundant fish, and then made the Xié his permanent home. At the time the Xié’s banks were still deserted, while the Xié-surrounding population, as Luís’s son Jurez described them to me, were forest-dwelling and thought to be ‘like game’ (P. *como caça*) animals. This is a common trait among many Amerindian groups: even as they apply the category of person (or humanity) to non-human fauna, they radically dismiss other ethnic groups as ‘animals’ (Viveiros de Castro 2004).

At the time of their ancestor’s arrival, people lived in secluded forest locations rather than riverine settlements, and fled to avoid interethnic contact (which they say is also the custom of contemporary Makú peoples). Being like game entailed eating wild fruits rather than engaging in horticulture, eating game rather than fishing, having a very rudimentary material culture and possessing no canoes. Unprotected and uncivilized, a further feature of being like a game animal is that of political impotency, and thus being without claim to the land or those who live there. Luís and Jurez described to me how through a series of encounters, Luís’s nameless great-grandfather lured the game-like population to the riverfront and became their master. When the nameless goes to meet him, he calls Darikawana his brother-in-law and over time establishes an affable exchange relationship.

There is a well-known ambiguity in the brother-in-law relationship: building on the observations of several regional scholars,

Viveiros de Castro (2001) specified how the brother-in-law could be a dangerous outsider, but as an insider would be an important col-luder. Using a concentric model, Viveiros de Castro described the centrifugal tendency of de-affinizing the non-consanguine and making him kin as the sociological axis of Amerindian societies. The opening of this axis appears to have facilitated this outsider's integration.

According to one of Aline da Cruz's (2011: 22–23) informants (Lina, born in the 1920s and interviewed in 2007 in Anamoin, which once lay within Darikawana's territory), Anamoin was 'opened' (P. *abrir*, which da Cruz translates as founded, P. *fundar*) before she and her family arrived. At this time, it was 'pure Warekena territory', but then these people left and the land at Anamoin was 'closing'. They came to reopen it. Certainly, the prestigious Warli clan's (found in both Anamoin and Tunu) account coincides with those they identify as descending predominately from these forest dwellers. When I spoke with these groups, now mainly resident in lower-river communities, they described to me their lifestyles, dwellings and technologies in ways that did not contradict those of their dominators. And they, like many other northwestern peoples, were incorporated into Arawakan sociality and therein ranked below that of the riverine newcomers.

Acting as an intermediary, first Luís's ancestors offered this population salt, then soap and later hooks for fishing. The forest-dwelling population was described as having a rudimentary material culture with little knowledge of fishing techniques, to which they were introduced. Over time, kin relations were established and the nameless's son, Cândido de Oliveira, married one of Darikawana's daughters. In addition to taming the wild forest population – by establishing affinal relations with them – Cândido de Oliveira, through a series of rituals, must also tame agents of the riverine mythscape: Tunu Cachoeria's crab-owner, a form of *maiwa* (ancestral animal spirit) associated with a rock by the same name, is also pacified. This ensures affable relations with animist agents and thus allows for the establishment of the first Xié riverfront community.

Luís describes how they acquired other features of civilized society, including the technology to make canoes and travel long distances for the purpose of extending trade relations. Eventually, Darikawana made a series of journeys to Manaus during the height of winter in order to buy industrialized products. By the end of this narrative, Darikawana is described as having been a powerful figure who resisted the authority of agents of the nation-state. Finally, the 'police' came to take him away, but Darikawana is remembered

for artfully evading their efforts to capture him. When they do, he hands the river over into the custodianship of Cândido de Oliveira.

The dialectic between forest and river is a well-known idiom for exploring differences, and degrees of difference, between peoples. The forest is the place of 'wild Indians', fierce and undomesticated, while the river and cleared spaces are the proper abodes of civilized persons. Riverine lifestyles – secret ritual observances (*G. jurupari* cultism), skilled fishing, the production of canoes, the acquisition of prestige items – stand in sharp contrast to that of the marginalized forest-dwellers, in their inaccessible and more rudimentary forest dwellings. In these narratives, coming out of the forest is then couched as a historical process, one also encompassed by myth.

In historical narratives the Warli clan trace their genealogy to important people in the past and this is said to be a time just after their mythic ancestor arrives, who lived in adjacent locales, thus also mythically confirming their place in the river's ranking order. But in the context of myth and mythscaping, a genealogy of descent has only the depth of decomposing leaves piled one on top of the other, which during ritual come to reconnect and offer a special contingency in the present (Hugh-Jones 1979: 139). This evinces the 'relational' or rhizomatic view of generation, which is part of mythic thought and animist societies. Charismatic persons, in the past and today, literally embody the mythic ancestors (Hugh-Jones 1988: 151) regardless even of their specific rank and genealogical heritage. Darikawana is a legendary figure on the border between history and myth, who embodies the deft shamanic skills of mythic ancestors and the first shaman. In these contexts, hydrocentricity is accrued by ritual and daily practices that confirm a reorientation to riverine living, making forest dwellers into real persons.

Conclusion

The chapter has described perinatal caring practices, and specifically the technique of splash-washing, which unfolds as part of Xié dwellers' hydrocentric lifestyles and which are understood to be highly efficacious in meeting the needs of babies. However, rather than being passive recipients of care, babies are understood to crave and solicit this proper caring praxis in order to grow. A carer's responsiveness to this need asserts their position as a responsible carer (and real person) as much as it produces the baby being cared for. Carers then carve out a special niche from which babies may emerge into

kin persons. Identified here, thermic cycles are somatically sensed and very closely mediated and associated with life-cycle changes, and are used to orientate appropriate actions and caring techniques. From a Xié dweller's perspective, executing environmentally emplaced techniques, such as splash-washing, contributes at once to creating a growing infant's fleshy substance, as well as to the production of an autonomously dependant, strong and cool-minded person who can live well with others.

Xié dwellers also tell stories about these caring techniques and refer to mythscapes that appear as a timeless backdrop for their contemporary, yet 'sedimented' (Heckenberger 2002; Merleau-Ponty 1962 [1945]) perinatal practice. However, I have suggested that this is at once confounded by their openness to others, which makes the possibility of incorporating new techniques and practices all the easier. Transformations in the minutiae of caring practices (such as splash-washing), and as a consequence bodily techniques (Mauss 2002 [1934]), are probably as hard to trace as the transformations of the content of oral traditions such as myths (Gow 2001: 23). By the same token, mythscaping makes them appear as their own, timeless practice. In this way, mythic narratives, thanks to their orality (Guss 1986), their contingent malleability and their liveliness, offer a mindful narrative that equals their daily mindful practice. Ultimately then, 'there is no opposition ... between continuity and change' (Ingold 2000: 147).

While the narrating of personal experience is an active way of shaping memories (see Gow 2001), myth speaks to the reproduction of more generic, barely perceptible everyday habits that people literally carry with them in their body-mind. This mindful way of being in the world is reflected by mythic discourse: mythscaping is the narrative accompaniment to daily mindful practice, a way to live with changes in such a way to make them relevant on sociopolitical and corporeal levels as part of the wider aesthetics of Amerindian living. Perhaps then, there is a positive link between certain types of narrative form and mindful states of being: in the mindfulness literature the suggestion is that the narrative mode of mind inhibits living in the present (Raffone, Tagini and Srinivasan 2010). However, the fact that mythic protagonists 'are not merely commemorated but actually made present for the assembled audience, as though they had been brought to life and invited in' (Ingold 2000: 92) may activate rather than disable 'living in the present'. It is only in animate cosmologies, where the liveliness of the landscape is apparent, that oral narratives of the mythic kind have this particularly contingent

poiesis. This mindful and mythical mode of dealing with the past, a past which in Amerindia is all too often scoured by bloody histories of domination and forced dependence in the face of postcolonial exploitation, is perhaps also, in some instances, a less traumatic narrative alternative than accrued and commemorated histories (cf. Echeverri 2010).

Finally, I have proposed that new techniques and practices are evaluated according to a humoral logic specific to northwest Amazonian Arawakan groups and that this logic forms part of their defining lifestyle and maintains their status. In this way, Xié dwellers' imperative: 'go and bathe and be strong' is at once a health-promoting practice as it is a socially and politically motivated one that upholds the status-conscious and hydrocentric parenting values of these river dwellers.

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Chapter 8

GENERATIONAL CHANGE AND CONTINUITY AMONG BRITISH MOTHERS THE SHARING OF BELIEFS, KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES C. 1940–1990

Angela Davis

According to Nancy Chodorow, ‘Biological mothering – pregnancy, childbirth, the felt reproductive drive – is filtered and created through the prism of the intrapsychic and intersubjective reproduction of mothering’ (1999: xiv). Using Chodorow’s thesis of the reproduction of mothering, this chapter explores how women’s relationships with their own mothers influenced their attitudes towards motherhood in post-war Britain. Focusing on the themes of women’s learning to be mothers, emulation of their own mothers, and rejection of their own mothers’ examples, the chapter considers the transfers of knowledge that took place. This is examined not only at a conscious level, for example in the practical help and support mothers offered their daughters in respect to maternity, infant care and child-rearing, but also at an unconscious level, through the models of motherhood they presented. By analysing the accounts of mothers and daughters the chapter demonstrates the continued importance of the mother-daughter relationship in the intergenerational transmission of attitudes and practices.

In a 1974 article entitled 'Family Structure and Feminine Personality' Chodorow explained that she was attempting to 'rectify certain gaps in the social-scientific literature' and contribute to a 'reformulation of psychological anthropology'. She continued:

Most traditional accounts of family and socialization tend to emphasize only role training, and not unconscious features of personality. Those few that rely on Freudian theory have abstracted a behaviorist methodology from this theory, concentrating on isolated 'significant' behaviors like weaning and toilet training. The paper advocates instead a focus on the ongoing interpersonal relationships in which these various behaviors are given meaning. (44)

Developing her ideas in the seminal work *The Reproduction of Mothering*, first published in 1978, Chodorow offered an explanation of women's mothering based on object-relations psychoanalysis (Rye 2009: 24–25). Drawing on the work of Margaret Mahler, she proposed that because mothers treat their daughters and sons differently, they in turn develop differently (Mahler et al. 1975: 3). Daughters, who share a 'core female identity' with their mothers, are encouraged to imitate them, while sons are expected to be separate and autonomous (Chodorow 1978: 151). During the oedipal conflict the daughter remains in an 'attached' relationship, which ideally suits her for adopting the caring and nurturing responsibilities in the domestic sphere. The son, on the other hand, turns away from his mother and towards his father who he sees as more worthy. He adopts competitive traits that are suited to the powerful public sphere (Chodorow 1978: 8–10, 39). While Chodorow acknowledges the importance of the outside world in shaping their experiences of motherhood (her earlier works paid more attention to the sociology of gender (Lorber 1981: 482)) she ultimately concludes that, 'Women come to be mothers because they have been mothered by women' (211).

Chodorow's analysis was taken up by the women's movement as the most competently theorized new writing on mothering (Segal 1994: 136). But it was also deeply controversial (van Mens-Verhulst 1995: 526–539). Although her text is a frequent reference point, it has been widely criticized for its reliance on the model of the white, heterosexual, middle-class, nuclear family (Rye 2009: 24–25). When she was writing the book, however, the model of heterosexual family described by Chodorow (1999: xi–xii) was statistically prevalent. In the United States 74 per cent of households were headed by a married couple in 1965 and it was similarly 74 per cent

of households in Britain in 1961 (Hughes 2010: 15; Wetzel 1990: 5). Reflecting back on the 1970s in the 1999 preface to the book's second edition she explained that she could not, at that time, 'foretell that a culture that advocated full-time mothering and an economy that permitted it for many women would be replaced by workplace practices and economic transformations that erode recognition of the mother-child relationship' (Chodorow 1999: xvi). Born in 1944, Chodorow is of the same generation as many of the women oral history respondents discussed in this chapter. Like Chodorow they grew up in a social and cultural context where the model of the male breadwinner and female homemaker was dominant. And similarly to Chodorow, in the course of their narratives they tried to make sense of the continuities, as well as the changes, that existed between their own and their mothers' lives. Chodorow's theory of how women become mothers is therefore particularly pertinent to the testimonies analysed in this chapter and offers an explanation for why mothers remained important figures in their accounts of their own motherhood.

Using Chodorow's thesis of the reproduction of mothering, while also remaining sensitive to its limitations, this chapter examines how women's relationships with their mothers influenced their attitudes towards motherhood. In doing so, it explores the processes by which girls are socialized into becoming adult women within the family, while also paying attention to how they reflect upon their psychological development as mothers.

Methodology

The chapter is based on seventy oral history interviews carried out in 2008–2009 with women about their experiences of motherhood in late twentieth-century Britain. The interviews were conducted as part of a wider project on post-war motherhood (Davis 2012). Interviewees were found through local newsletters, websites and radio, community groups and social clubs, and by women recommending other women to me. The sample was self-selecting as all the women volunteered to be interviewed. The interviews were semi-structured and based around the life cycle to encourage the women to position their own experiences within a longer process of generational change and to examine how their understandings of motherhood were passed down the generations. Memories are transmitted through the stories family members tell. Discussing oral history and

family memory, Paul Thompson reflects how, 'Telling one's own life story requires not only recounting directly remembered experience, but also drawing on information and stories transmitted across the generations' (1993: 13). The changing lives and expectations of family members, particularly women in the family, was a central theme for the interviewees. Personal autobiographical memory is also functionally and structurally related to cultural myths and social narratives (Nelson 2003: 125). Issues such as class and gender therefore intersected within their accounts and informed the stories they chose to tell. To explore these narrative processes, the women were selected from a range of class and educational backgrounds: from those who had left education at fourteen with the end of compulsory schooling to those who held postgraduate qualifications.

Different types of localities and communities also affect women's experiences. A case study was chosen rather than a national survey to enable an in-depth analysis of women from rural, urban and suburban locations in the neighbouring counties of Berkshire and Oxfordshire. These were the villages of Benson (referred to in this chapter as BE) and Ewelme (EW) in south Oxfordshire, the Wychwood villages (WY) in west Oxfordshire, the twenty-four square miles near Banbury in north Oxfordshire covered by the Country Planning (1944) survey (BA), and two villages in Berkshire – Crowthorne (CR) and Sandhurst (SA). Interviews were carried out with women from the market town of Thame (TH), which lies in the east of the county, Oxford city centre (OX), and the contrasting suburbs of industrial, working-class Cowley and Florence Park in east Oxford (CO), professional, middle-class Summertown in north Oxford (NO), and graduates of Somerville College, Oxford (SO). The interviews were typically ninety minutes in duration, although some were shorter and others considerably longer. They usually took place in the interviewee's home at a time of their choosing. I had met many of the interviewees before the interview, and had spoken to almost all by telephone to arrange the meeting. To enable informed consent I explained the aims of the research to potential respondents in advance of the interview. Interviewees were also given the chance to specify any restrictions they wished to make on their contributions. To preserve their anonymity pseudonyms have been used. Recordings and transcripts are held by the author.

Women construct their narratives in the context of the cultural representations that are specific to their generation and in relation to the experiences of others, such as their children and grandchildren (Wright and McLeod 2012: 15). The interviewees considered

here ranged in age from those born in the late 1930s to the early 1960s, so that the women's narratives demonstrate change over time. Women's age, and their position in the life cycle, influenced how they reflected upon generational change (Nelson 2003: 125; Pascoe 2009: 231). The issue of nostalgia is also important. Barbara Shircliffe defines this as, 'a yearning for something past that is no longer recoverable' (2001: 62). The interviewees had grown up with a strong ideal that marriage and the nuclear family was the best and perhaps only form that families could take. Popular conceptions of motherhood in the decades after the Second World War, with the associated ideals of happy nuclear families founded upon the companionate relationship between breadwinner husbands and homemaker wives, were deeply influential. Such ideas were also present in contemporary social surveys and community studies, as I have discussed elsewhere (Davis 2009, 2012: 15–55). The women's accounts of motherhood employed the discourses of marriage and family that dominated the post-war social and cultural milieu and they often found it difficult to relate to the other arrangements with which they had been confronted, often through the experiences of their own children, in later life (Davis 2012: 177–202).

Oral history therefore raises a number of interpretive challenges, such as the tension between self and public representation, the dynamics between interviewee and interviewer, the function of memory, and the playing out of the past-present relationship in interview narratives (Wright and McLeod 2012: 16–17). The women were looking back on past experiences from their current circumstances and this encouraged selective recollection. Their present selves determined what the important events from their past lives were. In many cases this was influenced by them having recently relived their own experiences of motherhood through the birth of grandchildren. Linked to this, my own status as a younger woman, often of a similar age to their daughters, was also significant in shaping the interview. Jay Mechling (1987: 580–581) has demonstrated how oral history informants modify their testimonies in accordance with their reading of the audience's understanding, so that the background and generation of the interviewer determines the topics they raise for discussion (Wright and McLeod 2012: 2). Interviewees were also aware of a wider public outside of the interview. They addressed this external audience in their interviews, asking questions about what other interviewees had said and how their own stories fitted into a larger account. These intricacies make oral history a particularly appropriate methodology for this study, however. Oral

history reveals the complex ways in which women compose their narratives in order to reconcile ideals of motherhood with the reality of their own lives, but also the changes in this relationship over time (Davies 1992: 55).

Learning to Be a 'Mother'

Girls learnt how to be a mother in the home. Intergenerational transmission occurs through a number of processes. It could take place through habituation. The women interviewees in this study recalled how girls, rather than boys, were expected to help with housework and emulate their own mothers' domestic roles. Margaret was born in 1944 in Romford in Essex, and her younger brother was born five years later. Discussing whether they helped in the home when they were growing up, she said:

Well, I used to help with the Hoovering, help with the washing, I always went shopping with my mother. She used to ask me to work with her I think when we were doing housework. I mean I don't mean to say I was Cinderella or anything but I just felt that because I was the girl I was expected to do the domestic stuff and my brother never was. (EW15: 2)

Girls' experiences of learning from their mothers varied significantly according to class, however. Interviewees from middle-class backgrounds said they learnt far less from their mothers than their working-class counterparts. The mothers of middle-class girls, particularly those born before the Second World War, had domestic servants who their daughters said were responsible for the more practical elements of their upbringing (SO5: 3; NO7: 1; NO14: 3; OX15: 1–2).

