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EXPLORING THE DEPTHS OF GENDER, PARENTING AND 'WORK':

CRITICAL DISCURSIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND THE 'MISSING VOICES' OF

INVOLVED FATHERHOOD.

ABSTRACT

This paper sets out to capture the missing voices of fathers in discussions around gender, parenting and work. Using Critical Discursive Psychology (CDP), a qualitative methodology that frames discourse, language and action as socially situated, the paper sets out to understand the complexities of involved fatherhood. Using data from two distinct research projects that considered managing tensions around parenting and paid work, alongside the move to 'involved fatherhood', we examine the ways in which different discourses are operating in order to construct stories around gender and parenting. We are particularly interested in the ways in which participants use language and, specifically, discourses of parenting, working and caring. Through the interview excerpts we analysed how simultaneously participants position themselves in the discourses and were also being positioned by the wider societal discourses. We consider how CDP can contribute rich insights into the ways in which fathers are arranging sharing parenting caregiving responsibilities, using these insights to inform the policy landscape. We finish the paper by suggesting that CDP methodology can be mobilised by researchers wanting to capture missing voices in shifting policy landscapes.

INTRODUCTION:

This paper offers a consideration of involved fathering discourses in relation to managing the complexities of gender and caring responsibilities. It uses a particular form of qualitative analysis called Critical Discursive Psychology (CDP) (e.g. Wetherell & Edley, 2014) to provide an in-depth exploration of how fathers have diverse voices which are socially situated in similarly diverse caring and working practices. This particular qualitative methodology has strong applications to the field of community, work and family (e.g. Locke, 2016; Petrassi, 2012; Yarwood & Locke, 2015). The paper was formulated following our invitation to deliver a CDP doctoral workshop at the International community, work and family conference (May, 2016) in Malmo, Sweden. Long after the conference, the dialogue continued with interdisciplinary scholars expressing interest in discussing, debating and, in some cases, applying CDP to community, work and family research. We were encouraged to write this paper, keeping these conversations going. It aims to extend the reach of these discussions about how CDP was applied to two separate research projects on gender, parenting and caregiving. Throughout the paper, we attend to the ways in which CDP, as a particular qualitative methodology, contributes to knowledge on gender, parenting and 'work' through the dual analytical focus on micro and macro discourses in action.

Shared parenting, 'involved' fathers and gender

Within qualitative research work generally, others have noted the potential contribution of CDP to work and family research and policy (e.g. Brady, 2015). There have been a variety of qualitative methods utilised ranging from ethnography (Doucet, 2006) grounded theory (e.g. Latshaw & Hale, 2016) to post-structuralist (e.g. Lupton & Barclay, 1997; Rose et al, 2015). In terms of work taking a discursive perspective specifically, Petrassi (2012) suggested that mothers' constructions of gender and childcare were perpetuating

inequality with regards to gendered binaries of care. Lupton & Barclay (1997) using a post-structuralist discursive perspective, noted the different subject positions that the fathers adopted in everyday interactions. Whilst using a similar perspective of post-structuralist Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) on stay-at-home-dads, Stevens (2015) considered the struggles these fathers had with the dominant discourses of fatherhood. Similarly, Locke (2016) in her CDP on SAHDs in UK British newspapers noted how the SAHD role was often presented as through necessity, not choice, with the newspaper reports containing 'markers of masculinity' to maintain hegemonic masculine norms whilst presenting these non-normative fathers. We argue that a CDP analysis is useful in understanding the nuances of parenting childcare decisions and paidwork as it combines the conversation analytically (CA) inspired discursive analyses (Wiggins & Potter, 2008) with the societal discourses of post-structuralist approaches (e.g. Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008). These CA inspired discursive approaches do not operate outside of the conversation, thus ignoring the wider societal context in which the talk is uttered, whilst the concerns of the 'decentred subject' (Wetherell, 1998: 388) so evident in post-structural discourse analysis can now be reconsidered through a CDP perspective. That is, CDP looks at the situated and highly occasioned nature of constructions, drawing on wider discursive tools such as ideological dilemmas (Billig et al, 1988) and interpretative repertories (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). As a result, CDP offers the opportunity to study the 'situated flow of discourse' (Wetherell, 1998: 405).

