

## INTRODUCTION

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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 Breengard 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

<b>Processes of transmission</b>	<b>Primary process</b>	<b>Secondary processes</b>
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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