It was not only through watching or helping with household chores that girls learnt what was expected of adult women. Women growing up in the decades after the Second World War also learnt what was considered to be the appropriate behaviour of adult women from their mothers (Alexander 1994: 220). Tara was born in India in 1954, where her parents were part of the Anglo-Indian community, before moving to London when she was eighteen months old. She was the second youngest of four children and the only girl. Recalling the birth of her younger brother in 1957 she said: 'my first significant memory is his birth ... And I remember helping my mother bathe him, and push him around in the pram

and all that' (SO15: 1). Tara not only witnessed what it meant to be a mother, but was encouraged to participate in the mothering of her brother. It was at home that she learnt about division of labour in the family, with breadwinner husbands and homemaker wives, so dominant in post-war British culture. She continued by explaining that: 'I think my earliest impression of what it was to be a woman was to be a mother. That's what I remember, you know. Mum has the baby and it's literally holding the baby and dad's out there somewhere doing something called work' (SO15: 2). Discussing growing up, Tara explained that it was in the family that she learned what her expected future was to be. She told me: 'there was a large, great deal of pressure for the female role – expectation that you would get married quite likely and that was the substantial part of your future' (SO15: 4–5). However, it was not just from her mother that these ideas were disseminated, and she told an anecdote about a conversation with her father to illustrate this point:

I remember being with my father when I was a little girl and talking about the future and he said, 'Oh, one day I'll have to give you away.' And I was very alarmed. I thought, 'What do you mean?' You know, be given to a jumble sale or something? Then he said, 'Oh, no, that's what happens when you get married.' So it was definitely there. You know, that the daughter was expected to get married. (SO15: 4–5)

Tara's account of her childhood was not unusual and other women had similar stories to tell. Pippa was born in Paisley in Scotland in 1955. Her father was in the navy and her mother was a housewife. During Pippa's childhood the family had moved around the country following her father's postings. She explained: 'my mother ... was very clear about her role within the house. There was much more differentiation between my parents' (CO13: 3). Indicating the influence of her mother's actions upon her own, Pippa said that despite ostensibly trying to live her life in a different way from her mother she felt that in many ways she replicated it: 'I think that there is still this element of being respectable and conforming to the model of motherhood that my mother had to present to me' (CO13: 20–21). Pippa felt she was constantly defined by her mother's conduct, not only in terms of her relationship with her children, but also her husband. She said:

She's always been concerned about [my husband] being away all the time and always been absolutely horrified about the way I treat, supposedly treat him ... There was a lot of ... nurturing of my father to

which I [rebelled], you know, a lot of the arguments we had when I was a teenager was [because] my Dad had the best of everything and had the best chair and was served first and so I would rail against this. (CO13: 20–21)

Despite these tensions, however, Pippa also explained that she had tried to please her parents. She spoke of how she felt she had been encouraged by her parents, at both a conscious and unconscious level, to marry early at the age of twenty-three rather than living with her partner. She said: ‘it’s interesting that I wasn’t prepared to upset them really’ (CO13: 20–21). Pippa’s use of the idea of conscious and unconscious mind may have resulted from her work in early years’ services which meant she was familiar with the language of psychoanalysis. However, while other women may not have used these terms, she was not alone in describing the implicit and explicit influence that parents had exerted over life choices in terms of education, employment and choice of partner. This was described as occurring through parents’ efforts to overtly enforce their will on their children or because the bond between parent and child meant the younger women did not want to disappoint them. The different ways in which parents could influence their children was also something they reflected on as parents themselves. Pippa explained how she had tried to behave with her own children, indicating how these ideas about the distinct roles for men and women had been passed down the family, even if not intentionally:

I don’t think I made any distinction, not consciously, between them over household chores. But I think there is a gender difference. I think when they’re home, there is a more of a feeling of a student flat about the place when the boys are here than when my daughter’s here ... Whereas the boys [say] ‘Oh, I’ll do it later’ you know, if I ask her to do something, she will do it. (CO13: 20–21)

As both Tara and Pippa’s accounts indicate, women could find it difficult to reconcile the model of motherhood they had inherited from their mothers with their own hopes and desires. After the Second World War, the 1944 Education Act and the expansion of universities meant that young women, and particularly, although not exclusively, middle-class young women, had educational opportunities that had not been open to their mothers and in consequence held different aspirations for their future lives. They did not want or expect that being a wife and mother would also entail being a full-time homemaker dependent on a male breadwinner.

Kim was born in 1948 and grew up in Nottinghamshire to a middle-class family. She had one brother who was five years older. Kim said she had struggled to combine the image of motherhood that her mother had shown with her own aspirations for an education. Kim's mother had left university after a year and had not worked after having her children. In consequence, Kim explained that she had 'no idea how on earth the two things squared up, going to university and having a career, and turning into my mother and being a good housewife with children. It was a gap in my understanding that I couldn't easily put together' (OX15: 4). Kim had always wanted to go to university, but was unsure what would happen next. She said she thought she would 'have a career of some kind, very unspecified, no idea what it would be, hopefully not teaching because I hated school so much, and that I would then somehow miraculously meet somebody, stop that bit of life and would start this other strand of life which was me as a mother' (OX15: 4). Her mother had passed down a model of motherhood that she did not want to replicate, but neither did Kim know how else to be a mother: 'I didn't really like the model that my mother had given me because ... the more I got into my teens, the more I was flabbergasted really by how passive my mother was ... she hadn't had a career, she'd left that all behind years before' (OX15: 4).

This difficulty of knowing how to be a mother was a subject of importance to Kim, and one she discussed throughout her interview. Indeed she expressed doubts over whether she herself had managed to find a way of being a mother which enabled her to meet her different and sometimes contradictory needs. Furthermore, Kim continually used her own mother as a point of reference. For example, when asked at the end of the interview whether there was anything else we had not yet talked about that was important to her experiences, she returned to the subject of how she wanted to behave as a mother. She said, 'going back to this idea of the dichotomy of the career or the mother, and knowing what I had about my mother being rather depressed and not wanting [to be] that kind of mother, I found myself [as] that kind of mother and it was very difficult for me' (OX15: 4). For women such as Tara, Pippa and Kim, who had been educated to expect to lead a different life from their mothers but then found their lives were similar, the reproduction of mothering seemed to be an unavoidable process. They had come to emulate their own mothers, even when they had been trying to carve out a new way of being a woman and mother. It was hard for them to break free from the example of motherhood that their own

mothers had presented them with, and, as was indicated by Pippa's account of her relationship with her daughter, they could also pass on this model of motherhood on to their own daughters.

Family dynamics were diverse. Some women felt a closer bond to their father than their mother, and fathers could be particularly important when it came to educational and career decisions. For middle-class women, nannies or mother's helps were often primary caregivers, and grandmothers could be important figures for women of all classes. However the fact that being a mother was a shared female role across the generations meant that women related to their mothers and the influence of their mothers upon their own behaviour in a different way from other relationships they described. They were echoing Chodorow's argument, here, that it was because of their shared gender. Chodorow surmised that:

Mothers ... experience daughters as, in a certain sense, like them, and sons as, in a certain sense, unlike. Reciprocally, girls and boys themselves appropriate and transform these unconscious maternal communications through their own intrapsychic capacities for fantasy, their own defensive reactions to anxiety and guilt, and their own desires, passions, and impulses. (1999: viii)

For Chodorow, 'mothering' is not simply parenting undertaken by women, but an especially intense form of childcare overwhelmingly performed by women (1978: 3, 11).

Following in Their Mothers' Footsteps

As well as their mothers acting as role models for how to be a mother, mothering practices were also passed down the generations. Using language informed by psychoanalytical thought, whether or not they were conscious they were doing so, interviewees explained how they thought the desire to care came naturally to mothers because they were reliving their own childhood experiences. Sharon was born in Prestatyn in 1944 after her mother had been evacuated from Liverpool, where the family returned to after the war. Her father worked in a dispensary and her mother was a housewife. She had one younger sister. Recalling the births of her own two children in 1972 and 1974, she said, 'Mum was very supportive' (EW9: 10–11). She explained that her mother offered practical support and advice that Sharon said she followed, but her mother was also emotionally supportive in that she respected Sharon's choices in how to

look after her children. Sharon contrasted her mother's approach with the mothers of other women she knew:

Mothers are very important because if they are, if they have completely opposite views to what you want to do it's terribly difficult. And I breastfed. I wanted to breastfeed, and Mum was completely supportive of that. But you know, you used to keep meeting all these women who wanted to breastfeed, and their mothers would say, 'Oh, why are you doing that, give them a bottle'. (EW9: 10–11)

Sharon felt she was influenced by her mother at an unconscious level as well: 'I think that when you look after your children, you probably are recalling how your mother looked after you. So if you haven't had a good mothering experience, I think it must be very difficult to know how to mother other children' (EW9: 14).

It is noteworthy, though, that Sharon did not live close to her mother. Sharon had moved to Ewelme, a small village in south Oxfordshire, when she had her children, while her mother remained in Liverpool. Despite this geographical distance, Sharon recalled that she would turn to her mother for advice on how to care for her children. She explained how, 'Until the last couple of years before she died she was the person I could talk to about the children' (EW9: 14). Women and their families often made efforts to remain in contact despite the distances between them. The widespread adoption of technologies such as the telephone, once the preserve of the middle classes, meant that disparate families could remain emotionally close and continue to pass on their mothering practices and beliefs across the generations. As Sharon's account indicates, talking over the phone offered a new way to share knowledge, although it meant women now learnt through listening to what their mothers said they would do, rather than watching them in action.

Moreover, spatial distance did affect the transmission of cultures and practices between grandmothers, mothers and children. For some interviewees, living away from their families made it harder to maintain intergenerational bonds and receive child-rearing advice. Megan grew up in a middle-class household in north London, but lived in St Clements, a working-class area of Oxford, when her children were born in the early 1970s, away from her family. She felt she suffered because of this separation: 'My mother didn't live near, and neither did my mother-in-law, so I did feel very isolated, I think that was difficult' (OX11: 7). Women whose mothers had not been around when they were growing up also spoke of the

difficulties that this absence could bring. Tina was born in 1945 and spent her early years in Portsmouth. Her childhood had been a difficult one:

I had a mum and dad and they split up, then I was put in a home, then I lived with my dad's sisters. Then work brought him up to Cholsey, then I was fostered out at Cholsey, but I couldn't say it was very happy. Definitely not, definitely not happy. And I don't often talk about it because it's too painful. (BE3: 2)

Tina felt that not having her parents around when she was little made it hard for her when she married and had her own children between 1964 and 1971, as it had prevented the intergenerational transmission of mothering to occur. She thought: 'That caused a lot of trouble as well, 'cause I'd never been used to a mum and dad to sort of have a role model' (BE3: 4).

Other women, whose mothers were not alive when they were raising their own children, spoke of the consequences of not having their mother present. When recounting her own birth Kim told me, 'I don't know how many days I was in hospital ... the nursing home, I think not many and then I came home and my mother did breastfeed. But because she died when I was twenty-one, which is before my own children were born, all these [are] questions that you normally ask your mother then' (OX15: 1). Nonetheless, Kim still thought she still had tried to emulate her mother's child-rearing style, even though her mother was not there to ask for advice. For example, when discussing family size Kim explained that her dream was to mirror her own childhood experience: 'there would be two of us, two children ... and preferably a girl and a boy, but we didn't [manage that], but the two children was optimal' (OX15: 5–6). Similarly, recalling what happened when her first child was born, she again said she thought she may have been trying to recreate her own childhood experiences:

I was home in two days and really then just had to get on because I'd made a decision to live as naturally. I mean, whether it was because my mother wasn't around and I wanted to kind of experience what she'd experienced, I've no idea why it was, but I wanted ... [that] everything was done naturally so I boiled the nappies. (OX15: 7)

Kim's uncertainty in explaining how she felt when her baby was born and the reasoning behind her decisions reflects the difficulty in interpreting the interviewees' memories of their past lives, which they themselves shared. However it also indicates the contradictory

feelings that they had about their mothering practices, both with hindsight and at the time. This suggests the problems they faced in reconciling the multiplicity of often conflicting messages about how best to care for small children (coming from their own family and friends, advice literature and medical professionals) which existed both at the time and today.

Having children could also make women feel a new understanding for their mothers. Hilda was born in 1942 and grew up in Wembley. One of four children, her father, who had been a regular soldier in the army, died when she was nine and had been ill for some time with tuberculosis before his death. Hilda's mother had therefore worked to support the family. Hilda explained that it was having her own children in 1967 and 1970 that made her realize what it must have been like for her mother. She said, 'I must admit I did not appreciate my mother until I'd had my own children and then I really appreciated all that she did and all how she managed' (BA11: 17). Throughout her interview Hilda referred to her mother as being a supportive and influential figure in how she raised her children, even though she was not nearby, as she continued to live in London while Hilda had moved to north Oxfordshire. Specific child-rearing practices were also passed down from mother to daughter even if mothers were not immediately at hand to learn from. For example Hilda told me that she 'Can't stand dummies. I can't. Probably it's left over from my mum, my mother couldn't stand dummies and you do ... you do inherit these things unknowingly or whatever' (BA11: 24). Gloria was from a working-class family in Benson in south Oxfordshire. Born in 1939, she had lived in the village all her life and her parents were also from the village. Unlike Hilda, she therefore had her mother living a few streets away when she had two children in 1966 and 1969. Discussing how she had looked after her first baby, she said that something that she had thought to be very important was that babies needed regular time outside the house: 'Don't matter if it was winter, or whatever, during the day for her sleep she'd be outside, both my babies. Wouldn't be in here, wouldn't be in her cot, she'd be in her pram, outside, under the plum tree, wrapped up snugly and warm if it was winter.' When asked why she thought it was important, she answered: 'It was something my mum used to do I suppose' (BE14: 18). Gloria was not alone in wanting to behave with her own children as her mother had done with her. Andrea was born in 1952 to a working-class family in London, the eldest of two girls. Her own children were born in 1978, 1981 and 1984. When asked whether she had

tried to be like her parents when she was bringing up her own children, she replied:

Yes. I mean a lot of people laughed how I still make my kids' beds for example, I've still got two that live at home and they say, 'Oh you spoil them'. I say, 'No, my mother did that for me until the day I got married and it didn't do me any harm.' And it's just something mum and dad did for me and I still do for my children. And when [I spoke] to my kids once about it, they said 'No, if you turn into nanny and grandad you'll be alright'. (SA9: 8–9)

While some women recalled that they had adopted specific child-rearing practices in an attempt to be like their mothers, others, like Andrea, aspired to be like their mothers in their mothering ethos. Jean was born in 1959 and grew up as part of a large extended family living in Cheltenham. Her father was a pilot and her mother a housewife. At several points during her interview Jean explained that she had tried to be like her mother with her own children, born in 1987 and 1990. For example, when asked whether she had helped in the home when she was growing up she answered: 'No. I mean my mum was at home. I think she did everything. She did everything for us, which is what I do with my kids' (EW14: 1). It is striking that at a point in her narrative when she said she had tried to put her own ideas into practice rather than following her mother's example she ran into difficulties and ultimately turned to her mother. She told a story about weaning her son:

I mean I had fairly strict ideas of how I was going to bring my baby up ... I remember I had all these healthy ideas, so my children ate rice with my milk and no sugar and all the rest of it. I couldn't get [my son] to feed. He wouldn't take solids, so I was starting to wean him then. I remember ringing up my mother in floods of tears and she came round with a Heinz baby food pot of chocolate, and of course he ate it in about thirty seconds, so I think the lesson was learnt there. (EW14: 6)

This anecdote therefore supported Jean's overall theme, namely that mother knows best. Later in the interview, when she was discussing the differences between what it was like to be a mother when she had her children and for women today, she said that a lack of discipline was characteristic of modern parenting. In contrast, Jean had 'always been very strict about bedtimes and pretty strict on discipline as well'. When asked if that was something she also took from her mother, she answered, 'Absolutely, yes. It's funny because I've

brought my children up very much as I was brought up. They never took days off school sick unless they were so ill they could hardly get out of bed' (EW14: 8).

It is notable though that Jean felt her sister had behaved in a very different manner. She explained: 'My sister has done completely the opposite. Her children are ill disciplined. They've only got to say that they've got a headache or stomach ache and they don't go to school. It's really bizarre. Mind you, I was always the goody-goody and she was always the rebellious one, so there we go' (EW14: 8). Jean was not alone in comparing herself with her sister. Carmel was born in 1949 in Rochdale and had one elder sister who was born in 1943. Carmel's three children were born between 1977 and 1985 while her sister's children were born ten years before. In contrast to Jean, Carmel felt she was the sister who had taken a more relaxed approach. She was less bound by routine than her sister, recalling that her sister had a 'completely different' parenting style (NO16: 8–9). The interviewees regularly used the experience of friends and family as a point of contrast in their narratives, frequently as an example of what they felt was the wrong way to behave, and this reflected how they developed their sense of identity as a mother by positioning themselves against others. Indeed, interviewees of all backgrounds and social strata, including those who lived close to family and those who did not, said it was other mothers of young children who provided their principal support networks.

Trying to Do Something New

The figure to whom women most frequently compared themselves was their own mother. While women who had enjoyed close a relationship with their own mothers could try and consciously or unconsciously imitate their mothers' behaviour with their own children, those women who had more troubled relationships with their mothers, or who had doubts about their mother's child-rearing style, could try to behave in a different way. Carmel did not present her childhood as unhappy, but she did think it was old-fashioned, and described it as having 'more in common with the Victorians than it does with the twenty-first century' (NO16: 1). When Carmel's own children were born she therefore wanted to depart from her mother's child-rearing practices. She felt that the divergence between her own approach to childcare and that of the older members of her

family caused a significant degree of conflict between them. She explained how: ‘they felt, my mother probably less than anybody, but they did feel a bit challenged by it all and tended to say “Oh you can’t. Breastfeeding on demand. Don’t do that”’ (NO16: 8–9). In part Carmel’s desire to do things differently represented generational change. However, as Julia Brannen and Ann Nilsen (2006: 340–341) demonstrated in their study of intergenerational transmission of fathering practices, generational change does not have to imply generational conflict. One of the fathers they interviewed said that what was transmitted from his family was the freedom to choose to live his life in a different way to his parents’ generation. Likewise, it is of note that Carmel felt that her mother was more supportive of her decision to parent in a different manner than other members of the family were.

Generational change between mothers and daughters was commented upon by a number of women. However it is interesting that some women felt that their own generation of post-war mothers was the first to break with the attitudes of the past, whilst others felt it was the generation of mothers today. Harriet, who was born in 1955, grew up in an upwardly mobile family in suburban Taplow. Harriet was a twin, her mother was also a twin, and Harriet had twin boys in 1986. She thought that she had taken a far more active approach to her pregnancy than her mother who had been resigned to her fate. Harriet explained:

she said ‘I just didn’t want to know. What will be, will be.’ And I said, ‘But didn’t you ever ask the doctors?’ [She replied] ‘No. Well, you know, the doctors know best. You leave everything in their hands.’ And I think that was the attitude then. My mum just thought, okay, her mother had had twins and they were really tiny and they’d survived. And my mum was going to have twins and they survived ... And I think ... there’s less questioning of things. My mum just blithely just carried on with it. (CR8: 12)

In contrast, when discussing why she had chosen to have a natural birth, she explained it was because she had decided that, ‘I’m not just going to go along with what the doctors say’ (CR8: 5). Unlike Harriet, however, Hilda thought that it was today’s generation of mothers who were breaking the chain. She said:

Well fashions change don’t they? I think we relied perhaps more on our mothers for guidance. And I think, as I say, they’re a lot older the mothers these days. And obviously they’ve been out working for a

number of years so they're kind of independent minded aren't they?
So (a) I don't think they'd ask for help and (b) even if they did, it would be, 'Well we don't do it that way mother'. (BA11: 13)

Hilda presented her own generation as trying to replicate the behaviour of their mothers while women today did not. In doing so, she also alluded to the effects of social mobility as women moved away from working-class attitudes towards child-rearing, which lost influence in post-war Britain in the face of welfare reforms, the foundation of the National Health Service and economic affluence. Middle-class women were less likely to follow their mothers' advice because of greater geographical mobility and higher levels of education, which facilitated their access to the latest childcare theories (Davis 2012: 117).