Research on fathering narratives has evidenced complex and dynamic identities (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011; Johansson, 2011). UK work-family policy has enduring persistent gendered caring and working constructs of mother as primary carer and father as breadwinner worker through traditionally long maternity leave and limited (if any) paternity leave (Fagan, 2016). At an individual level, fathers say they want to be more involved with the care of their children (Dermott & Miller, 2015; Finn & Henwood, 2009: Miller, 2010). There are however

large differences between suggested involvement and actual parenting practice (Craig, 2006; Dermott & Miller, 2015; Johansson & Klinth, 2008), with most fathers still working full-time whilst mothers are providing the majority of the childcare (Fagan, 2016). This breadwinning discourse appears to remain a prevailing issue for many fathers, although some prioritise caregiving (Gatrell et al, 2015).

It is pertinent to remember that fathering does not form a hegemonic discourse, despite it often being seemingly reported in these ways. Indeed fathering discourses will differ in terms of intersections with social class (Dolan, 2014: Shirani, Henwood & Coltart, 2012), age (e.g. Eerola & Huttunen, 2011), ethnicity (Hauari & Hollingworth, 2009), sexual orientation (Johansson, 2011) as well paid work status (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003) and all of these differing issues themselves may, in turn, be intersecting with masculinities. With regards to involved fathering and paid work, it has been noted that there is a need for a 'social legitimacy' in explanations of fathers taking on a greater caring role (Doucet, 2004) and fathers need to demonstrate themselves as active participants in family life (Tomas & Bailey, 2006). Regarding SAHDs specifically, Latshaw & Hale (2016) in a time use study of female breadwinning families noted how despite the gender reverse in childcare, once the mother returned to the home after a day in paid work, she took over the childcare. They noted how families were continuing to 'do' conventional gender despite having an alternative domestic set up. For this reason we begin by fleshing out work-family policy in early twenty-first century UK.

Shifting Policy landscape, Shared Parental leave and Father Quotas

Globally, researchers have made great strides to include the voices of individuals and groups, particularly fathers, previously missing from mainstream policy and practices of caring and working (O'Brien, 2013). However varying international policy landscapes mean

countries such as the UK, have laboured behind other neighbouring countries such as Norway in gender equal work-family policy. Evidence shows that where shared parental leave policy and paternity rights for fathers have been established over decades and in countries where father quotas are ideologically and politically supported (Haas and Hwang, 2007; Hegewisch & Gornick, 2011; Pajumets, 2010), there is more equitable gendered division of work-family responsibilities. Both Sweden and Norway have maternal and paternal quotas, a shared leave period and high rates of income replacement. Notwithstanding some resistance on the grounds of disrupting the mother-child dyad, in Norway, prior to the 1993 introduction of paternal quota, less than 4% of fathers took some paternal leave, rising to 89% by 2009 (Axelsson, 2014; Brandth and Kvande, 2009).

In the UK, the voices of 'involved fathers' have long since been overdue in policy discourse. Indeed during the consultation of the newly introduced Shared Parental Leave policy (SPL) (Children and Families Act, 2014), The Fatherhood Institute (2010) called for an exclusive fathers only 'use it or lose it' parental leave entitlement. They argued that, compared to many other countries, the UK were unusual for having an extended maternity leave and limited paternity leave setting parents on highly gendered paths in caregiving and employment (ibid). Such an approach could have put the UK in line with the Nordic States by including a 'Fathers' quota' however it stopped short by offering SPL and not specified sufficient father quotas (ibid).

