

Fathers and Fathering in Contemporary Contexts: Future Directions

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Three Types of Issues

1. Imagination

- Are there new questions we might ask?

2. Information

- Do we have the data we need... or want?

3. Execution

- Are we able to identify effects and mechanisms?

Imagination

(what might we further investigate?)

- Institutional effects
 1. Incarceration and the criminal justice system
 - Why are some able to reintegrate better than others?
 - What about fathers' responses to maternal incarceration?
 2. Military deployment
 - What are the key barriers to successful reentry?
Dispositional? Wartime experiences? Social setting to which they return?
 3. Economy
 - 'Fathers of the Great Recession'

Data Issues

1. Social fathers and multi-partner fertility – Quantitative versus qualitative data and findings
 - One paints a more positive picture than the other
 - Reconcile what on the surface appears to be differences (multi-method approach?)
2. Who are we missing from household surveys? And does it matter?
 - 20-40% of black men in their prime childbearing years of 20-40 are not included in major household surveys (Nelson, ARS, 2004, p.429)
 - Can we at least assign a direction to the bias?
3. Inadequate data on incarceration
 - Jail vs. prison; Duration; Time since release
 - Possible solution: Follow those released for a period of time

Execution

(Identifying mechanisms)

1. Compare exposure to very different types of institutions
 - Does the type of institution matter?
 - E.g., Military deployment vs. incarceration – different institutions, similar effects on children