However Hilda's account of continuity and change in mothering practices that occurred down the generations reflected wider ambiguities and tensions that occurred across class and regional boundaries. Indeed Lucinda McCray Beier has also referred to this generational shift in attitudes with reference to the oral history interviews that she and Elizabeth Roberts conducted with working-class women in Lancashire (Beier 2004: 409). Sandra's account exemplified such generational ambivalence. Born in London in 1950, Sandra was one of three girls. Her father was a quantity surveyor. Her own children were born in 1976, 1979 and 1982. Discussing her daughter-in-law, Sandra indicated that she felt women learnt how to mother from their own mothers and would repeat their mothering practices. She said her daughter-in-law 'didn't breastfeed for very long. She only breastfed him for six weeks. She wasn't enjoying it. Her mother didn't breastfeed' (EW13: 11–12). However, Sandra then went on to say that she herself had behaved in a different way to her own mother by choosing to breastfeed her children. She said: 'My mother only breastfed for a couple of months and then she smoked. They used to smoke during their pregnancy then' (EW13: 11–12). Although Sandra had attended a comprehensive school after failing her eleven-plus exam and had not gone to university, she added that, rather than seek the advice of her mother she 'did a lot of reading when I was pregnant. I read Hugh Jolly, a great book, Penelope Leach, and I went to quite a few lectures and things up at universities' (EW13: 11–12). Sandra's mother suffered from health problems, which meant she could not provide her daughter with as much practical help Sandra would have liked. While Sandra did not say how her mother felt about the situation, other than explaining

that she did try to help when she could, the lack of support was difficult for Sandra (EW13: 6–7).

Figures such as Penelope Leach were influential in the post-war period and Sandra was not alone in preferring to follow the advice of experts rather than family (Davis 2012: 112–141). However, wanting to follow the advice of experts did not mean women did not love or respect their mothers. Contradictions and ambivalence were inherent in the mother-daughter relationship. Women could believe their mothers had tried to do their best for them while also thinking that their mothers' actions were misguided. Recalling the difference between her own and her mother's approach to baby-care, Pippa told me: 'she has said things to me like, "Oh, you were expected to sort of just leave you crying", you know, from that regimented view of childcare'. In contrast, Pippa said: 'I never could. I had to pick him up'. However Pippa wanted to defend her mother and stated: 'But I think she was, she was and still is a very loving mother' (CO13: 17–18). Cynthia was born in Kettering in 1957, the eldest of two children. When asked whether she had tried to be similar to or different from her parents she replied:

Yeah that's a good question ... It's hard to say ... I suppose my ... mother was a stay at home sort of mum, certainly for the first eight or nine years. So there wasn't really a sense in which I was trying to be like her because our lives were just so very different. I mean I certainly felt that my parents were very good parents. So in that respect, yeah, I've tried to model myself on them a bit. (WY12: 10)

Conclusion

Using Nancy Chodorow's thesis of the reproduction of mothering as a starting point, whilst remaining sensitive to its limitations and acknowledging that her theories are products of the time period and social milieu in which they were written, in this chapter I have considered how women's experience of being mothered influenced their behaviour as mothers. Inspired by her idea that women come to be mothers because they have been mothered by women, I have explored how attitudes towards motherhood and mothering practices in the second half of the twentieth century were passed down from mothers to daughters. While not all the women interviewed experienced their mothers as their primary caregiver when they were growing up, with nannies, grandmothers and fathers also acting as

'mothers', women whose mothers were absent during their childhood still recalled them as influencing how they themselves behaved as mothers. Women learnt what it meant to be a mother through watching their own mothers. In part, this transmission of mothering could take the form of women inheriting their mother's attitudes or behaviours in relation to specific child-rearing practices, such as infant feeding or child discipline. In some cases the transfer of knowledge had occurred through habituation, with interviewees relating how they learnt from their mothers through helping them with the care of younger siblings. However, their mothers' influence was also felt at a broader and more diffuse level. It was through the example of their own mothers (whether present or absent) that girls learnt how adult women were expected to behave and these representations of motherhood remained deeply influential upon their later lives. Furthermore, the imagined figure of the ideal mother was as important to the interviewees as the real mothers or other kin who raised them, and this understanding of what a mother should be like was also transmitted across the generations.

In consequence, the social and geographical mobility experienced by many of the women interviewed did not mean that they believed the transmission of mothering between mothers and daughters had ceased. As Thomson et al. (2011: 119) found in their contemporary study, 'intergenerational work' is central to the project of motherhood. Differences did emerge in terms of the class and educational backgrounds of the women interviewed. Housewifery practices were less likely to be transmitted in middle-class families due to the presence of domestic servants. Women who had been educated for a professional life spoke with particular ambivalence of replicating the domestically-orientated lives of their mothers. Despite these differences, though, all the interviewees discussed the importance of their mothers as role models. Women who tried to imitate their mothers and those who rejected their mothers' model of motherhood thought their mothers were important in shaping their own maternal identity. However, confirming the findings of Beier (2004), the women's accounts also indicate the effects of wider social change as women referred to the increasing emphasis placed on following expert advice. This chapter has built upon these existing accounts by exploring the limitations of the dichotomy of women either rejecting or emulating their mothers. As the narratives of the women presented here demonstrate, the mother-daughter relationship was a complex one, characterized by ambivalence and subject to change over time at both the individual and societal level. Women could

relate to their mothers in different ways in relation to different aspects of motherhood, at different points in the life course, and at different points in the interview reflecting their simultaneous identities as daughters, mothers and grandmothers. Mother-daughter relationships were more multifaceted than the often over-sentimentalized portrayals popular in post-war British sociology allow for (Davis 2012: 21–22).

Indeed the chapter's use of oral history has enabled particular insights into the process of generational transmission. The subjective nature of oral history as a methodology sheds light on the interviewees' thoughts and feelings about their experiences, which have often been absent from the historical record. It also reveals how their understanding of these experiences is shaped over time. Developing this theme, the dual nature of the interview, whereby interviewees are reflecting back on their past lives from the perspective of their present selves, offers an insight into the relationship between memory and experience and the complexity of generational transmission within this process. As well as discussing the reality of their experiences of mothering and being mothered, as they constructed their life stories interviewees also actively created, consciously and sub-consciously, the model of motherhood they wished had been passed down to them and which they hoped to transmit.

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Chapter 9

‘I FEEL MY DAD EVERY MOMENT!’

MEMORY, EMOTION AND EMBODIMENT IN BRITISH SOUTH ASIAN FATHERING PRACTICES

Punita Chowbey and Sarah Salway

This chapter examines the fathering narratives of British South Asian men with children aged three to eight years, in the context of their complex migration histories and experiences of socio-economic marginalization in contemporary Britain. It investigates men’s narratives about their memories of their fathers and their legacies for their own values and practices as fathers. This reveals the contradictions between men’s constructions of their own fathers and their own aspirations for fatherhood, and demonstrates how socio-economic location influences the fathering practices of British South Asian men.

While recent growing recognition of fathers’ roles and needs is to be welcomed, the research underpinning such developments in theory, policy and practice has been critiqued for largely focusing on European and North American middle-class fathers (Cabrera and Garcia-Coll 2004; Hawkins and Palkovitz 1999). Little research has involved minority ethnic or working-class fathers (Lewis and Lamb 2007; Shears 2007). There are concerns that policy and practice, grounded in the experiences and normative assumptions of white middle-class culture, is often inappropriate for fathers from other, less privileged, backgrounds (Gillies 2009; Lloyd, O’Brien

and Lewis 2003). The finding that early years and parenting interventions often fail to engage with fathers from diverse cultural and class backgrounds is one indication of this mismatch between the dominant understandings and expectations of fathering and the lived realities of many men in diverse societies (Lloyd, O'Brien and Lewis 2003).

According to the 2011 U.K. Census, British Asians/Asians represent 4.9 per cent of the total population in England and Wales. Of all ethnic minority groups, those identifying as British Indian/Indian are the largest, making up 2.5 per cent of the total population, while those identifying as British Pakistani/Pakistani (2 per cent) and British Bangladeshi/Bangladeshi (0.75 per cent) make up smaller but still sizeable groups (Office of National Statistics 2012). The majority of British Asian men become fathers, and fatherhood is a key component of identity for most U.K. Asian men (Beishon, Moodood and Virdee 1998; Shaw 2000). Yet little is known about how British Asian men experience and practise fatherhood or how their fatherhood is shaped and constrained by structural factors alongside individual and family-level influences (Chowbey, Salway and Clarke 2013). Complex migration experiences, unemployment or poor employment, and systematic minoritization can make being a father challenging for South Asian men (Platt 2002; Salway, Chowbey and Clarke 2009). Furthermore, marriage breakdown is on the rise in some South Asian groups, underscoring the danger of assuming static parenting arrangements (Qureshi, Charsley and Shaw 2014). This chapter goes some way to filling this gap in knowledge. Our focus on fathers' childhood memories of their own fathers takes a novel, but we suggest fruitful, approach to increasing our understanding of British South Asian men's fathering experiences and practices.

Fathering attitudes and behaviours are influenced by parents' own childhood experiences (Daly 1993; Floyd and Morman 2000; Furstenberg and Weiss 2000; Pease 2000; Snarey 1993). For example, research suggests links between fathers' and sons' authoritarian parental practices, and that, similarly, young fathers are less likely to live with their children if their own fathers were non-resident (Furstenberg and Weiss 2000; Peretti and Statum 1984). The intergenerational transmission of fathering takes on a particular significance when the focus is on migrant and minority fathers. These men must often fashion their father identity and behaviour in a context that differs over space, as well as time, from that of their own fathers. Brannen, Moss and Mooney (2004) sought to examine

how different generations and ethnicities engage in fathering. In their work with Polish and Irish fathers, they show the complexity of comparing migrants across different historical periods and across different national contexts. They conclude that structural and relational ambivalences are managed and reflected in men's identification with their own fathers' strong work ethics and provider roles. Our research takes a similar approach by focusing on fathers with young children and comparing their accounts of being brought up in South Asia and the U.K. In addition, fathers' different ethnic, religious, cultural and migration histories provide insight into diverse religious and cultural influences on fathering for British South Asian men.

Memory, Emotion and Unconscious Embodiment

Current policy discourses on fathering make private acts of child-rearing public. Connecting personal stories of being fathered with collective narratives of racialization and marginalization is thus essential for understanding the images of the past and how they are projected onto the present context. Furthermore, memories construct a sense of the self in a particular time and context (Misztal 2003). As a father, memories of childhood give not only a sense of self as a son in a particular socio-economic and historical context, but also as a father constructed by the memories of the self as a son. Childhood memories may arouse particularly strong emotions. Smart argues that 'Whether the feelings evoked [through memory] are good or bad, they hold a peculiarly alluring and nostalgic significance. The emotional reaction to these memories when constructed in the present shifts "the family" into a special place in our internal calibrations of personal significance' (2007: 39). As she argues, memories are not all about remembering, they are also about forgetting, as well as unconscious influences.

Here, to understand how fathers draw on their conscious and unconscious memories, it is useful to think about the embodied nature of memory. Following Doucet (2009), we draw on Bourdieu's (1977: 93; 1990) concept of the *habitus* as 'beyond the grasp of consciousness' to understand unconscious, habituated ways of thinking, acting and responding to current fathering contexts. Bourdieu's *habitus* makes it possible to investigate the extent to which the reproduction of fathering practices is deeply rooted in fathers' memories of their own childhoods and under what circumstances fathers question and

seek to alter these practices. Further, it helps us to examine the role of structural inequalities in reinforcing the habituation of fathering practices across spatial and temporal contexts.

In examining the interaction of the social and the individual, a memory-led approach to *habitus* highlights the dynamic nature of fatherhood and enables exploration of gaps between fathers' expressed ideals and habituated ways of practising fatherhood.

Methods

The study focuses on fathers of children aged three to eight years who self-identified as belonging to one of the four religio-ethnic groups: Bangladeshi Muslims, Pakistani Muslims, Gujarati Hindus (of Indian origin), and Punjabi Sikhs (of Indian origin). Our theoretical approach to ethnicity was to acknowledge the contested and malleable nature of both the content and boundaries of ethnic 'group' membership, and the multiplicity of experiences represented within the commonly used ethnic categories (Gunaratnam 2003; Modood 1988). At the same time, however, we recognize that identity formation remains 'deeply rooted in the organization of society' (Ville and Guérin-Pace 2005: 237), so that there are limits to the ways in which individuals can fashion their identities. The respondents represented a variety of age, migration histories, educational and occupational backgrounds, as can be seen in Table 9.1.

Fieldwork took place in a number of neighbourhoods across two English cities between 2006 and 2008. An initial phase of familiarization employed a range of informal interview and observational methods, involving over eighty informants, to gain a broad understanding of social and economic context, family, parenting and fatherhood, and relevant local words and phrases. Next, fifty-nine in-depth interviews were conducted with fathers and thirty-three interviews with mothers recruited through a range of community networks. Respondents were interviewed in the language of their choice by bilingual researchers. Interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed and, where necessary, translated into English in full with a focus on retaining conceptual equivalence. Our research team included four female professional researchers supported by a number of trained male and female community researchers who identified themselves as members of one of the four religio-ethnic groups.

Analysis and interpretation of findings were ongoing during data collection. Line-by-line coding was combined with an iteratively

developed coding schema and holistic thematic analysis. Researchers kept field diaries and held regular meetings and analysis workshops to discuss and clarify emerging findings.

This chapter draws on data generated from the questioning aimed at understanding fathers' own experiences of being fathered. Respondents were asked to reflect on their own childhood including their relationship with their fathers, time spent together, involvement in daily caregiving and discipline. Fathers were then

TABLE 9.1. Table of respondents' characteristics

Respondents' Characteristics	Number	Sheffield			East London		
		Total	PM	BM	PM	BM	GH
Age							
20–29	6	2	1	2	0	0	1
30–39	36	7	9	3	6	6	5
40–49	17	2	0	4	3	4	4
Migrant status							
U.K.-born/migrated age <10 years	26	7	3	3	1	5	7
Migrated age >10 years	33	4	7	6	8	5	3
Education							
GCSE/ O-level	20	2	4	4	3	4	3
A-level or equivalent	15	5	2	2	1	2	3
Degree or equivalent	24	4	4	3	5	4	4
Current work							
Part-time	19	2	5	3	4	2	3
Full-time	31	7	4	4	3	7	6
None	9	2	1	2	2	1	1
Occupation (current or past)							
Manual/semi-skilled	18	3	4	3	2	4	2
Skilled	17	3	3	4	2	3	2
Professional	17	4	2	2	3	2	4
Self-employed	7	1	1	0	2	1	2
Total respondents	59	11	10	9	9	10	10

KEY: PM = Pakistani Muslim; BM = Bangladeshi Muslim; GH = Gujarati Hindu; PS = Punjabi Sikh

encouraged to think about how their childhood experiences might relate to fathering their own children. The interviews provided an opportunity to understand fathers' perceptions of fatherhood and experiences of fathering, providing access to discursive constructions of self as father (Mason 2002). A life history grid in conjunction with a semi-structured interview guide made it possible to probe childhood memories and fathers' experiences of fathering retrospectively. However, interviews are situational and relational and there can be differences in what people say and what they do. Further, it is important to appreciate, as Lawler (2000) identifies, that storytellers may choose to privilege one voice over another or use it to validate a certain class or ethnic position, and in so doing create proximity to, or distance from, their parents.

Below, we begin by describing how fathers remembered their own fathers and the content of these memories. Next, we consider the legacy of fathering, outlining different ways in which our respondents made sense of the memories of their own fathers and how they responded to these in their own enactment of fathering. The final section draws out the significance of emotion and unconscious embodiment, as we have introduced above.

Remembering Fathers

Memories of Fathers

Although both fathers who had migrated to Britain and those who were British-born were asked the same questions and probed along similar lines, the second-generation migrant fathers tended to reflect on their childhood memories more expansively than first-generation fathers. The majority of first-generation fathers grew up in extended families with a high degree of involvement by other relatives and therefore had limited memories of their own fathers. Further, given the public discourse of involved fathering in the U.K., second-generation fathers had more prompts to engage in reflection on their own childhood as well as their roles as fathers.

Over two-thirds of respondents told us that they lacked many vivid memories of their own fathers, being unable to recall things that they had done together or particular events. However, this lack of concrete memories contrasted with the strong emotional ties that they reported sharing with their fathers. Some had been raised by their grandfathers or uncles, with their fathers being less involved in

their lives. The following statement from a second-generation Pakistani respondent is typical of many fathers in our study:

I wouldn't say there were any positive memories! It's like a blank ... 'cos if there's no involvement, you're not actually going to have any memories of it. He [my father] never hit us or anything but ... we didn't notice the difference, most of the kids in our area were like that, so it seemed normal to us that most of the parents [were not involved].

The above quotation illustrates how the absence of fathers from their children's daily life was a 'normal' way of growing up for the majority of our fathers. Another Pakistani father's narrative threw light poignantly on what it meant for the early childhood relationship between fathers and sons: 'When I was about four or five, he was apparently a man that I didn't like. People say he was a complete stranger to me so I used to run away from him.' For respondents who had been separated from their fathers due to family migration, the years of separation remained the main frame through which they remembered their fathers, as illustrated by a Sikh respondent who migrated to Britain aged seven: 'I am not sure I did have much of a relationship with my father because when I was very little he came over to England so, up till seven when we came here ... I don't think I knew him, hardly at all.'

Some fathers reported missing their own fathers while growing up. The majority of these men were brought up in the U.K. and lacked the involvement of a large extended family that was more common for those raised abroad. This second-generation Pakistani father stated: 'When your father is not around, it's difficult. Your granddad can only play a certain role. I have no regrets ... it's part of life ... I'm thirty, but I've got experience of a sixty-year-old, what I've gone through.' Some fathers who were raised by their grandfathers or other relatives abroad did not feel that their father's absence was unusual or problematic, as reported by this first-generation Sikh father: 'There is not much difference in Asian families [between parents and grandparents], that you can't get love from grandparents. They are the same as parents. So I missed my dad, but only a little. It wasn't that bad because my grandparents loved me a lot.'

Although distant physical locations shaped day-to-day experiences, the psychological and emotional distance or proximity to their fathers did not always depend on daily interaction. Instead, for many respondents their fathers were very prominent in their

childhood narratives, despite physical separation and fleeting encounters. The significance of letters and phone calls, however infrequent, is evident from this first-generation Bangladeshi respondent whose father worked in the Persian Gulf for a major part of his childhood: 'My father left when I was four, came back after about five, six years for a couple of months. Then he went again for three, four years. But he was all the time in touch through letters ... they were very powerful at that age. We had lots of questions to ask and there were huge letters from him offering guidance.'