In brief, with UK paternity leave standing at two weeks, the Children and Families Act (2014) led to new SPL. This means all employed women maintained eligibility for maternity leave and statutory maternity pay but could also *choose* to share the balance of the remaining leave and pay up to a total of 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay (Statutory Maternity Pay Rate). Given this policy context, we present qualitative empirical data focusing on a number of dominant work-family discourse constructions, the 'breadwinning

parent' to the 'full time parent'. Drawing on two UK projects, we offer insights of involved

fatherhood and the reasons SPL policy might not present a great enough policy opportunity to

break down engrained ideological and political discourses of gendered work-family divisions.

These projects were undertaken before the new SPL rights were introduced and document the

voices of fathers involved in caring during the Government's consultation period of

legislative change. The fathers in the project were not consulted directly by policy makers

about their fathering experiences. We argue this was a missed opportunity as the language

and social action of voices such as those documented here could have better informed the

development of a UK work-family policy to fit the lives of many 'involved fathers' in the

early 21st Century.

The first project spoke to working parents around the challenges of combining paid

work with caregiving. Working fathers presented examples of the challenges they faced

wanting to be more involved in parenting practices. The second is a research project looking

at the experiences of a group of fathers who held primary caregiving roles for their children.

This project explored the complexity in the decision making of men taking on these

caregiving roles, set again societal constructions of masculinity and parenting discourses.

Through using a CDP analysis, we are able to uncover the voices of involved fathers

including primary caregiving dads and those breadwinning fathers negotiating childcare and

parental responsibilities with their partners. We argue that CDP through its micro level of

analysis provides analytic research tools to amplify the relationship between the social action

of involved fathering, as described by the research participants, and the macro-level

discourses of fathering embedded in the wider policy of parental leave and gendered

expectations of caregiving. In other words, policies need to consider what involved fathering

means to those performing it and embed these meanings in wider policy discourse.

An in-depth qualitative method such as CDP, through its analysis of the subtle nuances of conversations about family life, offer insights to help inform the social policy making process. As we will demonstrate through the analysis, CDP as a particular constructionist methodology, examines the ways in which the fathers both construct and are constructed by discourses around parenting and gender binaries of care within UK society.

METHODS

The data used in this paper is drawn from two distinct research projects. The specific details of each are given below.

Project One: Working parents combining caregiving and employment

Led by the second author and approved by their institutional ethics panel, the first project draws on one-to-one semi-structured interviews with fourteen working parents (nine mothers and five fathers) between 2009-2011. These parents had children under school age (this is children in their fifth year of age in the UK). All fourteen participants were in paid employment in the UK but their working patterns differed from part-time, flexi time and compressed hours to full-time work. The participants, aged between 28 and 43 years, varied in cohabiting arrangements, marital status and ethnicity. The interviews provided a data rich site to analyse the discursive ways the participants positioned themselves and were positioned by society as working parents.

Project Two: Fathers as caregivers

The second project was led by the first author and was subject to institutional ethical approval. In this research the first author interviewed twenty fathers who identified as being 'heavily involved in the care of their children'. The majority were full-time primary

caregivers (stay-at-home-fathers) whilst others worked part-time. They were also in the majority white, middle-class, heterosexual and raising biological children. Their partners, in the main, tended to hold professional occupations. None of the fathers became SAHDs due to unplanned employment. The first author conducted one-on-one interviews with fathers, in person or over the telephone between 2013-2015. The interviews lasted on average one hour. This project was funded by (name removed for review).

Analytic approach: Critical Discursive Psychology.

Both projects draw on a Critical Discursive Psychological (CDP) methodology (e.g. Wetherell, 1998; Wetherell & Edley, 2014). As briefly discussed earlier, CDP is a form of discursive analysis that embodies principles from both wider (conversation analytically inspired) discursive psychology (e.g. Wiggins & Potter, 2008) and post-structuralist Foucauldian-inspired Discourse Analysis (e.g. Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008). CDP frames discourse, language and action as socially situated (Burr, 2015) and discourse becomes the central focus of investigation. In this sense then CDP starts from a position of social constructionism that considered knowledge to be culturally and historically located (Burr, 2015). Within this framework, discourse is a way of interpreting the world and giving it meaning through language which in turn has a constructive force on social action. That is, we are interested in what is being constructed by the participants, how is this being done in the interaction, and what this tells us about wider societal ideologies. In both projects, discourses are both constructed and constructive through language and social action and we are interested in the ways the participants use language and, specifically, the ways in which discourses of parenting, working and caring are constructed and negotiated by the participants. Through the interview excerpts we analyse how, simultaneously, participants position themselves in the discourses and are being positioned by the discourses. Thus the

methodological framework attends to the taken-for-granted assumptions of shared parenting including caring and working practices undertaken by mothers and fathers. In particular looking at the variable practices of fathering, parenting identities and care work and examining how these practices are constructed in a particular (UK) context. In this sense then drawing on the work of Michael Billig (1991) who notes that people are both the products and producers of discourse. By focusing on these discourses, we explore versions of working and caring available to fathers through questioning socially situated normative gendered caring and working practices. By adopting a CDP methodology our focus becomes how are categories of gender and parenting 'done' in the interaction, enabling us to consider the discourses of the involved fathers.

Importantly this paper brings together qualitative empirical data from both projects to critically read the ways in which the participants use language to construct caring and working practices, and parenting identities within families in the UK. Thus, in this analysis we examine how the participants use language to position themselves within and outside constructed normative caring and working practices in which gendering has historically been 'ordinary' (Sacks, 1992; Edwards, 2007) within socially situated norms and social policy 'realities'. Significantly, the methodology presents opportunities to question how the men and women in the projects negotiate work-care arrangements framed within 'a multiplicity and variety of situation-dependent ways of life' (Burr, 2015: 14). We argue that the projects in our paper present exemplars of the ways CDP as a methodology captures the rich diversity to develop breadth and depth of acknowledge of the ways in which diverse families experience the challenges of combining caregiving and employment.

FINDINGS:

Our research projects help highlight connections (and disconnections) between UK work-family policy and the parents, who as research participants, are framed as policy agents. In other words, although they were relatively small-scale projects, they provide a window to in-depth insights from fathers about their everyday parental and work practices. As such, we see how work-family policy is working in practice and being adapted and adopted at the local level of both the individual father and family unit.

We focus on a number of points that appear pertinent within the literature on caregiving and paid work, namely, the constructions of different types of father, from the 'breadwinning parent' and discourses around the 'full-time father'. Using these constructions, we consider the negotiations around gender norms, employment status including part-time and full-time worker, division of labour within and outside the home, and employer expectations of gendered parenting roles.

Discourses around the 'breadwinning' father

In the first excerpt the participant gives detailed insight into wanting to be a more involved father but considering the challenges posed to him by combining work and care. Brad, is a full-time scientist, often working around the UK, who was retraining to become a teacher so that he can work more flexibly and be a more involved father.

In my experience, I work full-time, you know, good old fashioned breadwinner. There's no chance I could care for my daughter like my wife. Ideally I want to be a more involved dad but work gets in the way. If there were choices and options to take more time off work, yes ideally I'd do it." (Brad, project one)

In Brad's account we see clear gendered binaries of care being constructed and these are acknowledged as normative by Brad ('good old fashioned breadwinner'). Brad ties his breadwinning status to a lack of options available to him that are available to his wife. This is claimed on the basis of paid work status but it appears to be intersecting with gender (see Yarwood & Locke, 2015). Significantly SPL had not been introduced at the time of interviewing Brad and it is impossible to say whether this would have been a viable option to him (we pick up this point in the paper's later discussion section). However, it is notable that, he chooses to point out there are a lack of choices available to him as a breadwinning father and Brad constructs an incompatibility between his main earner identity and that of an involved father. This excerpt is one of many that demonstrates the way in which the participant constructs their own breadwinner identity by positioning themselves *in* and *by* discourses of working parent and we can see, through a CDP analysis, the nuanced ways that Brad, as a father in early 21st century UK brings, meaning to combining caregiving and paid work. Brad uses a discourse of breadwinning and the associated responsibilities that go along with this category, in opposition to a more caring role, noting time (and paid work status) as the key sticking point. As Hanlon (2012) noted, many fathers construct caring in breadwinning (financial) terms. That said, as has been noted elsewhere, the gendered aspects of parenting are often implicitly and explicitly given in our dominant cultural norms, and the working mother (whether full-time or part-time) appears accountable for managing her working and caring responsibilities in a way that perhaps, as yet, men are not as expected to be (Miller, 2010).