Many fathers recounted memories of their own fathers with a deep longing for greater physical and emotional intimacy. However, some fathers said they understood that their fathers loved them without receiving direct verbal or physical expressions. Being introduced by their fathers to their friends with pride, being called to sit on the same *charpay* (cot) next to their father, or being asked if they had eaten, were all viewed as expressions of love. Reflecting on his relationship with his father, one first-generation Bangladeshi father expressed these unstated articulations of love: 'Actually he shows his affection with us actually internally ... not hugging, I mean, holding us just inside, we can imagine he likes us too much.'

Many respondents had vivid memories of limited but important time together with their fathers. Rather than descriptions of routine and daily time with their fathers, the narratives recounted stories of going to parks, the seaside, shopping and on visits to relatives and other ways of linking to the outside world. For the majority such occasions were limited, and some respondents were unable to recall any details of time spent with their fathers. Nevertheless, many respondents' narratives suggested strong bonds with their fathers, and a powerful impact of limited time spent together, as illustrated in the following excerpt from a second-generation Pakistani father:

So although your mother is there you really look forward more to the time with your father because it's like a guy thing, you can chill out together. I remember always wanting to impress my father more than my mother, want[ing] to get the answers right, behav[ing] myself slightly better in front of him. It was almost like trying to impress him more than my mother ... a longing for my father to come home in the evening. Because the time was limited it meant a lot more for us to be there with him.

The memories may not have been abundant, but they were powerful and meaningful for the fathers in our interviews. What many

men lacked in giving their sons bountiful memories of togetherness as fathers, they more than made up for by role-modelling as honest, hard-working, self-made men in a more overtly racist Britain. Many second-generation fathers' narratives recognized the additional hardship that their fathers had faced because of discrimination that they had experienced in their daily lives. Fathers frequently described how society had changed in the decades since their own fathers had worked to make a life in the U.K., referring to reduced racism in schools and communities, as well as greater visibility and acceptance of minority ethnic people. A second-generation Sikh father whose parents had moved away from an all 'black area' to an all 'white area' to provide a 'better environment' for their children recollected:

I can remember like we had quite a big National Front organization in the white area and mum would go down the road and they'd be six-foot skinheads, [calling] to mum like, that would be her English name and it was quite ironic to see ... I can remember one day the next-door neighbour saying 'oh there's a Paki family have just moved in up the street'. She never thought it was a bad thing to say.

Relationships with Fathers

Our respondents' relationships with their fathers shifted over their life courses. For the majority of respondents, their fathers contributed to their lives in many positive and nurturing ways, despite often limited day-to-day involvement. For over half of our fathers, especially the first-generation migrants, their fathers were a source of inspiration. Many expressed deep gratitude to their fathers and felt they owed everything to them. Some dwelt upon what their fathers had achieved and ignored the minimal day-to-day involvement they had had in their lives. Several fathers talked about their fathers as their 'heroes' and role models. A second-generation Sikh father said: '[He was a] ... person to look up to, like an idol, sort of thing, you know. The things he used to do, you'd want to do when you grow up'. Pride was a very common sentiment in many fathers' narratives. Some fathers elaborated on how their fathers were very knowledgeable, helped others and served their community and family back home. Many expressed respect for their fathers' very hard work to provide for the family, as seen in this second-generation Sikh father's narrative: 'Dad had six or seven jobs at one time ... just before I joined the police service I did loads of jobs like my dad because you do whatever there's available to

do ... he would do whatever he could to lay his hands on money to bring us up.'

The respondents' narratives also revealed a deep sense of gratitude towards their fathers. The fathers who felt this way had grown up with a strong sense of trust and security and felt that the provision of such a strong attachment is an integral part of fatherhood. The following statement from a first-generation Gujarati illustrates this well: 'Whatever my father says is the truth! I am here, because of him. If you need something [even if it is impossible], a father would still try to do that to keep you happy ... not only my father, everybody's father is going to do.' For many who felt this way, this sense of gratitude emanated from the huge sacrifices their fathers had made to help them become the individuals and fathers they now were.

For some, however, memories were painful and ever-present, appearing to limit their own fathering role. These fathers wanted to salvage themselves and their fathers from traumatic (or absent) childhood events. Some longed for their fathers and tried to make sense of their predicament, blaming not individuals but circumstances that may have got in the way of fathers and sons. As one second-generation Sikh father said: 'As I was born at the wrong time they gave me to my dad's friend, the English lady. She was looking after me and then ... one day they took me back in and ... I was very young. I put it down to experience and in the olden times life was hard.' This father in his forties was still grappling with what his narrative suggests is the most significant event of his life – the sense of abandonment by his parents. This childhood desertion shadowed all aspects of his life including his role as a father. Yet his narrative also included rationalization of why his parents had acted as they had. Other fathers rationalized their fathers' role in their lives and wished to forgive them. A common rationale was that fathers had not experienced 'good' fathering themselves and so did not know how to father; it was not their fault. As one second-generation Pakistani father said:

My dad was nine when he came to this country. His uncle brought him. So he didn't actually have a proper father figure either ... and I can't blame him, because he didn't have a father as well. So for him to give that to his own child, he wouldn't have known what it would [be], because he didn't experience it himself.

Unlike those who sought to explain and accept their fathers' behaviour, a couple of fathers expressed anger and resentment at their

fathers' failure to fulfill their expectations – to provide protection, love and resources. One second-generation Gujarati father complained that: 'I don't know why my dad wasn't the main breadwinner ... my mother worked solid. She did what my dad should have been doing! So looking back on it ... it's wrong. The whole roles had been reversed, except my dad didn't do anything to actually take over the other role and look after the kids.' However, almost all of the fathers who had painful memories sought to reconcile themselves with their childhood events and 'move on' in life. As one Sikh father expressed, 'I have had a hard life ... and really if I want peace in life I've got to let go of the past and try and move on'. Although just a few of our respondents expressed the desire to seek reconciliation with their fathers, despite troubling childhood memories, their stories illustrate well the importance of fathers' positive roles in children's lives.

In contrast, some fathers appeared to have an emotionally distant relationship with their fathers and explicitly recognized little contribution of their own fathers in their lives. Although several did not have many negative things to say about their fathers, they did not dwell upon the memories or their relationship. Some tried to identify work-related reasons for their emotional distance. For others, their fathers were fear-inspiring, distant figures. This distance was often understood as a reflection of 'old-fashioned' parenting, as reported by a second-generation Pakistani father: 'I don't want it to sound like I'm painting a bad picture of him, but he was this individual who [we] would classify as old-school thinking'. Some fathers accepted this emotional distance and refused to dwell upon this, being more concerned about how they could be better fathers to their own children, as reflected in this Sikh father's statement: 'I have got more things to do than look back on things ... it's not that important really ... You've got another generation to look after, [rather] than look over in the past and decide it could have been better here or there'. The majority of these fathers were pragmatic about their relationship with own fathers and, if they had felt any resentment in the past, this was no longer at the forefront of their experience. Some appeared to have gone through a cycle of appreciation, and finally acceptance, of the difficult circumstances of their fathers. Some of these respondents answered questions about their own childhood memories with comments about their children's future, illustrating the simultaneity of their roles as both son and father.

Legacies of Fathering

In this section, we examine the legacies of our respondents' own childhoods in terms of the extent to which they drew on the fathering practices and values of their fathers. We identify three broad patterns: emulation, rejection and reinvention. Importantly, these patterns do not neatly map onto respondents' experiences of being fathered or relationships with their fathers. For example, those fathers who had positive memories did not necessarily emulate all aspects of their childhood. Similarly, those who had painful memories did not necessarily reject their fathers' approach to fathering in its entirety. Some degree of reinvention, or at least aspirations for reinvention, was present in all narratives. This recasting of fathering reflected a desire not to replicate unpleasant aspects of their own childhood, the need to adapt to changes in society such as expectations of a more hands-on approach to fathering, and their own socio-economic positioning and family circumstances.

Father Emulation

Many fathers' narratives described various ways in which they sought to reproduce the fathering that they had experienced. Although not all fathers in this category described themselves as 'close' to their fathers when they were their own children's age, as fathers now themselves they looked back on their father's ways of parenting as desirable. They identified various areas such as emotional closeness, self-sacrifice, role-modelling and encouragement towards education, which they sought to replicate. Although some fathers were doing things that their fathers had never done when they were children – such as direct caregiving – they did not dwell upon those aspects when talking of their own fathers. The following explanation by a Bangladeshi father who migrated to Britain as a teenager reveals how he sees his father as a role model: 'I learnt many things from him, particularly how he sacrificed his personal life for his children. For example, the importance of education. Lots of people didn't educate their children because they wanted money a little bit earlier. If my father had not sacrificed so much then I would not be here in this position.'

For many fathers reproduction was effortless and some had not considered other ways of bringing children up. One first-generation Bangladeshi father was eager to demonstrate the affection he had learnt from his father: '[What] I have learnt from him is ... to love and be affectionate towards my children ... and also that we

should be happy and have a good time with the children together, and have a greater attachment (*maya*) for the children'. For this father, showering children with love was the most natural way of bringing up children. For him, this was the main contribution of his father to his life; he did not talk about any practical ways in which his father may have been involved. Although he was more involved with his children on a day-to-day basis than his father, to him these were not the most important aspects of fathering. Therefore, even though he was reorienting fathering practice, he believed he was following in his father's footsteps. Several other fathers talked similarly about the rush of emotions at the sight of their fathers, be it at the end of the day or after an extended period of separation; they sought to reproduce the same with their children.

A further significant area for reproduction was to inculcate survival skills and confidence. Fathers were keen that children have the necessary skills to negotiate the hostile world and carve out a respectable life for themselves both within their religio-ethnic community and within wider British society. A second-generation Sikh father whose early childhood was marked by racist experiences, articulated this powerfully:

[My] dad instilled us with common sense and street awareness that pays me off more now ... Sometimes I'll take him [my son] to the gym just so he gets used to the environment. I like him to be around people so he gets confident talking and not scared of people ... my dad always taught me that ... that's what I want to instil in my son. It's just to have confidence and that's a vital role my dad had on me, just to give me a man's confidence to deal with things and issues.

Some fathers also talked about helping their children financially, saving money for their education and marriage, just as their fathers had done for them. The majority of the fathers who sought to emulate their fathers' practices chose to overlook the less desirable aspects of their own upbringing and carry on with the other aspects.

Father Rejection

Over one third of the fathers sought to distance themselves from some aspects of their fathers' approaches to parenting. In particular many fathers, though appreciating the need for their fathers to work long hours in the socio-economic and migration context of their time, sought to reject this model of work-life balance. Significantly, these respondents were prepared to pay the price for their decisions

in terms of reduced earnings and social disapproval, as it was common for friends and relatives to discourage them from compromising their breadwinning role. A second-generation Pakistani father explained his reasons for taking part-time employment through his relationship with his daughter:

Well I used to come back from work and sit next to her cot not wanting to wake her up. I wasn't seeing her grow up and that's where I went wrong with my parents. Because my father used to work all the time and I thought 'I am not going to do the same with my children'. So, I went part time.

Many fathers distanced themselves from their fathers by presenting themselves as more loving and involved in day-to-day caregiving. Some respondents also rejected their father's approach of imposing their choices on their children, which they found unacceptable. This second-generation Sikh father saw himself as somebody who believed in the individuality of children, unlike the previous generation who he felt viewed children as their 'property': 'Because my parents made me do things I didn't want to do. I'd rather they experience the things they want to do. And if it's wrong they can say then, "I don't want to do that anymore". I want them to experience life as they want to rather than what we want.' With regard to their involvement in daily lives, these fathers identified many avenues where their own fathers had failed and vowed not to repeat these mistakes. One second-generation Bangladeshi father said: 'To my father we were just kids, he did not think about our education, future. So I think that, the mistake that my parents committed has led me to be unsuccessful in many areas, and I don't want that to be repeated by me.' Like this father, several others blamed their fathers' lack of input in their education as a reason for their current economic plight. Linking academic failure to poor employment outcomes, fathers reiterated their commitments to their children's education.

Importantly, despite our respondents' best efforts to give their children a different childhood, the legacy of being fathered was evident in the way they thought about their children. One second-generation Sikh father's narrative showed how he projected his own lack of love as a child onto his children. As we mentioned earlier, this particular father was given up for a temporary adoption as a child and felt unloved by his parents. He describes how he loves his children and worries that something bad might happen to them:

Now while you're going to work you ain't got your eyes on your children and you're worried that, I hope my children are safe because I don't want them to go through any abuse or anything through life ... I hope they're all right, they haven't got injuries or they ain't done something silly or ... I'm quite worried every time I'm out ... if something went wrong, how would you get home quick?

Importantly too, although many strived to get away from an undesirable work-life balance, they found themselves working long hours and in multiple jobs just like their fathers. They felt trapped and bitter but at the same time did not have the time or resources to break this cycle of long working hours and little time for fathering. This frustration is revealed by one second-generation Sikh father's failure to be different from his father:

Because of my job situation I can only do a certain amount. I don't blame myself, and I do blame myself. I blame myself because I didn't get education, but my parents should've taken care of that. Now it's having a big impact on my children. I try my best to do things for them even though I'm tired, shattered or exhausted. I still try and do it.

Despite their explicit rejection of their own father's parenting, many respondents' patterns of involvement in their children's lives were therefore affected nevertheless by their own childhood memories and by the reproduction of socio-economic disadvantage.

Father Reinvention

Many fathers responded to their memories of their fathers by emphasizing the vast difference in context between their childhood and the present day. Some in this category were raised abroad for parts of their childhood and others carved out a different life to their fathers in terms of class and neighbourhood. They felt that the composition of households, their own educational and occupational backgrounds, as well as changes in understandings of childhood and fathering rendered their own childhood experiences meaningless as a platform for comparison. One first-generation Sikh father felt there was no point in looking back because his childhood was so different to that of his children:

I grew up in India and it's a different story, parenting isn't done by mother and father as such. It's a big family situation and anybody can be responsible for you. It's like an open house ... it's not just your parents, who can tell you off or whatever.

Another second-generation Sikh father emphasized the way in which ideas of childhood and what it means to be a father have changed:

I've given a lot of time for my child but it's naturally because the way things have moved on in life. My father had ten children ... it was work and feeding ten children and ... now a lot of fathers are trying to spend time with their children ... So I think it's a lot different from my dad giving us time than we do today.

For some respondents, the conscious decision to reorient their fathering practices only came after a major life event such as sickness. Some discovered other models of fathering slowly by observing others. A Pakistani father made this point:

I didn't give my family that much time because my father didn't give us much time. I thought it was normal to be like that. But it's only when you get more mature you see other people and you think, I should have personally given my kids more time.

Many fathers emphasized the difference in education and occupation between themselves and their fathers. One second-generation Pakistani father in professional employment described how different his circumstances are to his father who had worked in a factory and led a very family-centric existence. He said:

My dad was slightly different because he was working all the time ... he didn't go out. The only socializing for my father's generation was with the extended family. So his knowledge about what was going on in the world was limited, whereas I am different.

Several fathers also noted that children are now more aware and demanding than they had been as children. As one second-generation Gujarati father said: 'If you don't get no time off during the holidays ... children start saying that "oh, my dad is not spending time with me"'. Some fathers spoke of how their children insisted that they want their 'daddies' to do certain tasks such as taking them to the park, reading or putting them to bed. Wives' roles in encouraging fathers to be more involved with their children also emerged as important. Sometimes, it arose out of necessity when wives were away at work in contrast to their mothers who had been housewives. For others their wives encouraged, taught or forced them to take on more hands-on childcare responsibilities. Fascinatingly, with regard to intimacy with children, many

fathers looked to their own mothers for role models rather than to their fathers. They sought to forge intimate bonds with their children that were similar to those that they had had with their mothers; for some this had made up for their distant relationship with their fathers. As one second-generation Bangladeshi father said: 'The things which my father did not do ... like playing with us ... these things I do with my children ... the things I found lacking ... and this was something we had with our mother'. Many fathers viewed themselves as modern fathers who were like a 'friend' to their children, creating a space for openness. As a second-generation Sikh father said: 'I know he's my son but if I look at him as a friend we'll share more secrets and we'll have a great laugh in life. If I look at him as my son then he's going to be shy and doing things behind my back'.

Interestingly, fathers in this category, more than any other, appeared to be especially aware of public discourses of appropriate fathering. Though only a handful of fathers had ever engaged with fathers' support services, many had had encouragement from their colleagues, children's teachers and health professionals to adopt a particular form of 'involved fathering'. Some fathers felt pressure on them with regard to meeting the expectations of these professionals, though believed there was little support available to them. In addition, many fathers in this category found their new way of fathering tough because they were doing things which were considered to be unusual. Their own fathers and extended family members disapproved of their high level of involvement in their children's lives, especially when it compromised their breadwinner roles. As one second-generation Gujarati father who took time off for a year to look after his sick son said: 'My dad sees him [sick son] as being someone who has probably cost me financially because I took a year off to care for him'.

Grandfathers were a source of practical support, especially when both parents worked, but they controlled the amount and types of input by fathers. For example, many grandparents influenced what was construed as helping with children as opposed to doing domestic chores. While it was acceptable to feed the children, cooking was considered a wife's job and was frowned upon. Thus fathers often found themselves reinventing their fathering role in the face of familial and community disapproval. The following quotation from a second-generation Pakistani father sums up the outlook of many fathers towards their new way of fathering:

And you also [in addition to your own fathering aspirations] use your own life experiences as I said earlier about my father ... between the two of them you try to establish what parenting is for you. So, I didn't want what had happened with me in terms of not having a relationship with my father but at the same time I wanted to bring them up to the best of their abilities with what my education and understanding had taught me.

The fathers' narratives highlighted the need to juggle the multiple inputs that new modes of fathering demand and negotiate a more subtle and multidimensional fathering role. This new way of fathering was usually fashioned in the absence of a role model and often in the face of criticism from extended family and community and significant structural constraints. As they embarked on this journey of father reinvention, however, they were also aware of the influence of their fathers on their fathering practices. As a first-generation Bangladeshi father narrated, 'That influence is there. I feel my dad at every moment. How he spoke. How he would look at me. I find myself doing the same with my children.'

Conclusion

The psychological literature has clearly demonstrated the significance of a father in a man's life (e.g., Gruenert 2003; Pease 2000), but much of the sociological literature has ignored fathers' complex relationships with their own fathers and the role they play in reproducing fathering. Indeed, in frameworks of influences on fatherhood, authors have spent no more than a few sentences considering how fathers' memories of their own fathers influence their approach to bringing up children (for example Cabrera et al. 2007; Doherty et al. 1998; Lamb 2004; Palkovitz 1997). Against this, we have demonstrated that fathers' own experiences of being fathered shape their constructions, enactment and experience of the fathering role, both consciously and unconsciously.

Our findings show that despite the diversity in socio-economic, cultural and household trajectories, the majority of the fathers had shared a deep bond with their fathers, which was sometimes troublesome and complex. Irrespective of the actual day-to-day contributions, our respondents were deeply influenced by their fathers, as reflected in the individuals they had become and the fathering roles they had defined. Several key features of previous generation's fathering were highlighted, including undesirable work-life

balance, minimal involvement in daily caregiving and a physical and emotional distance between many fathers and their sons – the typical ‘old-fashioned’ or ‘Asian’ model of fathering, as they put it. Respondents remembered their fathers not just as individuals with certain temperaments and behaviours, but also as individuals who occupied a particular position in the socio-economic and racial hierarchy. Consistent with previous research (Daly 1993), our respondents often justified their fathers’ absence from their childhood on the grounds of their work and associated constraints.

Respondents related to their fathers in many ways, including some who had a troubled relationship with their fathers and wanted to salvage themselves from the painful past, some who idolized their fathers and overlooked any unpleasant aspects, and some who appeared distant or indifferent to their fathers’ memories. In this context, Pease’s (2000) suggestion that fathers may carry deep ‘wounds’ because of how they were fathered and the relationship they had with their own fathers resonates with some of our interviewed fathers, but clearly not all.

Some studies of fathering suggest that fathers replicate the positive aspects of their own fathers’ practices and reject the negative aspects of their own upbringing (Bar-On and Scharf 2014; Snarey 1993). Although this is consistent with some of our findings on fathering legacies, we found three contrasting ways in which fathers responded to the memories of their own upbringing: those who emulated their fathers’ practices, those who rejected them and those who reinvented their fathering roles to respond to significant changes in the fathering context since they had been children. Though changes in wider society and individual circumstances necessitated some reorientation of the fathering role for all our respondents, some differences in the degree of refashioning were evident, linked to the interplay of class and ethnic identities. The majority of those respondents who had degrees and were in professional jobs aspired to a highly involved model of fathering across all four religio-ethnic groups and regardless of migration generation. However, differences were also found between the groups. The majority of our Gujarati and Sikh fathers had wives who were employed, which necessitated their involvement in their children’s lives on a daily basis, thereby changing their self-image as fathers. This contrasted with a large number, though not all, of our Pakistani and Bangladeshi fathers, who had sole responsibility for income earning within the family and tended to have a specialist division of labour with their wives, particularly if first-generation

migrants. Further, the tendency to focus on enhancing children's education and development – for instance via educational toys and visits to museums – appeared to be more common among our Gujarati and Sikh fathers than the Pakistani and Bangladeshi fathers. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the dynamic nature of parenting arrangements and the ways in which structural constraints and opportunities – such as restrictions on employment possibilities for some men – produced flexible responses in fathering practices.

Notwithstanding the active reflection and deliberate nature of fathering exhibited by some of our respondents, the role of *habitus* as embodied dispositions, 'inculcated as much, if not more, by experience as by explicit teaching' (Jenkins 1992: 76) was evident in the fathers' narratives. These habitual ways of being, thinking and doing were acquired by watching their fathers and through the experiences of being fathered. This was evident in the ways that, despite active narratives of rejection, unconscious replication of their fathers' values and practices or over-compensation were revealed. Interestingly, father reinvention responses had been triggered for some men by major life events, while prior to these 'turning points' respondents described how they had replicated, unconsciously, their fathers' pattern of parenting. Fathers' degree of emotional intimacy was a particular area where respondents' experiences and expectations appeared unconsciously influential. Embodied physical and emotional connection or distance were frequently discussed in fathers' narratives, with many expressing a sense of an intuitive 'knowing the right way to parent' in this regard. Such embodied memories are encapsulated in this quotation from a second-generation Sikh father:

I see people get books and stuff like that and I don't think we need them. You have a feeling when things aren't right, it's gut instincts. You know how you've been brought up, you know what positive features there are in you and what positive features you need to hand on.

Like this father, the majority of fathers had relied on a 'natural' way of parenting learnt instinctively through their own experiences and from watching others (see Dermott 2008; Gillies 2006). Many struggled for role models as they tried to carve out fathering practices that were fit for their current context and aspirations, and some drew instead on their mothers' embodied parenting in bonding with children. Many fathers cited the close relationship

that they had had with their mothers as characterized by intimate conversations, physical and verbal expressions of love and day-to-day care as their ideals of parenting. Mothers' parenting practices were more in tune with the involved fathering discourses and provided in many cases the template to follow. While we emphasize fathers' core influences on their sons' later fathering practices, our findings therefore concur with Pease (2000) in acknowledging mothers' and wives' roles as a resource in building a fathering identity for some men.

To conclude, fathering practices are shaped not just by the inter-generational replication of values and practices but also by the deep emotional legacy that children inherit from their fathers. Further, fathering is embedded in wider socio-economic and racial hierarchies, which constrain men's ability to father in new ways. Despite their efforts, many men end up replicating their fathers' parenting practices, such as working long hours and being absent from the day-to-day lives of their children. Alongside men's conscious and intended fashioning of their fathering roles, the unconscious and unintended manifestations of father identities and practices persist largely due to men's inability to escape their own fathers' fate of insecure employment combined with gendered, classed and ethno-religious conceptions of fatherhood. Thus many of our respondents felt frustrated at their failure to enact the involved and emotionally close fathering promoted by current public discourses and to which they aspired, perceiving this to be the path to gain personal fulfilment and the joys of fatherhood.

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Chapter 10

BECOMING PAPA

KINSHIP, SENESCENCE AND THE AMBIVALENT INWARD JOURNEYS OF AGEING MEN IN THE ANTILLES

Adom Philogene Heron

'Life for me was a journey!' Scratchie declares, the matter-of-fact tone of his words failing to betray his distant, contemplative expression. We sit. I am perched on the concrete step leading down from the rusty galvanized gate that opens onto the road above his yard. He is opposite, on an overturned plastic bucket in the doorway of the small plywood house he shares with his wife and daughters. He exhales deeply. The smoke of his evening spliff wafts away above us, caught by the breeze of the river that runs towards the Caribbean Sea beneath the *falaise* on which the yard sits. I begin to scribble, trying to keep up with his words. 'I believe that no one can change the hands of time', he continues,

The setting of time. Jah set his time. And he knows the road he set you on. Maybe, I ... maybe the road I choose made me a better person today because the life I was living – I never thought today I would married, I would be a family man and today I am, you understand'. That's why I told you my life is a story. I've been incarcerated more than eighteen times. Every country I pass – I've been to thirteen different countries without a passport. My life is a story!

It is December 2012, just the third month of my first fieldwork journey to Dominica, the verdant and mountainous homeland of my maternal grandparents. The commonwealth of Dominica is a francophone *Kwéyol* (Creole) and English-speaking island of approximately 70,000 people that sits between *Gwada* and *Matnik* (Guadeloupe and Martinique) in the Lesser Antilles. It is my first encounter with ‘Scratchie D’, a stout, stocky and charismatic black man aged thirty-seven from the village of Loubiere south of the capital, Roseau, on Dominica’s west coast.

Upon telling the young men in the village of my research project on men and family life, I was enthusiastically persuaded to record the story of ‘Scratchie Dan’ –or ‘Old School’ as his youthful *padnas* (‘partners’, peers) call him – a father of two, who attends church, is married and ‘have live plenty life already’, so I was told. They encouraged me to document his locally infamous life as a young man ‘in the world’ and ‘on the block’. The former, a biblically-derived idiom connoting ‘irresponsibility’ and itinerancy, materialist pursuit and carnal desire; the latter, the village setting for such a life, the notorious roadside stage on which ‘yout man’ (like themselves) ‘pull up’/*posé* (momentarily dwell), vying for respect in an ongoing play of solidarity and competition, while surveying the street scene for transitory moneymaking opportunities. Scratchie excelled in this realm. Here he made his name. The tales his young peers share of his narcotics dealing, theft, incarceration and escape between *Gwada* and Dominica, all attest – via their public telling – to Scratchie’s achieved respect in this outside world of men. However, his peers also informed me of his more recent moral and spiritual reorientation, his inward movement into house, home and marriage, his ongoing project of refashioning himself into the respectable figure of ‘family man’.

In December 2007 Scratchie was freed from prison ‘for the last time’, he vowed. In the five years between this release and our meeting, his life shifted radically. He began working at a nearby quarry, entered a cohabiting common-law union with his first ever girlfriend, Angeline, and became *beau pé* (step-father) to her eldest daughter, who would come to call him ‘daddy’: ‘is me she really know as a fada from de time I came in deir life’. And with this newfound responsibility Scratchie transitioned from self-provision and occasionally ‘extending a hand’ to his mother, to the paternal imperative to provide – learning ‘*what it really is* to be a fada!’

Yet the contours of his transition were far from smooth. To Angeline’s frustration Scratchie was often drawn back to the block. In

2008 she became pregnant and gave birth to their first child. Tragically the infant died in mysterious circumstances at daycare (from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, it is believed). 'He was only t'ree months old.' A sombre tone interrupts his usually robust manner. 'I decided that was a sign. That was a wake-up call God was giving me ... I told her [Angeline] you know something, we're gonna get married. We gonna start to, you know, live a different life.'

In early 2009 Scratchie proposed and Angeline accepted. They converted to Pentecostalism, married and in December their daughter, Ange, was born. Shortly after realizing his paternity this second time, an intriguing though not uncommon thing happened: his own father acknowledged him as his son. In all his thirty-six years he had not known the identity of his father. A father was never 'named' by Scratchie's mother during his childhood between *Dominica* and *Gwada*. But upon coming to know one another they rapidly developed a close relationship. Scratchie now visits his father daily; coincidentally he lives just up the hill from them.

As our interview continues, Scratchie becomes more philosophical. He takes a sip from his Guinness stout, turns to me and declares,

Life! Life is journey we have fe bear. Life is a mountain we all have to climb. We all have our span to live in life, but that is why I ask Jah for a long life. I want to see my children grow. I want to see them graduate. I want to see them pull my beard, my grandchildren pull my beard [he gestures]. That's how I wan' live now, man!

Two months after this first meeting, Angeline, who was heavily pregnant at the time, gave birth to their second daughter. Eight months later Scratchie tells me his (step-)daughter – now aged nineteen – is pregnant and expecting a child. He excitedly informs me he is soon to become a grandfather, thus marking the actualization of his aspiration. From October 2013 to April 2014 I moved into a small wooden house in their family yard and continued documenting their day-to-day lives through 'observant participation', a sensitive subversion of the self-other-reifying ethnographic orthodoxy (Lassiter 2005). During this time I saw Scratchie and his wife work hard for little pay to maintain their family. I heard his self-convincing reminders that the block was 'not like before' and he preferred to pull up at home. I observed him walking his two youngest daughters to and from preschool (see Figure 10.1), attentively assisting the middle one (of five years) with her homework, and 'looking at' (minding) them in the evenings when his wife and eldest daughter were at work, visiting friends or at church. I listened as his wife

lamented his 'blocking their blessings from God' (material prosperity) by not quitting smoking (weed) or attending church as regularly as he should. And I witnessed his joy as his grandson entered their home.



FIGURE 10.1. Scratchie with his two youngest daughters walking to pre-school and daycare

Introduction

I have offered this sketching of Scratchie's metamorphic biography because it presents a vivid example of a Dominican man's entry into fatherhood, 'family life' and grandfatherhood. Scratchie captivantly narrated his story to me across countless conversations and informal life-history interviews during my eighteen months of fieldwork. He regularly told me that he is 'on a mission now', conscious of his life journey as an everyday epic, an exceptional tale of redemption of which others – notably young men – can make an example. Yet although his complicated journey is idiosyncratically unique and the contrast between past and present is drastic, its general course and the motifs are no doubt familiar to many ageing men on the island. Scratchie's shift from being 'outside', on 'the block' and 'in the world' with his peers, to his newfound responsibility, increased presence at home and closeness to kin (wife, father, children) reflects a widespread pattern of centripetal later-life movement among Caribbean men (Barrow 2010: 31). Put simply, slowing down, 'catching yourself' (or 'taking stock') and becoming a 'family man' – from mid-life onwards – is a common feature of ageing for a diverse cross-section of Caribbean men (of varied class, occupation and colour).

The central aim of this chapter is to understand how Caribbean men's kinship lives change as they move towards and into later life – a life phase beginning in a man's late thirties. To do so I present a series of ethnographic snapshots of Dominican men aged thirty-seven to seventy-four decelerating into a slower daily rhythm, contracted socio-spatial routine and kin-oriented life. Yet complicating any notion of a linear journey, 'inside' are the men's fond tales of reputation-making adventures (spear fishing, sexual conquest, crime stories) and memories of life in the outside world of their *padnas*. I take such reminiscences to disclose a dissonant insideness and enduring existential affinity to an outside world once inhabited by their virile younger selves. However, being a grandfather and ambivalently 'inside' is just one of the generational moments under focus. I also engage the question of intergenerationality in biographical terms, developing a picture of the process of *becoming* papa. Hence individual life trajectories are traced, palimpsest-like, through three overlapping generational layers – being fathered, becoming fathers and becoming grandfathers – to understand how men's kinship lives change with time.

Methodologically, the narrated personal histories of eleven grandfathers reflecting back on kin-lives through the subjective present comprise the main body of ethnographic material directing my claims. However, in places I also draw on the reflections of adult children (now parents themselves) to contrast the men's fathering and grandfathering. Furthermore, I employ 'observant participation' in their daily lives to gain a practical picture of the grandfathers' spatial movement and intimate interactions with grandchildren. Qualitative depth and a sincere representation of lived experience, rather than statistical representativeness, are my intentions here. There is the temptation in Caribbean sociology to try and statistically reveal whether Caribbean fathers are predominantly 'absent' or 'present' *vis-à-vis* households and family life (Roberts and Sinclair 1978: 58). However, my modest (though no less important) aim is to present rich case studies of individual lives that claim representative fidelity only to themselves. Nevertheless, though speaking for themselves (in their contextual specificity), the men's biographies are far from anomalous, and, indeed, 'speak to' regional patterns.

Individual transitional lives constitute my focus here, replacing traditional approaches to generation as a 'before-after' juxtaposition of analytically separated generational cohorts. This biographic approach has the benefit of revealing the simultaneity of generation. Much like Stephanie Lawler's shifting and doubly constituted mother-daughter subjects (2000: 3), the elder narrators in this chapter variably present themselves as sons, fathers and grandfathers, interchangeably shifting generational location as they look back on particularly meaningful aspects of kinship pasts. This concept of generation enables an understanding of how men's relations to kin (specifically fathers, children and grandchildren) as well as symbolically gendered spaces ('inside', 'outside', home, yard, street (Barrow 2010: 128)) are transformed throughout Dominican males' social ontogeny. At the same time as revealing details of the changing lives, spaces and practices of men and their kin, this framing also sheds light on changing wider kinship ideas, processes and events in Dominica through historical time. Significantly, the post-war migration of many fathers to England in the 1950s and 1960s, the emergence from the late 1970s (with the arrival of American T.V., returning migrants and public education) of an explicit 'responsible fatherhood' concept, characterizing 'care' through provision, discipline and protection (previously fathering ideals were more implicit and optative) and the repeating experience of familial emigration in response to economic crises and

natural disasters (e.g., Hurricane David) – all patterned the men's familial lives in particular ways.

Before continuing it is necessary to note that the unruly circumstantial course of each individual biography inevitably disobeys the sequential neatness that the three generational moments (above) might imply. In the world (as distinguishable from sociological imagination) categories like 'father' and 'grandfather' overspill the ordering lines we conveniently draw between them. This is especially true of the Antilles, where the open-ended and flexible nature of social categories has been widely acknowledged (e.g., Mintz 1996; Rodman 1971; Wardle 2007). Consequently it is important to keep in mind that these generational phases, separated in response to their narrated salience, are far from bounded. They are often experientially continuous, overlapping and defying simple chronology (e.g., Scratchie having children before becoming his father's son).

The experiences and practices of elder men in families is an untheorized and underdocumented area of Caribbean ethnography (with a few notable exceptions: Barrow 2010: 114, 118; Brodber 2003; Ford-Smith 1989: 98; Henriques 1953: 113, 197; Rubenstein 1987: 244). Hence before elaborating the generational journeys below, it is imperative to briefly turn to the matrifocality thesis to interrogate this conspicuous dearth.

Matrifocality and Invisible Men

Caribbean kinship's theoretical history may best be summed up as a struggle for analytic acuity. Since the 1950s successive Caribbeanist cohorts – each varying the theoretical guise – have sought order from the chaotic familial dynamics of this 'undisciplined' region (Trouillot 1992), a region D'Amico Samuels once astutely termed 'the battleground for competing theses regarding family structure' in anthropology (1988: 785). Yet for all the contestation and propensity of its social forms to evade gatekeeping theories, the 'matrifocal family' thesis has followed Caribbean kinship through its ethnographic career. Proposed by R.T. Smith in 1956, the theory posits that 'women in their role as mothers ... come to be the focus of [family] relationships' (Smith 1996: 42). He clarifies that 'matrifocality is a property of the internal relations of male as well as female-headed households', but identifies the maternal figure as a 'focus of affective ties' and 'an economic and decision-making coalition with her children'. Although 'men contribute to the [material] support of the household

... [they] do not participate very much in childcare or spend much time at home' (1996: 41–42). These fundamental conclusions on the centrality of mothers and the marginality of male conjugal partners/fathers to family life have functioned over the years to provide a sense of clarity, a taken-for-granted stable core from which Caribbeanists can elaborate their analyses. However, given the emergent character of the Caribbean social landscape, where forms and values pragmatically flex and flux according to everyday uncertainties (personal, geological, financial and meteorological), I am inclined to approach matrifocality's apparent stability with suspicion. This begs the question, then, is matrifocality 'well documented historical fact' (Brown et al. 1997: 87) or simplistic default theoretical posture?

Taking popular Dominican kinship ideas at face value would seem to prove me wrong. In fact, Dominicans normatively delineate a clean division of parental labour that appears entirely 'matrifocal'. I am told that mothers sacrificially 'make' children – endure the burden of 'carrying dem nine month and pushing dem out', dutifully meeting their daily needs, and, in turn, receive filial loyalty and care into old age. Men on the other hand, 'only put them there' (procreativity 'plant the seed'), and principally (if forthcoming) express 'care' by materially 'maintaining' their child(ren), whether an everyday presence in a child's life or not. Yet although it is clear that Dominicans are reflexively aware of – even celebrate – mothers' vital roles and organizational functions within familial settings, labelling Dominican families as 'matrifocal' obscures more than it reveals. Allowing kinship ideology alone to guide our ethnographic focus is to miss the power of observation and specific case studies in complicating facile conclusions about the way people live their lives. The age-old ethnographic conversation between what people observably do and what they say they do is crucial here to moving our understanding beyond matrifocality's constrictive margins.