Given that the new Children and Families Act (2014) aims to support working parents to meet the dual demands of employment and caregiving through new SPL rights, we note that these policy changes may play out in a variety of ways within different families. Using CDP as an analytic tool provides the means to illuminate the nuanced ways these policy

changes could be realised in the work-care arrangements of different families who, as the instance above shows, make sense of breadwinning within the intersections of full-time work and gender. In other words, parental leave policies have the potential to provide parents with shared opportunities to combine paid work and caregiving from when the child is born. Within the context of parental leave policy, these discourses of breadwinning illuminate the multifaceted aspects of family lives and decision making concerning negotiating caring for children, in particular considering how wider societal discourses are intersecting with the complexity of gender and parenting roles within the home. Indeed international comparative research on parental leave policies acknowledge that in Anglophone countries, such as the UK, implementation of policies to facilitate active fatherhood have not yet fully matured partly due to the composite of care, gender and employment at macro and micro-level (Baird & O'Brien, 2015).

Emerging from both projects was rich data concerning the problematic relationship between gender, paid work and caregiving. As we have previously discussed, in policy discourse, mothers are typically seen as the caregivers whilst fathers are seen as the financial providers, and the excerpts from working fathers above reflected this societal discourse. However, unpicking this discourse further in order to see the ways in which caregiving decisions are negotiated and accounted for on an individual and familial level is of interest for this research stream and forms part of what is missing from more general studies around work and family. Other ways that we can illuminate these gendered binaries with working parents is to consider the ways in which families arrange work-care when a child is unexpectedly sick. Rick is a 30 year old full-time employed sales consultant.

> *Rick: I'd like to be more involved as a father, I would but I need to keep working hard and succeed to provide for my daughter*.

I: If your daughter was sick and you had to go (leave work), could you?

Rick: I think probably I could. There's girls in the office. Like we'll [male colleagues] have a secretary between 4 of us and she does it all the time. I mean I said the other day I needed to go because I needed to pick my child up because my mum was sick so she couldn't do it and neither could my ex-wife. In the end my boss said 'look just go'. Again this is really sad thing to say but in sales if you're bringing in figures and doing really well and you say, 'I need to go early' then your boss doesn't care. But when you are not doing well, that's probably when they are going to say 'No'. What I mean is as a man surrounded by high performing male team I need to perform at work that means my ex-wife or my mum normally see to my daughter when she's sick." (Rick, project one).

Here Rick details the negotiations between himself, his ex-wife, his mother and his employer at work when managing caring for a sick child. In this example Rick invokes specific gender categories of male colleagues in high demanding roles in comparison to women's roles (his secretary, mother and ex-wife) as a reason for prioritising paid work over caring for a sick child, again adopting the father as provider discourse. In the excerpt whilst constructing a generalised account using 'you', he continues in gendered terms; 'if a man'… in a male team' to provide justification as to why the care of his sick child 'normally' turns to one of the women in the family. For Rick, it appears that masculinity is tied in with working status, and his caregiving fathering role sits as secondary in relation to his role as provider.