In its fifty-five-plus years matrifocality has received a good deal of critical attention (Blackwood 2005; Trotz 2004). This is as much for theorists' misuse of the concept (Trouillot 1992) as it is for the gendered assumptions on which it tacitly rests and the non-normative familial realities its optics preclude. Matrifocality implicitly assumes a patriarchal ideal of male (nuclear) family headship. The very identification of familial configurations as 'matrifocal' marks (and reinforces) their negation of this implicit norm. Note how nobody ever talks of 'patrifocal' families; they are simply unmarked and normative (Strathern 2005). And since the negation is the 'missing' patriarchal man (Blackwood 2005) – authoritative provider, disciplinarian and

guide – the *cooperative* kinship practices and roles of men in households and kin networks (Stack 1974) are cut off from ethnographic view. Therefore not only do fathers gain little recognition for their caring and affective (non-normative) practice (Brown et al. 1997; Fox 1999) – either in Caribbean societies or Caribbeanist accounts of them – but grandfathers, uncles and brothers are also peripheralized into obscurity. These consanguineal male kin are the real ‘missing men’. Centring our focus on mothers, within households and domestic roles, reinforces ‘the notion of the domestic as an essentially unchanging feminine and bounded domain’ (Trotz 2004: 371). And as much as it locks women ‘inside’, matrifocality leaves men conceptually ‘outside’, rendering the father ‘a somewhat shadowy figure who drifts in and out of the lives [and households] of ... family members’ (Liebow 2003: 3), while leaving other men (grandfathers and so on) effectively invisible. Therefore although it is important to recognize interlocutors’ gendered differentiation between ‘inside’ (private, respectable, feminine, household, kinship, marriage) and ‘outside’ (public, reputation-oriented, masculine, street, peers, outside affairs) (Wilson 1973), my aim is to demonstrate the reorientive movement of men between these symbolic spaces with age, thus demonstrating the porousness and changing dynamics of domestic space and kin relations over time.

As Sons

Paternal Absences, Reunions and Blood’s Utterance

Growing up not knowing one’s father – having a father who was personally and physically remote or ‘absent’ – was a common experience for the grandfathers I came to know. A number of them held feelings of abandonment and anger towards the men who had left their mothers, their village or the island during their infancy, migrating like many of that generation to England in the 1950s or 1960s and never ‘sending for them’. For some, fathers were men who refused to acknowledge them or were never ‘given’ paternity for them by their mothers; mothers who took on the sole burden of their upbringing, ‘mother and child left to the elements’ as one grandfather described it. Others felt indifference towards men whom they simply did not know, for whom they had only a vacant figurative outline, an unfulfilled idea of what a father should be. Yet this image was at odds with the reality of a man they had never met or had only vague childhood memories of passing on the road

or visiting their mothers. Nevertheless, with the passage of time – having successfully survived into adulthood (without him), realized their generativity by becoming fathers themselves, and reflected on the ontological imbalance of not knowing the man responsible for ‘putting them there’ – some of the men sought to (re)activate relations with their fathers. These (re)unions were moving tales of inclusion into paternal lineages founded on the powerful principle – and vocality – of shared ‘blood’, as well as an embracing ideal of familial togetherness.

In Dominica they say that ‘blood speaks’. This popular aphorism signifies that blood – the biogenetic shared substance of family – has a mystical means of revealing relatedness between hitherto unknown kin. And since paternity is based on a premise, its ‘proof’ must be identified in shared ‘ways’, speech patterns or physical continuities – complexion, gait, body techniques, somatotype and other bodily nuances (e.g., finger nails, bowed legs, etc.) – between father (or paternal kin) and child. In cases of disputed paternity the putative father’s aunt or mother may visit the baby some months after birth to determine whether the child is ‘theirs’ (Chevannes 2006). Upon positive identification of a child as kin they well determine *sa sé zanfannou* (‘that is our child’). Thus blood agentively ‘speaks’ through the reading of bodies by family, and in some cases community members, who vocalize a visible likeness. Yet it ‘speaks’ non-verbally, too, mystically provoking serendipitous encounters between long-lost kin or leading one’s spirit to ‘take’ (develop an uncanny affinity for) someone else’s, who is later revealed as family. Unlike the anticlimactic reunion tales of adult children and biological parents documented by Carsten (2000), I contend that the mutual amity expressed by father and son, their emphasis on blood’s vocality and their folding of disjunct kinship time through ‘as if’ narratives (i.e., remarking that it is ‘as if’/like they were raised by their fathers), produce an affective continuity of being between father and son.

Mr Scotland’s Story

‘I was raised without a father ... he totally abandon us!’ says Mr Scotland, a tall, fifty-nine-year-old police officer, father of six and grandfather of two (at least he mentions only two), as he reflects back on his relationship with a father who left for England when he was four. Bearing only the parting memory of being driven around Portsmouth (Dominica’s northern town) on his father’s motorbike, days before his departure, it would be forty-six years before Mr Scotland saw him again. During his early adult life he felt forsaken

by this man: 'I had more rage in me, that if I meet him I prob'ly have strangle him', he asserts. However, after meeting and being embraced by his paternal family (aunts, grandmother, cousins) while a junior officer stationed in their outlying natal village, followed by their subsequent disappearance during the havoc of Hurricane David in 1979, and his reunion with a paternal aunt in 2003 whilst she was visiting from the United States (where they had emigrated to after the hurricane), he had a realization:

I grow up, I reach fort-nine, and I say you know something, it's damn nonsense ... my father cannot be alive and I do not know the man that is responsible for bringing me. He is a sperm donor, that is how I look at it. But ... I'm getting older and wiser. I'm more cool ... I'm not in any more rage ... I need to know my father!

As such, his aunt (a key organizer in the family) suggested he visit her in the U.S. and then his father in the U.K. So in 2004, after gathering some savings, he flew to St Croix (U.S. Virgin Islands) to see a paternal brother, America to see several aunts, and finally, London, to meet and spend 'four glorious weeks' with his father. He and his father's first (re)encounter in Heathrow airport was powerfully affecting. After landing and an unsuccessful attempt to use U.S. dollars to buy a machine-issued bus ticket to the maternal uncle with whom he planned to stay before he contacted his father, Mr Scotland walked wearily back into the terminal towards the nearest information point:

So I'm going back now to de information desk. I'm hearing my name, 'Al Scotland report to de information desk' ... I'm seeing a fella standing, facing away from me, and something jus tell me, 'Quick, this is him!' First time I was seeing him as an adult. At the same time I see him and I'm walking towards him ... something tell him, 'Hey!' Because he's looking at 'arrivals', but I had come from there already ... So he looking dis way ... and I'm coming from dis side [*gestures*]. *He jus' turn!* When he see me ... he had a newspaper under his arm, he jus' drop it. He jus' grab me and he began to cry ... I held him away from me and I tell him, 'look padna I didn't come here for dat', and I hug him again. He tell me am I hungry. I say, 'no I'm not hungry'. I tell him I'm contented, *that the man that have the responsibility for bringing me here, I meet him!*

Mr Scotland never explicitly articulated what told him 'quick, this is him!', nor exactly what seized his father's attention and urged him to suddenly turn. Neither did he hazard to explain what could have

caused the serendipitous sequence of the whole episode. Yet given Dominican ideas about the numinous power of blood to ‘speak’ and render relatedness apparent, it is fair to surmise that the unifying idea of shared blood may be the ‘something’ that drew them together. This unifying principle was rendered visible through physical continuities which, once emphasized, bridged the disjunctures of paternal abandonment: ‘I doh know why, for some reason immediately we clicked. Because ... when he reached home he call his sister, he tell his sister when he went to the airport *he jus’ saw himself walking towards him*. Because he find I looks very much like him’.

Therefore, as another grandfather put it with reference to a similar case of physical likenesses initiating kinship, ‘that is where de blood really start to flow’. Particularly, in the context of the existential emplacement implied by meeting a long-lost father, emphasis on physical likeness as a gloss for common blood provides the foundation of their shared kinship. This foregrounding of likeness/blood enabled kin-lives spent apart to be folded back, covering (though not disregarding) absence, and exposing as ultimately significant the progenic basis of paternal relatedness – the ground from which to develop close bonds into the future. Mr Scotland and his father now speak almost daily on the phone. He adds that a paternal brother in England ‘cannot understand dat kind of relationship me and my fada have and we didn’t know each other ... he raise with him and he doesn’t have that kind of relationship’. Mr Scotland’s brother’s comments echo Scratchie’s reflections on his own father. They share an ‘as if’ concept of their kin-lives that imaginatively recasts the past – *as if* spent together – to help produce a shared present and future. As Scratchie comments, ‘you know the relationship between me and my father *is like I grow with him* ... me and him very very close. Trust me’. Hence the bridging of lives lived apart enables a closeness, a fond continuity of being that, in fact, ironically may not have been the case – as we see with Mr Scotland’s brother, and will see in the following section – if his father was ‘on island’ or ‘present’.

As Fathers

I always maintain that every generation after me have to come stronger!

(Young man talking with friends in Roseau)

The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father.

(Ezekiel 18:20)

The idea of intergenerational progress – giving one’s children opportunities in life that one did not have growing up – is a widespread ethic that motivates parental duty and sacrifice throughout Dominica. This idea produced in many of my interlocutors an individual moral drive to ‘play their part’ when they became fathers, providing for their children (school books, fees, shoes, snacks, clothes, etc.) as their fathers before them had failed to do. Mr Scotland asserts, ‘I was raised without a father. But I decided I did not want my children to raise without a fada ... it was an abandon-ment! You cannot abandon your children so! That is why I am so happy that I never abandoned *any* of my children’.

Steadfast in their refusal to visit the sins of their fathers upon their children, most of the men were deeply committed to ‘being there’ as fathers in the material sense. Many of the men resisted the urge to unsustainably have ‘children all about’, as was valorized among some of their father’s generation, signifying virility and contributing to a man’s reputation as a sexually prolific ‘hot boy’. Inevitably, the men’s conjugal circumstance (relations to ‘child-mothers’), number of children and the vagaries of Dominica’s peripheralized economy – where wages are low and jobs few and far between – conditioned their abilities to ‘care’ for their children. Yet for the most part they were able to ‘do what they had to do’, surpassing the material shortcomings of some of their fathers before them.

However, with age, experience and reflection, combined with an awareness of changing ideas about ‘responsible fatherhood’ that have emerged since they initially became fathers in the 1970s and 1980s (fatherhood as a personally significant life condition, as opposed to *fathering* as simply siring), some of the men reflected that they ‘could have taken more of an interest’ in their children. Commitments to ‘liming’ (the convivial pursuit of ‘pulling up’, drinking and talking by the roadside with peers), working and generally spending time ‘outside’ (the home), away from their procreative family, in addition to assuming a distant disciplinarian posture when in the conjugal home, rendered many of the fathers what is locally termed an ‘absent-present father’. This paradoxical idiom connotes a father who is physically present and conjugally cohabiting, even married and sleeping at home, yet emotionally and personally remote.

Mr Cuffy and Mr Pierre

Mr Cuffy, a charismatic police inspector, father of two and grandfather of four, who never knew his father, reflects back on his life as

a married man more oriented towards the outside world than his conjugal family:

I cannot attribute that to work ... there's a time you leave work, so you have to be with the family. So you're out liming, you know ... you're drinking you know. *You're in the world* ... you [only] come [home] to sleep. The same thing I'm telling you, you put a liddle money in the home or you give the wife a liddle money and you think that's it. That does not mek you a father. That does not mek you a father!

Mr Cuffy appeared to wend his way through his early fathering, doing the basics and not questioning the wheres, whys, nor hows of his paternal imperatives. But with age, men like Mr Cuffy become more critically reflexive. Many silently 'take stock' of the abdications of their younger years, seeking amends in later life. As one adult daughter told me, with her decreasingly distant elder father in mind, 'So I think when we get older, so much reflection is done. 'Cause that's all you get to do, you're retired and so a lot of reflection is done, a lot of introspection. I guess people see the error of their ways along life, and decide to make a change on it'.

Similarly to Mr Cuffy, Mr Pierre (now retired) was a senior ranking police officer (interestingly, as he told me once, police officers are 'some of the worst offenders' when it comes to having 'chil'ren all about' and not 'maintaining' them). Unlike Mr Cuffy, however, Mr Pierre was never much of a limer. Instead, 'I was too much in love with my job, I gave too much time to my job', he soberly states as he recalls the shortcomings of his relationship to his now deceased first wife and three children 'by her'. He elaborates, 'I don't think necessarily that I was negligent, but I, I failed to spend the time that I should have. So to some degree I feel that I cheated my children, you know, of my presence in their lives, of the attention that I should have given them'.

Mr Pierre is now sixty-eight, he has remarried and has a ten-year-old son with his wife. Like many of the serial fathers I spoke to who had children with multiple women across the span of their adult lives, the experience they gained from their earlier fathering, along with their changing life circumstances and changing societal ideas, led them to approach their elder fathering differently. Elaborating this notion of a changing fatherly self Michael Diamond writes that 'the ageing father must ... more fully embrace previously rejected gendered dimensions of himself by giving way to the expressive, connective and disclosing modes of his being' (1998: 289).

Mr Pierre is currently a full-time father, staying at home while his wife works at an office in town. He cooks his son's meals, prays with him morning and night, picks him up from school, assists with his homework and takes him for transinsular drives at the weekends. Mr Pierre's first son from his previous marriage drowned during his teens. Reflecting on his past and present fatherly selves he solemnly compares his relationship to his two sons:

It became clearer and clearer to me that the relationship that I have built with my young son is far better and far deeper than what I had with my first son, who died tragically. I just thank God, every day that he had given me an opportunity to do better. I am thankful that at this time in my life I'm retired from the police service but I'm full-time in fathering, and I thank God for that opportunity. For me it's like a second chance.

Mr Pierre's redemptive later-life fatherhood is more overtly demonstrative than his earlier fathering, and that of his father before him. 'I don't recall one day my parents telling me that they love me ... I just knew. It didn't trouble me to think about', he states during our second life-history interview, highlighting the self-evident love behind their parental labour. The same could be said of his earlier fathering also. However, at the end of the interview as we get into his car to drop me home he calls his son to inform him that he will be back late. Before hanging up he casually signs off the call with the gentle reminder – 'love you' – his two simple words evincing the contrast between his father's, his own earlier fathering and his contemporary fatherhood practice.

As Grandfathers

Becoming Papa

Papa is a term of respect, a status that evokes a quiet, gentle, even playful patriarchal presence in a home or family setting. While in the neighbouring 'French islands' *papa* means father, in Dominica it is the deferential address of a grandchild to a grandfather (*pé* being Creole for one's immediate father). Yet in the context of kin networks that span Dominica and its francophone neighbours, this play between *papa* as father and grandfather is more than mere translational nuance. Rather, it evinces the overlapping generationality mentioned above, and as I will demonstrate, a *papa's* proximity to grandchildren.

When I first visited my grandfather's rural northwestern village of Colihaut at the start of my fieldwork, just six months after his passing, I recognized a common classificatory slippage in grandfather-grandchild referents. My grandfather's friends and extended kin referred to me as *zanfan pou Mendes* ('child for Mendes') or 'Mendes' son'. Despite frequent reminders that Mendes was actually my grandfather, I would continue to overhear comments such as, 'he looking jus' like his fada, *wii'*, as I passed elders on the road. I came to realize that although a child will call their grandfather *papa* or 'grandpa', he will often refer to them as 'my child'. Similarly, to third parties (e.g., elder villagers) grandchildren are also 'his children'.

Querying this, I asked Mr Scotland why he makes no nominal distinction between his immediate children and grandchildren. He explained, 'there's no distinction ... because what they saying is *his product*. Because without him your fada wouldn't be there for you to be there'. Hence any descending child in a man's lineage – whether direct progeny, 'grand-', or 'great-grand-' – becomes 'his child'. A man's name ideally 'lives on' through his children, both literally through a patrilineally inherited 'family name', and figuratively through his patrimony, descendants' memories of him and local tales told of his public persona by friends and family (as were told to me about my grandfather). This idea of living on through kin, or 'vicarious ego expansion' as Blake termed it amongst Jamaican fathers (1961: 192), resonates in Dominica whereby 'putting children on de earth' offers men a semblance of individual immortality. Since 'they came from your being', as Scratchie once framed it, children ensure a senescent man, cognizant of his encroaching 'day of reckoning', an enduring presence in the lived world (or, like Mr Pierre, a chance at redemption). Partly for this reason elder Dominican men express a sincere fondness toward their grandchildren, which the dyadic term 'my child' embodies. This notwithstanding, Mr Scotland adds a historical explanation, highlighting that post-war parental emigration to England in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in many children of his generation growing up in Dominica with their grandparents. As such, a mutual closeness developed, resulting in grandparents calling grandchildren 'their children'. According to Mr Gregg, a Rasta, artist and grandfather from Newtown (a community between Roseau and Loubiere), grandparents have a 'special love for de gran-child' and see them as being 'for dem'. The child *is a gift*. It is an *Ex-ten-sion*, it's a family extension, everybody does feel nice', he adds letting out a warm chuckle at the joy that interaction

with grandchildren, lineal continuity and an expansion of kinship being brings to him and other grandparents.

Yet while a grandfather's immediate progeny and grandchildren are indeed both 'his children', he will often act differently towards them during their respective childhoods, becoming more lenient towards the grandchild. Mr Gregg comments that children,

Have greeaat liberty wiv de grandparent! Yeah, dan de direc' offspring 'ave ... They're a kind of a softer-, sometimes your moda and fada will be more hard wiv you, more stric', and de grandparents will go down to allow you to get, ya kna, to get free. Yeah, de grandchildren can do a lot of liddle mess up fings an' it's taken for granted, 'oh, let de chil'ren play' ... Not that one wants their grandchildren to go astray, but is a *soft*[-ening], you know. Because maybe more age and more knowledge and so on.

Interestingly, while Caribbean fathers are normatively represented as the final arbitrators of familial discipline – evidenced in the motherly threat, 'wait til your daddy come home!' (Lazarus-Black 1995) – as grandfathers this role is often inverted. Grandmothers become the more punitive grandparent (Henriques 1953: 197), while grandfathers – growing more placid and freed from direct paternal imperatives – can become figures of fun, play and affection, particularly towards young grandchildren. Such a transgenerational shift in parental practices is vividly revealing of both the gendered distinctiveness of these roles and their repositioning through senescence.

Indeed, Anne, an adult daughter in her forties remembers her father as a staunch authoritarian, yet observes a gentler, warmer and more permissive grandfather:

Things that my father never did with me he does with my children, and I am amazed. The first time I remember my father kissing me on my cheek I was fifteen. And I can't remember any other emotional physical contact with him other than that. But my kids are all over him. They're on his bed, they're jumping on him – we wouldn't dare do this as children! I mean it's just unimaginable.

Similarly, Don, a Rastaman in his thirties who lives in Loubiere with his common-law wife and their eight-year-old daughter, observes that Val, his widower father, is less strict and more playful towards his granddaughter than he was with Don as a father:

To me, plenty of fings you as de child could never escape wiv, she escaping wiv it ... They have that ability from that time [i.e., the

present time], they can almost do what dey want and dey getting away wid it scotch free. Whereas you now, dem times dere [i.e., before], had no time! *GET AWAY WITH WHAT?! STEUPPPSSS* [kisses teeth]. *YOU'D GET BLOWS IN YOUR ASS AND YOU'D GET BLOWS IN YOUR ASS!* ... I believe it's a game to him now. It's an amusement park!