In Rick's excerpt he uses language to construct an incompatibility of involved fathering and hegemonic masculine ideals of a successful, worker and family provider. Hearn (2010) suggests that notions of alterity or 'othering', such as that spoken by Rick about involved fathering, is evident in social policy as different men have variable relations and are

implicated in a wide variety of ways. Identity formation occurs through a process of 'othering', marking groups (women, as well as other men) as different and excluded in binary terms to hegemonic men (Connell, 2001). Scholarship on critical men studies notes 'the double complexity for men in that they are both a social category formed by the gender system and collective and individual agents, often dominant collective and individual agents, of social practices' (Hearn, 2004: 49). The 'blueprint' hegemonic masculinity such as the provider father are never absolute or fixed (Connell, 2001) and, as this data illuminates, different men approach norms to different degrees, inevitably producing paradoxes. For Rick this paradox is constructed as 'involved fathering' versus 'breadwinner provider'. Notably, practices, such as fathering, are culturally and socially located within political and historical contexts, reproduced through the daily actions and language, as the excerpts from Rick and the other fathers show.

The concept of hegemony has been described 'as slippery and difficult as the idea of masculinity itself' (Donaldson, 1993: 2) however in this paper it aids the study of gender systems at play for Rick and other fathers making sense of work-family dynamics. Whilst hegemonic masculinity helps make sense of Rick's particular versions of breadwinner father, using CDP to critically read the excerpt we see that he is reproducing its dominance in relation to involved fathering as another version.

Discourses of 'full time' fatherhood

The accounts from the fathers over these two data sets offer us an insight into contemporary fathering identities and one that is marked with issues around societal norms of gendered parenting, negotiations of masculinity and relational discourses around status, power, gender and routine everyday practices (Hearn, 2010). These issues are particularly evident throughout the interviews with the fathers who were the primary caregivers for their

children. The father who becomes the primary caregiver is seen as atypical and has to account for his position in a way that a stay-at-home-mother perhaps does not have to (Doucet, 2004). If we consider what the excerpts above suggested around the constructed nature of gendered binaries of the caregiving role, despite societal discourses of 'involved fatherhood', then the study of fathers as primary caregivers is particularly pertinent to issues around caring and work.

In the first excerpt, we hear from Craig, who is the primary caregiver for two young children aged 16 months and 3 years of age. The three year old attends preschool on a part-time basis. This excerpt deals with Craig's reason for becoming the primary caregiver. Prior to becoming a SAHD, Craig and his partner were in professional occupations.

> *"one of the biggest reasons, actually is, my wife did suffer with post-natal depression and it's funny because at first we were very, kind of, 'Oh we don't talk about this' and 'Well we're managing. We'll get through.' And actually, as time has gone on, we sat down and thought, 'Well actually, one of the best ways to deal with it is to be open and up front and talk about it.' So, and actually that would have been one of the reasons why we decided to make the change. That and I'm a much better cook than my wife too". (Craig, project two).*

As we discussed earlier, there are strong societal gendered expectations of parenting where mothers are seen as natural nurturers whilst fathers are seen as providers (Hegewisch & Gornick, 2011; Thomson, Kehily, Hadfield & Sharpe, 2011). As Locke (2016) notes, media representations of the reasons for becoming a primary caregiving father typically focus on monetary concerns as the sole issue. Yet, as we can see in the excerpt above, reasons for taking on this role are diverse. In the case of Craig, he constructs a strong contributing factor

in the decision was his wife's post-natal depression during her second maternity leave and their decision for her to return back to work early, whilst Craig took on the primary caregiving role. He presents this through delayed reporting of conversations that took place between the two parents and the joint decision that was made. During the interview, Craig depicts how he positively embraced the opportunity to be more involved in family life. This stands in opposition to common media depictions of fatherhood (Locke, 2016) but reflects much of the literature on modern fatherhood (Doucet, 2006; Sunderland, 2006; Finn & Henwood, 2009).

Full-time fatherhood brings up issues at the intersection of gender, power and financial status as the excerpt from Paul below demonstrates. Paul is the primary caregiver to his son, who is nearly ten at the time of the interview. Paul was previously a university lecturer but stopped working many years ago when he became the carer for his two elderly parents, who had subsequently died. Paul is answering a question from the interviewer as to whether he classes himself as a 'stay-at-home-dad' (SAHD).

"I used to. In a public meeting when I was introducing myself about three years ago, partly because now, I'm not on necessarily very good terms with some of the people at that public meeting, I really regretted using it, because, to me, it gave the opportunity for connotations about status and work, and the traditional notions of masculinity". (Paul, project two).

Note from Paul's account that he used to construct himself as a SAHD and ascribed that label when introducing himself to others. As Shirani, Henwood & Coltart (2012) note, SAHDs seem to not be as bound up with the economics of masculinity and fathering. However, the area that Paul was residing in was mixed demographically in terms of social

class and occupation. However, he sets up this story in temporal terms, that whilst he did this three years ago, he 'really regretted it' because he felt 'othered' (Hearn, 2010) by those in his community around his identity, masculinity, power and working status. That is, that these others bound traditional fathering (and masculinity) within this breadwinning discourse (Dermott, 2008; Dolan, 2014; Willott & Griffin, 1997). This is important given the new SPL in the UK because, as we have seen in the excerpt above, such fathers have to continuously navigate the current gendered norms of parenting and paid work and account for their role as a primary caregiver (Doucet, 2004). This then raises the question of how many men would consider putting themselves forward for this position. It becomes the task of the CDP researcher to examine the fluidity of fathering identities that are being constructed and intersecting with other demographic factors such as social class and familial income.

As has been documented elsewhere, whilst men are becoming more 'involved' in the care of their children, studies have demonstrated that men do not actually become as involved in the domestic responsibilities of the house (Hochschild, 1989). However, again using data from the first author's project, we can see how the father discusses managing time between himself and his partner in the early evening when the children are still awake. This excerpt is from Peter who is the primary caregiver to three children aged ten, eight and two. Peter used to be in an occupation that meant that he was away from home for weeks at a time. Due to a period of serious illness a few years earlier, when he was overseas, he made the decision that he wanted to be more involved in the care of his children which he gives as the reason for him adopting the primary caregiving role.

"she (his wife) goes early in the morning so she gets in for about five-ish. So I usually

have tea ready for us to be able to sit down or within quarter of an hour sit down.

Then by the time we tidy up it's sort of getting ready for bedtime. So I tidy up downstairs while she's sorting out upstairs. But that's more of a logistic thing

I: So it sounds like it's real teamwork, which is nice

It has to be. Because if not, we'd throttle each other, which we do every now and again anyway (laughs), like most people." (Peter, project two).

In this excerpt, Peter is discussing how he manages the domestic demands of early evenings with children and his wife who is the breadwinner. He begins by giving her working schedule that she goes to work early and can therefore be home to share a family mealtime at the end of the day. He then described how he continues with domestic work, whilst his wife takes over more intimate caring with the children (c.f. Latshaw & Hale, 2016). It is this quality time of the working parent that Dermott (2008) notes in her study of fatherhood, that it is the intimacy of the relationship that is important rather than the time spent. Dermott is discussing working fathers and their relationships with children but we can see it working for the mother here in her breadwinning role where both Peter and his wife work in partnership to ensure that they maintain both the domestic balance but also equal relationships with the children. Whilst Latshaw & Hale (2016) suggest that in families with a SAHD, gendered norms of parenting come into play when the mother comes back from work, the analysis here suggest that this joint parenting practice is a matter of 'teamwork' where the father picks up the domestic role (c.f. Hochschild, 1989 on the 'Second Shift'). Peter's nuanced account works to construct how he and his partner manage caring, working and domestic relationships. He formulates his response as one that the listener can recognise as a relational discourse of how tension and family duty are managed, before using a humorous turn of needing this routine or else they would 'throttle each other'.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This article extends scholarly dialogue initiated during the Community, work and family conference (May, 2016) in Malmo, Sweden about how two distinct research projects used Critical Discursive Psychology (CDP) to contribute the field of community, work and family research. Our examples have demonstrated an engagement with qualitative data, in particular CDP to present a richer understanding of the issues around fathering and shared parental care within new UK work-family policy horizons.