With the primary responsibility of 'correction' falling to the immediate parents, grandchildren can become a source of entertainment and companionship to grandfathers in their daily playful interactions. Mr Scotland says that interactions such as carrying his two grandsons under each arm during their weekend visits 'make me feel younger'. Emphasizing the personal importance of their fulfilled exchanges, he adds that were it not for his grandchildren 'I would probly say, "you know, [it] is time for me to leave, is time for me to go" [pass away]. But now, as if they bring more zeal to my life. My grandchildren are what I'm living for'.

Furthermore, for many elder men who follow a stoic 'work-home' daily routine – between their workplace, 'garden' (smallholding), and the yard/veranda/house – affectionate interaction with grandchildren in the household offers a tenderness that contrasts with the more boisterous sociality of men in 'outside' public spaces and workplaces. Advancing a respectable moral concept of self-worth – preferring not to linger on the road or 'interfere' (mingle) with a present generation of 'young fellas' who are 'always in *pwoblem*' (fighting, drinking or smoking (ganja)) – senescent men spend less time outside with peers and more time at home, and consequentially, with kin.

Yet given the Antillean male impulse towards being 'outside' and free to rove from the symbolically feminine domain of the home, elder men become 'ambivalently inside', paradoxically feeling only partially 'at home' in the home. Hence the interstitial spaces of the yard and the veranda, at once 'outside' yet not public, become spaces of elder male dwelling. The former is a productive space of male 'yard work', the latter a gender-neutral space for watching the passing world and yarning with visitors. Furthermore, such yarns often imaginatively transport elder men through time and space as they tell tall tales of overseas sojourns, local feats (e.g., on the sea or the football savannah), criminal adventures and sexual escapades during their younger, more virile manhood. All this, in the act of recital, attests to their experience of the world and their secured reputations therein.

Gus's Ambivalent Homeliness

The threshold between inner and outer was a site for intense struggle and friction, for men could not live with work alone, yet nor could they remain for long in the private world of the family without feeling a sense of identity loss and invalidation.

(Rutherford 1992: 17–18)

Gus is the husband of a maternal aunt of mine. He is a quiet security guard aged sixty, father of one, *beau pé* of three and grandfather of six. He is especially close to his youngest granddaughter (aged three) who lives in their bayside home along with his adult daughters, granddaughters and wife. He works long hours and spends most of his waking time at work, home, or in *his* yard (it is 'mum's house' and 'papa's yard') tending his animals (rabbits, chickens, dogs), cutting coconuts, picking fruit or doing odd jobs. On Fridays when he comes home from working late he will nonchalantly tell the family 'goodnight' as he meets them watching T.V. in the living room while his wife works (e.g., cleaning fish or making juice) in the kitchen. He then lovingly lifts and cuddles his youngest granddaughter, typically nestling a kiss in her neck before she wriggles free and goes about her business. Gus is an almost silent figure in the home, offering only short, functional conversation (about food, clothes to be washed, working hours) with his adult daughters and wife. Yet he becomes more vocal in exchanges with his granddaughter, playfully encouraging her to tell him about her day or unconvincingly threatening her 'not to do that' and 'go there' or she will get a spanking (that rarely ever comes) as she mischievously runs away from him, chuckling. On Sundays when he is off work and not in the yard he usually sits to watch cricket or westerns on a comforter on the floor with his two youngest granddaughters, before invariably drifting off to sleep as the children play or doze beside him (see Figure 10.2). Though never expressed in conversation, it is observable that Gus enjoys the company and warmth that his grandchildren bring him.

One afternoon sitting with Gus on his veranda, I ask how his life has changed since becoming a grandfather. He says he does not go out as much as he used to: spear fishing with his elder brother and friends, bodybuilding with another group, or just 'pulling up' and chatting with a fellow security guard at a nearby gas station during the man's Friday night shift. Now he spends most of his time at home or in his yard. After pausing for a moment of thought he interjects, breaking his silence, 'I begin to realize, it's not good to be too homey



FIGURE 10.2. Gus's routine Sunday nap beside his granddaughters

you know. When you homey, the day you go out everybody have to try and find out, "Why you out late? Where you going? What you doing?". He is referring to his wife and daughters – used to his routine presence at home – whose concerned questions, he feels, nag at his autonomy. Furthermore he adds that the children 'can be so noisy', often making his ears hurt. Hence he retreats each afternoon to the serenity of his animals and his shaded bayside yard. Our

conversation then drifts back to spear fishing. He lights up, losing his usual phlegmatic manner as he enters an exhilarating story of a diving adventure off Dominica's southwestern tip. He describes jumping on his friend's motorbike, spear gun in hand, flippers and snorkel in his pack, and off they go. He mentions encounters with sharks, his ability to hold his breath longer than his peers and the big catches they would proudly return with, carrying a laden *kwaye* (fish wire) bearing an array of fish and seafood for all to marvel at as they drive back at high speed along the coastal road. 'Back then we never bought fish from the market', he proudly states, echoing the nostalgic remarks I would often hear auntie make about his productive fishing days. Wistfully he proclaims, though more to himself than me, 'I want to go back to it', his retrospective tale reminding him of the satisfaction of his roving former self. However, although observably bringing about a feeling of loss, the very act of sharing his story of adventure, danger and bringing back a bounty of fish for his wife and children testifies to his past competence, technical skill and a qualified sense of masculine being in the outside world of his peers. Gus's imaginative retrospective journey into his personal history served to bring his sense of achievement in that world into the present. As his audience – a young and itinerant male who is 'of outside' in a very general (though not unambiguous) sense – I sat captivated, intently absorbing the vivid oral re-enactment of his tale. Gus's telling and my hearing not only reinforced his reputation, but asserted it as a resource to mitigate the feelings of displacement produced by his ambivalently inside, senescent life.

Conclusion

In the series of individual biographic sketches presented in this chapter I have sought to retrieve the kinship lives of elder men from the shadowy margins of Caribbean ethnography. Locating sons, fathers and grandfathers at various points of disjuncture, distance or intimacy throughout paternal life histories, I have synthesized a general, though complicated, picture of ageing inward motion. Such deceleratory motion has social, spatial, temporal and affective implications as senescent men dwell with greater frequency in the home, the yard and the veranda, and move into closer relations with kin. Absences and successful later-life reunions with emigrant and unnamed fathers, fatherly determination to disrupt cycles of absence yet unintentionally becoming 'absent-present' in

the process, pursuing paternal redemption with age, developing a special love, leniency and playful relations with grandchildren yet expressing ambivalence towards one's increasing homeliness – all patterned the fathering trajectories documented here. The composite gendered tale I have sketched is one of existential orientation and reference: initially, towards peers, work, liming, the block and the outside world, and eventually, towards children, grandchildren, kinship and the dissonant insideness of home life mediated by memories of a virile past.

Gaining an intergenerational view of these male kinship biographies has demanded an understanding of how past and future are experienced and made sense of in familial terms. What has emerged from observation and narrative across the three generational moments is that a strong ontological connection to progenic kin (children and grandchildren) develops as a man grows through fatherhood and grandfatherhood. I have framed this increasingly significant sense of connection as a 'continuity of being' between kin. For the individual men I came to know, who identified their antecedent paternal pasts (e.g., 'knowing the man who put you there') and descendent progenic futures (e.g., grandchildren being 'extensions') as existentially significant to their lived present, this idiom expresses the increasing personal importance of direct lineage and kinship with age. Thus, far from possessing the stable status of being absent or invisible appendages to matrifocal arrangements, men move in complex ways along senescent paths towards an ideal of intergenerational alignment that tenders familial togetherness.

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CONCLUSION

Siân Pooley and Kaveri Qureshi

This is not a conclusion in the conventional sense; we will not seek to press the diverse, nuanced and specific content of the previous chapters into a neatly tied-up ending. Our studies of inter-generational relationships do not support global theories of demographic transition, of the decline of extended family, of the rise of individualism, of youthful generational rebellion, or of ever more child-centred affective cultures across the last century. Yet cultures of reproduction do matter. In rejecting these linear narratives, we are not simply being destructive. Nor are we proposing that all we can conclude is that human societies are too complex, diverse and fluid to be usefully thought about at a scale above the individual case study. The introduction laid out the critical, analytical framework that this volume offers – of the insights that emerge from framing the study of parenthood around lifelong cultures of reproduction, of the need to understand how generational interactions and identities shape the passing-on of the practices that make these relationships, and of the four key, entangled processes by which people in one generation influence the parenthood of another generation. We will not repeat these arguments here. Instead, we focus on the theme of transformation through the principal ways in which men and women are altered by – and alter – cultures of reproduction. In each case, we also suggest some of the methodological and interpretative implications that are raised for future research by our reading of these diverse studies together.

This volume has demonstrated that it is constructive to ask the neglected question of *how* parenthood is passed on. In seeking to

answer this question, we have suggested that a comparative and interdisciplinary lens is especially fruitful. It is primarily in exploring these processes by which parenthood is passed 'between' that we deduce the most fundamental similarities in the ways in which one generation influences another's parenthood. By contrast, when exploring the more frequently asked questions of what people do to raise their children and who takes on these roles, our chapters reveal above all the particularities of human and social experience, the diversity of cultures of reproduction, the significance of contingency and context, and the inherently dynamic nature of these reproductive relationships. Only through this sort of comparative work is it possible to establish what is universal or widespread across cultural and historical contexts – and how this could be so – and what arises only in particular human, social and political circumstances.

When thinking across time and place, we have shown how little of these cultures of reproduction is made in blood. We suggest that it is worthwhile to dwell on the practices that fill the space 'between' generations – the acts that make relationships. The chapters reveal the degree to which this liminal relational space is not simply about unthinking duplication and timeless repetition, so as to be encompassed within the term reproduction in its literal sense. Instead, the complex range of acts and ideas that lie in these interstices can be understood as being fundamentally about invention, creativity and self-expression, as people work out who they are through the people they act daily to make. Building on this approach, we suggest that future research into parenthood could attend more fundamentally to the sustained power of those relationships between generations. State programmes and advice literature offer the most coherent and explicit guidance on how one should rear the young. Yet our research suggests that it is by studying the incoherent and often unarticulated body of memories, practices and emotions that make intimate relationships that we are able to explain most about what parenthood means to men and women, as well as what it does to them. The hands-on experience of parenthood and face-to-face models encountered everyday matter. They have the power to profoundly alter people's expressed convictions and enacted approaches to bringing up children, leading them to re-evaluate the wisdoms promulgated by those who claim expertise legitimated by scientific, religious, cultural or state authority. This has important implications for policy-making and practice. It is not sufficient to provide a new technology to young adults or to recommend a new childcare practice without also attending to the embedded and intimate power

of previous generations – men and women, ongoing and in memory. These figures always shape what people mean when they think about, and act, in making their own parenthood.

Our studies were selected to illustrate diverse global experiences of lifelong parenthood – whether that be in terms of gender, sexuality, age, marital status, ethnicity, nation or socio-economic class. Yet these chapters together also indicate some of the key contexts that create periods in which reproductive cultures are transformed most radically and rapidly. We suggest that insecurity is central to this analysis. First, many chapters in the volume examine insecurity through geographical mobility. Studies of contemporary parenthood have underlined the significance of globalization in enabling the rapid, global spread of new parenting technologies, standards and consumerism. Without denying the specificity of these changes in the contemporary world, our work instead emphasizes the significance of the mobility of people – of the emotional rupture, social dislocation, cultural hybridity and socio-economic inequalities that are most frequently engendered in the short-term by human mobility. High rates of intergenerational separation through geographical mobility are far from peculiar to the contemporary world. It matters little whether one generation is moving to the neighbouring town or to the other side of the earth: both produce absences which are felt intensely at the juncture of becoming a parent. These absences have to be managed individually or socially through invocations of memory, through short-term moves to bring people face-to-face, or through using communication technologies to do so virtually. Second, other chapters in this volume highlight the parallel significance of demography. High rates of mortality in mid-adulthood or the breakdown of relationships likewise result in shifts in patterns of intergenerational relations that produce particular patterns of aching loss, of grudging dependency, of strategic adaptation and of social change. Third, insecurity is profoundly shaped by structural inequalities – of economic poverty, of social and political oppression, or of sustained cultural marginality. Parents often worked to hide these inequalities from the historic child and they are glossed over in the personal narratives these same people later tell of growing up. Nevertheless, it is these patterns of presence and absence that most profoundly shape the next generation's decisions, practices and aspirations as parents. Of course, in none of these contexts does absence denote a lack of power; indeed the reverse is often the case, as the absent figure gains a mythologized or profoundly ambivalent status in memory. It is therefore revealing to place these unpredictable

patterns of security – the normally ordinary touch and taken-for-granted presence of a previous generation – as a central influence, not only in explaining when cultures change, but also in understanding its neglected opposite, of when mundane continuities are sustained. This suggests important avenues for future research into how reproductive cultures alter at an individual and societal level. We emphasize contingent constraints and contextually experienced crisis, rather than a linear, cumulative narrative of change.

Finally, reproductive cultures also transform at the level of the individual life. In discussing animal reproduction from the classical to the early modern period, many writers described how mother bears would ‘lick into shape’ the ‘shapeless’ offspring to which they had given birth. Only as a result of the mother’s care would the ‘lump’ come into being as a bear cub. Pliny the Elder argued that people were different to these beasts that were not ‘finished at birth’. Yet what our studies suggest is that it is more revealing to approach reproduction through attention to this lifelong moulding through the relationships we form and the cultural meanings we place on them. These most relational identities shift across the life course, as new generational identities are added and others diminish in importance. Yet the power to make others does not lie solely with the older generation. Chapters in this volume demonstrate how younger generations also mould their parents, both knowingly and unknowingly. Each cub for which the mother cares makes her into a fundamentally different bear. Cultures of lifelong reproduction are profoundly gendered, but in the human societies that we consider in this volume, it is not solely mothers who are shaped in this way. Our research has variously demonstrated the particular, contextually-shaped significance of fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers to the passing-on of parenthood.

While our chapters mostly focus on either the detailed study of these practices or on the later narration of lives made from them, together they suggest the insights that can be drawn from innovative longitudinal research that seeks to combine these methodologies by attending to the temporality of people’s lives. Historians can examine subjectivity in this way, by considering the life of an individual, not solely through the rationalized autobiographical narratives or oral history testimonies that they offered later in life, but by examining the silences, gaps and overlaps that are revealed when these accounts are read alongside earlier, less coherently self-managed archival sources such as letters, diaries or court records. In a contemporary context, by returning repeatedly to the same setting,

researchers can explore how people remake themselves – and their reproductive culture – as they go through specific moments of the life course. Likewise, by carrying out reflective interviews across generations within the same family, researchers can identify the slippages between the stories that are coined and passed between generations, and the often far messier lived experiences of parenthood. This allows the exploration of the intersections and disjunctions between the immediate, short-term and often incoherent explanations people offer within the very living of relationships, and the intensely emotional, but shifting, life-course narratives that are articulated in attempting to make more coherent relational selves out of the complexity of parenthood.

INDEX

A

abortion, 25, 71, 73, 82, 84,
115–16, 119–20, 123–26, 128–30
abuse, 13
of child, 78–79, 139–42, 242–43
of partner, 118, 124, 149–51
adolescence. *See under* youth
adoption, 7, 46–47, 51–52, 242–43.
See also fostering
adultery, 71, 77, 79, 123–24, 127
advice literature, 2–3, 10, 16–18,
77, 79, 92, 99–102, 106, 138–39,
146, 155, 165, 219, 223–24,
248–49
Ainsworth, Mary, 78–79
Almack, Kathryn, 45–46, 51
Amazonia (Brazil), 28, 181–206
Anagnost, Ann, 92, 101
Anderson, Michael, 14, 135, 140,
148
Ankole (Uganda), 87
Arber, Sara, 3, 14
Asad, Talal, 169–70
aspirations, 3, 24, 82–83, 92, 104,
149, 214–15, 220, 229, 240,
246–49, 255, 279
assisted reproductive technologies,
5, 23, 52, 58–61
attachment theory, 78–80, 143–44,
208. *See also* childcare
aunt, 70–71, 77, 84, 86, 142,
174–77, 262–63. *See also* kin

B

baby, 27–28, 50–51, 152, 166, 168,
186, 191–98, 201–202, 280. *See*
also child
Bailey, Joanne, 10, 29
Bangladesh 229–52
Baraitser, Lisa, 169, 176
Bathing, 4, 28, 166, 168, 182, 188,
191, 193–98, 203, 212–213
Beier, Lucinda, 2, 139, 223, 225
Bennett, Alan, 3
Bian, Fuqin, 97
biology. *See under* blood
birth. *See under* childbirth
Bloch, Maurice, 21
blood, 55–57, 174, 184, 261–64,
268–9, 278
body, 26–29, 154, 167–76, 190–4,
196–97, 201–2, 262–64, 280
Bourdieu, Pierre, 26–27, 30, 163,
169–70, 231–32
Brannen, Julia, 1–2, 14, 222,
230–31
Brazil, 28, 181–206
breastfeeding, 17, 66, 71, 77,
84, 100, 164, 166–67, 170–73,
175, 177, 193–94, 196, 217–18,
222–23
British Asians, 160–80, 229–52
Buganda (Uganda), 23, 65–90
Buhaya (Uganda), 86–87
Burnside, John, 13

C

- Caldwell, John, 65–66, 81
 Caldwell, Pat, 65–66, 81
 Carsten, Janet, 6–7, 11, 169, 196, 262
 Chavkin, Wendy, 3
 child, 5, 7–8, 19, 92–93, 116, 126, 128, 131, 152–54, 186, 196, 208, 242–43, 268–69. *See also* baby
 childbirth, 53–54, 71, 76–77, 83–84, 102, 106–7, 126, 164, 166–67, 174, 188, 190–93, 212, 216, 218, 222, 255, 280
 childcare, 27–29, 74, 78–79, 81–83, 91–110, 129–30, 138–45, 155–56, 167–69, 173, 176–77, 181–206, 208, 212–26, 234–36, 242, 244, 248, 255, 264–67
 by another child, 153, 161, 176, 212–13
 by kin, 24, 70, 78–79, 91–110, 129–30, 139–45, 152–53, 255, 267–73
 by nanny, 98–9, 103, 107, 216, 224–5
 by nursery, 24, 96–100
 childlessness, 14, 52–57, 66, 69, 81, 86–87, 121–22, 132, 170
 China, 23–24, 91–113
 Chodorow, Nancy, 2, 29–30, 207–209, 216, 224
 Clarke, Adele, 93
 class. *See under* socio-economic class
 Cohen, Deborah, 13, 15, 136–37
 colonialism, 19, 23, 65–90, 144, 183–84, 202
 Comaroff, Jean, 8
 Comaroff, John, 8
 communication, 22, 24, 279. *See also* media; silence
 conversation, 11–12, 22–23, 28, 49–63, 80, 85–86, 127, 266, 271, 280
 digital, 4, 16, 101, 118, 165
 letters, 75, 120, 122, 236
 telephone, 174, 217, 236, 264, 267

- conception, 6, 47, 58–61
 contraception. *See under* fertility
 cousin, 50, 103, 127, 161, 165, 198
 Crawford, Patricia, 10
 Croll, Elizabeth, 93, 110
 crying, 102, 167–68, 170–73, 175, 193–98, 219, 224
 Currier, Carrie Liu, 97

D

- D'Amico-Samuels, Deborah, 259
 Dawson, Graham, 12, 144
 delivery. *See under* childbirth
 DeLoache, Judy, 27
 demographic transition theory, 13–14, 67, 72–75, 80–87, 131, 277
 demography, 13–14, 65–66, 75–7, 80, 92, 97–98, 110, 115–16, 118, 121, 131–32, 135–37, 140, 152–53, 164, 279–80
 Di Leonardo, Micaela, 11, 168, 176
 disability, 56–57
 discipline, 10, 70, 79, 99, 104–5, 139, 220–21, 225, 230, 233, 239, 258, 269–70
 disease. *See under* health
 divorce. *See under* marital breakdown
 Dominica (Lesser Antilles) 30, 253–76
 Donner, Henrike, 161
 dyad, 6, 268

E

- East African Institute of Social Research (EAISR), 68, 78–79
 economy, 7–8, 10, 67, 74, 81–86, 92, 116, 146–47, 209, 223, 242, 258–60, 265, 279
 education, 16, 19, 66, 73–5, 77, 79, 81–83, 85–86, 92–93, 99–102, 124, 127, 139, 145, 214–16, 223, 225, 233, 237, 240–44, 246–48, 255, 258, 265, 267
 emigration. *See under* migration

- emotion, 7, 10, 53–54, 74, 136, 167, 170, 216–17, 231, 234–41, 247–49, 265–70, 278–81
- employment, 96, 128, 136–37, 150–51, 164, 185, 191, 199–200, 233, 247–48
- maternal, 71, 74, 79, 81–83, 86, 95–96, 103–104, 109, 114–16, 118–19, 126, 129–30, 142–44, 147–48, 151, 191, 209, 214, 219, 222, 239, 244, 267
- paternal, 143–44, 148, 151, 230–31, 233, 237–39, 241–44, 248–49, 255, 265–67, 271
- retirement, 97, 266–67
- unemployment, 81, 130, 151, 230
- unpaid domestic work, 80, 140, 144, 148, 152, 161, 165, 168, 174–76, 208–9, 212–13, 225, 245, 261, 267, 271
- England. *See under* United Kingdom
- ethnicity, 3, 48, 62, 66–67, 72, 75–77, 87, 163–64, 182, 184–85, 198–201, 229–32, 237, 241, 247–49, 279
- Evans, Harriet, 92, 98
- experts, 2–4, 10, 16, 18–20, 24, 68, 76–80, 86–87, 92–93, 99–110, 138–42, 157, 165, 169–73, 175–77, 187, 191–93, 197, 219, 223–25, 245, 248, 278–79. *See also* advice literature; medicine
- F**
- Faircloth, Charlotte, 3, 17, 93
- father, 10, 30, 126, 130, 136, 140–41, 144, 149–50, 166, 173–4, 177, 193, 213–4, 216, 222, 229–76
- absence of father 30, 78–9, 126, 130, 218, 238, 261–62, 273–74
- feeding, 77–78, 80, 84, 87, 99–102, 106, 138–39, 150–51, 166, 172, 217, 220. *See also* breastfeeding
- fertility, 13–14, 23, 47–48, 56–58, 65–67, 72, 74–76, 80–87, 115–6, 121, 132
- birth control, 66, 71, 77, 80–87, 92, 116–17, 119, 153–54
- family size, 81–83, 92, 97–98, 110, 136–37, 152–54, 218
- filial piety. *See under* lineage: patrilineage
- foetus, 71, 190–92
- fostering, 55, 69–70, 78–79, 152–53, 218, 238, 242–243
- Foucault, Michel, 20, 92, 105–9
- Franklin, Sarah, 5–6
- G**
- gay parenthood, 22–23, 43–64
- Geber, Marcelle, 78–79
- Gedalof, Irene, 9, 162, 178
- gender, 2–6, 10, 26, 28, 50, 53–54, 57, 62, 67–87, 93, 97, 103–5, 108, 116, 121–22, 132, 135–36, 140–51, 155–56, 162, 173, 196, 208, 216, 244–49, 258–61, 266, 269–70, 273–74, 280. *See also* father; grandfather; grandmother; mother
- Of children 79, 153, 196, 208, 214, 216
- generation, 12–20, 31, 278. *See also* intergenerational transmission
- horizontal cohort identity, 15–17, 43–44, 77, 118, 127, 136, 165, 173, 177, 219, 221, 242, 254, 257, 265, 270, 273–74
- intergenerational conflict 15–16, 46–47, 69–77, 83–85, 91, 93–95, 99–110, 148, 153–54, 213–14, 221–24, 241–43
- linear narrative of change, 17–20, 68, 110, 155, 182–90, 198–201, 221, 240, 243–46
- simultaneity of identities 11–13, 14–15, 30, 156, 225–26, 240, 257–59, 267–70, 273–74, 280
- vertical familial identity 12–15, 44, 60–61, 83–87, 93, 105–8, 213. *See also* lineage
- Gillis, John, 2, 19
- Ginsberg, Faye, 5

- global encounters, 3–4, 6, 8–9, 19–20, 31, 66–67, 72, 77–82, 86–87, 92–93, 98–102, 106, 115, 131, 184, 258–59, 262–63, 277, 279. *See also* colonialism; migration
- Godelier, Maurice, 7
- Goh, Esther, 93, 97–98, 100, 102, 108
- Goldberg, Abbie, 45–46, 51, 54
- Goody, Esther, 7
- Goody, Jack, 65
- Gorju, Julien, 70–71
- Gottlieb, Alma, 8, 11, 27, 171
- Gow, Peter, 181, 184, 196, 202
- grandchild, 23, 25–26, 30, 44, 50–56, 60–62, 97–98, 104, 123, 131–32, 152–54, 210–11, 255–56, 258, 267–74
- grandfather, 11, 26, 30, 108, 119–22, 130, 132, 196, 234–35, 245, 253–76
- grandmother, 11, 14, 18, 24, 43, 49–52, 98, 103, 108, 120–22, 132, 138–42, 145–46, 150–51, 160–80, 191, 194, 196, 216–17, 224, 226, 269
- grandparent, 3, 10–11, 14, 16, 23, 25–26, 50–56, 61–62, 67, 91–113, 116, 119–32, 135–59, 220, 245, 280
care for, 97–99, 153–54, 168
coresidence, 97–99, 129–31, 146–48, 150
- H**
- habitus*, 26–27, 169–70, 231–32, 248
- Harcourt, Wendy, 22
- Hareven, Tamara, 14
- Harris, Olivia, 25
- healer. *See under* medicine
- health, 13–14, 19, 92, 187, 190, 203, 223
of child, 66, 78, 80, 92, 99–102, 139–43, 165, 168, 170–75, 193–98, 220
of grandparent, 98, 153–54, 170, 223
of mother, 66, 71, 76–77, 83, 87, 106–7, 161, 166–67, 170–72, 188–92, 197
- Heckenberger, Michael, 182, 202
- Hoffman, Diane, 3
- housing, 96–98, 107, 118, 129–31, 142–43, 146–48, 150–53, 165, 169, 182–84, 199–200, 237, 257–58, 265–67, 270–73
- I**
- Iliffe, John, 65–66, 72
- illegitimacy. *See under* nonmarital pregnancy
- immigration. *See under* migration
- implicit normative expectations, 21–24, 43–113
- India 229–52
- infant. *See under* baby
- infertility, 14, 57–58, 66, 76, 81, 119. *See also* childlessness
- Ingold, Tim, 27–29, 169, 182, 197–98, 202
- inheritance. *See under* intergenerational transmission
property, 65, 74
- Inhorn, Marcia, 3
- intergenerational transmission, 1–2, 4, 11, 13, 18, 21–31, 277–78. *See also* generation
backwards, 16, 25, 117, 132, 210–11
forwards, 12–15, 44, 60–61, 79, 83–87, 93–94, 108–10, 137–39, 155, 161–62, 167–69, 191–98, 208, 212–21, 224–26, 230, 240–41
- IVF. *See under* assisted reproductive technologies
- J**
- Japan, 25, 114–134
- Jeffery, Patricia, 161
- Jeffery, Roger, 161
- Johnson-Hanks, Jennifer, 13, 81
- Joyce, Patrick, 20

K

- Kaufert, Patricia, 5, 8
 King, Laura, 10
 kinship, 4–6, 11, 18, 44–45,
 49–50, 61–62, 70, 78–79, 96–98,
 126–28, 146–48, 273–74
 Kipling, Rudyard, 15
 Kitzinger, Sheila, 2

L

- Lawler, Stephanie, 234, 258
 Layne, Linda, 3
 leave from employment,
 maternity leave, 103, 121
 paternity leave, 162, 177
 legislation, 47–48, 68, 70, 73–74,
 86, 92, 98, 103, 110, 116, 120,
 123, 139–40, 142. *See also* state;
 welfare
 Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 183–84
 Lewin, Ellen, 45
 LGBTQ. *See under* gay parenthood
 life course, 1, 9, 11, 13–17, 54, 66,
 71–72, 75, 85, 98, 121–22, 129,
 132, 140, 142, 144–49, 153,
 155–57, 201–2, 209, 211, 222,
 226, 237, 244, 248, 253–54, 257,
 261, 265–74, 280–81. *See also*
 youth
 lineage, 6, 12, 55–58, 65–66,
 69–81, 85–87, 93, 98,
 127–28
 matrilineage, 6, 71
 patrilineage, 23, 65–66, 69–75,
 93–94, 105–10, 261–62,
 268–69, 273–74
 locality, 3–4, 9–10, 25–26, 67, 80,
 86–87, 136–37, 145–48, 155,
 163–64, 187–88, 210, 254, 268,
 278
 Lock, Margaret, 5, 8
 Logan, John, 97
 lone parenthood, 25, 78–80,
 114–34, 140–41, 152
 Lyon, Andrew, 161

M

- Madge, Henrietta, 16–17
 Maher, Janemaree, 3
 Mahler, Margaret, 208
 Malinowski, Bronislaw, 6, 181
 Mannheim, Karl, 15, 17
 marital breakdown, 25, 70, 74–75,
 78–79, 86–87, 114–15, 119–25,
 127, 131–32, 148–52, 218, 230,
 279
 marriage, 25, 65, 69–75, 86–87,
 115, 119, 122–25, 132, 148,
 208–11, 213, 254–55
 maternity. *See under* mother
 matrifocality 30, 259–61, 274
 matrilineage. *See under* lineage:
 matrilineage
 Mauss, Marcel, 6, 26–27, 169–70,
 177, 193, 202
 Mechling, Jay, 211
 media, 3–4, 8, 12, 48
 internet, 16–17, 101, 118, 165
 magazine, 75, 77, 92
 newspaper, 78, 143–45, 149–51,
 155
 television, 258
 medicine,
 humoral, 28, 167, 190–94,
 197–98, 201–2
 non-western, 71, 100, 106,
 166–67, 171–72, 192
 western bio-medicine, 5, 72–73,
 76, 81–85, 92–93, 99–102,
 105–6, 126, 143, 166, 170,
 172–73, 187, 192–93, 197
 memory, 2, 12–13, 21–22, 28–30,
 44, 49, 52, 103–4, 109, 123, 128,
 137, 151–55, 171, 176, 184–85,
 202, 209–11, 226, 231–32,
 234–49, 257, 262–63, 269,
 279–80
 menstruation, 28, 188
 Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 28, 182,
 202
 methodology, 2–3, 280–1
 archive, 24, 67–68, 137

- ethnography, 29, 117, 162–65, 181, 255–58
- oral history, 29–30, 68, 137, 184, 198, 200, 209–12, 226
- structured interview, 47–48, 94–95, 117–18, 163, 232–34
- migration, 3–4, 8–9, 26, 28, 30
- international, 9, 76, 79, 127, 146, 160–80, 229–52, 258–59, 261–64, 268, 279
- regional, 9, 79, 146–48, 182, 187, 198–201, 217–19, 225, 237, 279
- miscarriage, 76, 123
- modernity, 24, 66–68, 78, 82, 92–93, 99–102, 109–10, 138, 221–24, 239, 245–47
- modernization theory, 13, 17–18, 31, 66–68, 72–82, 85–87, 93, 96–98, 107–10, 131, 138, 277
- Mooney, Ann, 1–2, 230–31
- moral judgement, 17, 21–22, 24–26, 50–51, 72–74, 104–5, 114–59, 270
- mortality, 66
- adult, 135, 152, 218, 279
- infant, 81–82, 138–39, 197, 255
- child, 116, 140–41, 267
- Moss, Peter, 1–2, 230–31
- mother, 10, 16–18, 24, 27–29, 69, 74–79, 82–83, 91–134, 138, 143, 149–50, 160–80, 190–93, 196, 207–28, 236, 244–45, 248–49, 259–62. *See also* matrifocality; mother-in-law
- absence of mother 103–4, 218
- mother-in-law, 95, 97, 101, 104–6, 108, 146, 150–52, 160, 165, 174–75, 191, 194, 217
- Moultrie, Tom, 81
- multiple care-givers. *See under* childcare: by kin; kinship
- Murphy, Elizabeth, 101
- myth, 28, 183–85, 187–90, 192, 198–202, 210, 280
- N**
- Naftali, Orna, 92, 100, 105
- nanny. *See under* childcare: by nanny
- Narvaez, Darcia, 3
- Navarro, José-Alberto, 3
- neighbours, 99, 120–21, 127, 140, 144–47, 237, 241, 245–46, 262
- Nilsen, Ann, 14, 222
- nonmarital pregnancy, 25, 66, 71, 73–75, 79, 86, 114–34, 152
- Nordqvist, Petra, 45, 53, 58–59
- norm. *See under* implicit normative expectation
- nursery. *See under* childcare: by nursery
- O**
- O'Brien, Mary, 7
- O'Connor, Clare, 16–17
- Orubuloye, I.O., 81
- P**
- Pakistan, 27–28, 160–80, 229–52
- parent, 5, 8–11, 21–31, 43–64, 67, 70, 75–76, 78–80, 92, 96–98, 101–5, 109–10, 114–15, 119, 126–31, 138–40, 142–45, 155–56, 163, 173, 176, 192, 214, 216, 220–22, 230, 243–49, 265, 269–70, 277–81. *See also* father; mother
- patriarchy, 23, 68, 85–86, 105–8, 260–61, 267
- patrilineage. *See under* lineage: patrilineage
- Pease, Bob, 230, 246–47, 249
- Perec, Georges, 12
- personhood, 6, 166, 199, 201–2, 280
- play, 96, 99–101, 103, 106, 142, 186, 236–37, 244–45, 267, 269–74
- politics, 20, 66–67, 73–76, 81, 84–86, 92, 102–3, 199, 279

- postpartum practices, 27–29, 66, 77, 100, 106–7, 160–80, 188–98
- poverty, 66, 80–85, 102, 118, 141, 146, 149–54, 170, 174, 177, 230, 239–43, 249, 265, 279
- practice, 1–9, 21–31
 habituation, 12–13, 21–22, 26–28, 161–62, 169–70, 177, 212, 225, 231–32, 248
 sedimentation, 27–28, 182, 202
- pregnancy, 25, 71, 114, 119–23, 149, 165, 167, 170, 190–91, 197, 222, 259
- promiscuity, 72–73, 265
- psychoanalytical thought, 13, 29, 207–9, 214, 216
- psychologist, 68, 78–79, 92
- Q**
- Quiggin, Pat, 65–66
- R**
- Rapp, Rayna, 5
- religion, 24–25, 65
 Buddhism, 116
 Christianity, 23, 66–70, 72–74, 77, 79, 84, 86–87, 122–23, 145, 254–56, 267
 Hinduism, 232–33, 247–48
 Islam, 161, 166, 172, 174, 232–33, 247–48
 Sikhism, 232–33, 247–48
- reproductive cultures, 4–16, 23–27, 31, 67, 69, 78, 80, 84–87, 92–94, 115, 137, 148, 154–55, 190, 277–81
- Richards, Audrey, 76, 78–9
- Roper, Lyndal, 14
- S**
- same-sex parenthood. *See under* gay parenthood
- sexual intercourse, 58–59, 66, 82–87, 115, 119, 154, 161, 254, 265
 abstinence, 66, 77, 82
 knowledge, 22–23, 58–61, 70, 77, 79, 81
 sexuality, 3, 16, 22, 43–64, 73, 115, 279
 sexually transmitted infection, 68, 72, 77
 Shen, Yifey, 93–94, 105, 108
 Shircliffe, Barbara, 211
 Short, Susan, 98, 103
 sibling, 50, 55–57, 70, 74, 120, 152–53, 161, 170–71, 174, 196, 199–200, 212, 221, 225, 261–64, 271
 silence, 1, 12, 22, 28, 57, 127, 192–93, 266, 271, 280. *See also* communication
 sleeping, 99, 167–68, 175, 193–96, 219, 271
 Smart, Carol, 15, 45, 53, 58–59, 61, 117, 231
 Smith, R.T., 259–60
 social reproduction, 7
 social survey, 18, 68, 78, 139, 154–55, 211, 226
 socio-economic class, 1, 3, 18–19, 26, 28, 30–31, 62, 65, 81–85, 121, 123–24, 135–40, 145–46, 149, 154–55, 161–63, 170, 177, 208, 210, 212, 214, 223, 225, 229–30, 233, 243, 247, 249, 257, 279
 Solomon, Andrew, 5, 16
 Southall, Aidan, 78–79
 state, 19–20, 23–24, 66–67, 69–70, 71, 73, 78–87, 92, 103, 116, 139–42, 155, 157, 198, 200, 231, 278–79
 Staunæs, Dorte, 107
 Stephens, Rhiannon, 69
 Strange, Julie-Marie, 10, 136, 142
 Strathern, Marilyn, 4–7, 196, 260
 Sullivan, Maureen, 45, 51, 54, 59–60, 63
 Summers, Carol, 79, 85
 syphilis. *See under* sexually transmitted infection

T

Thompson, Paul, 13, 136, 210
Thompson, Richard, 82
Thomson, Rachel, 2, 225
Timaeus, Ian, 81
Timonon, Virpi, 3, 14
transmission. *See under* intergenerational transmission
trauma, 78–79

U

Uganda, 23, 65–90
uncle, 70–71, 234, 238, 261, 263
United Kingdom, 22–23, 25–30, 43–64, 135–80, 207–52, 258, 261–64
urban-rural contrast, 23, 77–79, 82–83, 93–96, 121, 146–47, 160–64, 172, 177, 192, 210

W

Wallman, Sandra, 163
war 12, 15, 20, 73, 199, 216
Warakena (Brazil), 28, 181–206
weaning, 71, 78, 80, 208, 220
Weiner, Annette, 5–6
Welbourn, Hebe, 79
welfare, 1, 19, 76, 82–83, 115–18, 131–32, 153, 165, 170, 192–93, 223. *See also* medicine; state
Weston, Kath, 45, 48–49, 54, 61
Willmott, Peter, 3, 18, 140, 154

Y

Young, Michael, 3, 18, 140, 154
youth, 22, 70–75, 79, 85, 124, 141, 148–50, 254, 270. *See also* life course