Both research projects present detailed insights into the involved fathering discourses challenging a notion of a benchmark policy agent (Chambers, 2012) predicated on traditional masculine concepts of the male breadwinner. Whilst the involved father has historically been subordinated and 'othered' in macro-level norms of caring and working in the family, the excerpts illuminate these voices of fathers struggling with the daily challenges of being involved fathers. This is valuable because it moves away from what Smart & Shipman (2004) helpfully described as 'visions of monochrome' in which homogenised families are characterised in policy in ways which are disconnected from lived experiences of everyday work-family negotiations. In part, this is a feature of UK's work-family policy, due to narrow focus of classifying policy agents in 'mother' and 'father' categories reifying homogenised identities (Chamberlain, Foxwell-Norton and Anderson, 2014).

Through CDP, the two research projects recognise shifting identities as endemic and inevitable to families and individual parents. Thus, as these transformations occur, there is a need for aligned work-family policy to change too. We argue that any review of SPL policy should incorporate a consultation process which captures a diverse sample of fathers including SAHDs and involved fathers. As stated earlier, the Fatherhood Institute (2010) did much to advocate for diverse fathers during the early consultation of SPL, however, given that 'masculinities [and femininities] come into existence at particular times and places

are always subject to change' (Connell, 1995: 185) it is timely to revisit these identities and experiences since the SPL policy implementation in April 2014. Without this, the UK work-family policy runs the risk of being unfit for purpose (Hearn, 2010), falling short of its claims to meet the needs of UK's ever changing and richly diverse 21st century parents (My Family Care, 2015).

Given that SPL aimed to give parents greater opportunities to combine work and care (DBIS, 2012), early evidence of SPL take-up, whilst limited, suggests, it has not been widespread due to issues of pay and perceived threat to father's career prospects (My Family Care, 2015). Cross country research shows similarities to France, with low SPL take-up due to lack of financial access for some fathers due, flat rate leave pay and a "hyper-maternalised" (Milner & Gregory, 2015) culture of parenting. One recommendation is the future implementation of father quotas, not simply optional shared leave. According to Brandth & Kvande (2009), father 'use it or lose it' leave quotas support the increase fathers' uptake and promote gender equality. The UK could learn from international neighbours such as Norway and Sweden where father quotas have provided some transformation in gender, work and care practice (Axelsson, 2014).

Future UK work-family policy research should engage fathers who have chosen to adopt the primary caregiving role for their children, discussing father quotas with them. Also, as noted in the earlier analysis section, Brad was not a SAHD dad but a full-time worker who felt restricted in his choices of sharing care due to parental leave rights at the time. It would certainly be fruitful to ask fathers who did not have extended fathering leave opportunities to reflect on the potential difference these may have made to their decision making about caring and paid work.

To conclude, having discussed SPL and father quotas, it is important to point out that these must be supported by ideological shifts to stimulate chain reactions in the life courses

of both mothers and fathers in all their rich diversity. In other words, work-family policy has an ongoing responsibility to meet the needs of fathers in their rich diversity because, fathers (and mothers alike) are both the products and producers of gender, work and caring discourses (Billig, 1991). Much can be learned about the construction and implementation of various parental leave initiatives by turning to countries such as Norway and Sweden. However, questions should focus on; the extent to which governments can intervene in how parents share parental leave and the impact of such father and mother quotas on promoting gender equality (Axelsson, 2014; Bjørnholt 2010). From this paper we have argued that adopting a CDP framework as part of a review of UK work-family policy will offer rich insights from fathers, recognising discourses as culturally and socially located within political and historical contexts, reproduced by fathers through their daily actions and language practices.

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