Because That’s What Daddies Do: Effects of Fathering Patterns on Sons’ Self and Gender Identities

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Abstract

*The present study included an open-ended survey format that targeted males between the ages of 18 and 26. The 25 participants who responded were asked a series of questions related to their relationship with their fathers in order to understand how their personal gender identities were created and influenced by their fathers. The findings show three major trends: How fathers become helpless, fathers’ influence of sons’ gender through words and actions, and how fathers influence their sons view of fathering and what it means to be a man.*

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Introduction

**Importance**

From a boy’s infancy, he continuously learns and absorbs ideas of what he “should” become throughout his life. These ideas develop into a constant, spinning wheel of thoughts, assumptions, and conclusions being turned over and over in his head. Initially, these conclusions are fueled by the ideas and visions of those closest to him, like family and childhood friends with whom he is particularly associated. As he matures into adolescents, medias and other institutions in society begin to impose their own expectations of what the boy “should” be like at his age. Ultimately, all of these influences come to one question; what is it that makes a “man” out of a boy, and even further, how do his paternal influences help him to arrive at those conclusions?

The relationship between a father and a son can be a wonderful factor in the lives of those who experience such bonds. The health of this type of relationship depends on the maintenance behaviors of both parties. Many factors contribute to the amount of satisfaction fathers and sons experience including love, affection, closeness, responsiveness, and attentiveness. In some instances, the bonds between the two individuals may be strong and the mentioned factors may be well employed. Sadly, not all fathers demonstrate all or any of these qualities to their sons. In the same way, their sons are not always willing to reciprocate. The communication phenomenon I have explored involves the effects of fathering patterns on sons’ gender identity and how it is created through father-son interactions and influences. The purpose of this study has been to examine the masculine gender traits exhibited by fathers toward their sons. Specifically, I have analyzed how sons understand their relationship with their fathers and how ideas of masculinity and being a “real man” are created through their interactions with one another. In these relationships, I believe that there is a great deal of uncertainty in how masculinity and ideas of “real men” are created and sustained. So, I have identified areas of research that shed light on understanding how these relationships are maintained including the culture of fatherhood, response patterns, negative relational factors, and how feelings are generated through use of language and expression of emotions.

**Rationale**

There is a widespread association in western culture that connects females and mothering to closeness and affection, however, men are perfectly able to produce the same effects. Belluck (2011) reports that men biologically change when they become fathers. Hormone levels change and their perceptions of their selves change to accommodate the new title, “father.” These changes present the idea that men naturally possess the ability to become good fathers, but will they use it effectively?

For example, Paul Johnson, a professor at the University of Southern Maine, is highly involved in his son’s life. Through reflection on this relationship, he realized the strengths and needs for improvement in his fathering techniques as well as his abilities to work through situations where fathering and other demands on his time clashed. This example shows how a father can potentially take the biological initiative given to all fathers and use fathering to produce satisfaction, not only in parental respects, but also in overall communication effectiveness (Johnson, 2008).

Some fathers, however, may place greater value on other aspects of their lives than they place on parenting. These values may include career, leisure, or commitments to other groups or people. Thankfully, in a study that surveyed nearly 1,000 men in the United States, it was concluded that though values independent of fathering are important, most fathers believe that these things do not compete with being a parent (Tichenor, 2011). This may be true, but there are deeper, more delicate feelings between fathers and sons that affect more than just the values of each person.

Miller (2011) reports that “care giving and the practices and associated responsibilities of caring change over time.” It is vital to understand that these factors are changing and to study the patterns of care giving, determine effectiveness, and propose improvements for the future of such practices. Relationships between fathers and sons, as mentioned, are delicate and maintenance-driven relationships, which require a great deal of care. In order for these relationships to survive, there must be some knowledge of how factors, such as masculinities and fathering patterns, affect the relationship and help to form each member’s own identity.

Symbolic Interactions & Masculine Expectations: Theoretical Standpoint

**Symbolic Interactionism**

Griffin (2009) defines symbolic interactionism as “communication through symbols; people talking to each other.” The idea of this theory circles around three main principles. First, the meanings we create and associate with things is based on the interactions we have from infancy. In other words, no meaning exists within an object or even concepts, but rather we learn meaning and choose to accept and retain it, or change it to suit our own needs and desires. These meanings are continuously shaped and revised with each interaction throughout our lives. For instance, ideas of masculinity are conveyed through use of colors in an infant’s bedroom and the clothing they wear. Also, phrases such as “you’re going to grow up to be big a strong like your dad” place expectations of what the child *should* become.

Second, language is the creator of meaning. We assign names to people, objects, and ideas. These names have no necessary connection to the object. For instance, there is no necessary relationship between the word *baseball* and thoughts of men, strength, and bravery. It is through the language we use in symbolic interactions that we form ideas of meaning.

Thirdly, that each person’s interpretations of signs is dependent upon their individual ways of thinking. The dialogue we have in our minds is where we ultimately choose what meanings to apply and how those meanings will affect our decisions about life and the things we do. Our thought processes make the difference between seeing and acknowledging, and retaining and reacting. For example, Samuel may see his father drinking heavily and becoming violent. Though this could most definitely affect Samuel’s perceptions of fathering and masculinity, it is Samuel’s job to sort through that information in his own way to determine how he will react to it.

With the three principles that Griffin has provided, we can begin to understand how interactions influence people’s identities and we see how the formation of individual *self* occurs*.* More specific to the topic of fathers and sons, we see that both characters in the relationship have a significant amount of pull on how symbols are created, interpreted, and retained. The creation of meaning begins with the paternal influences at birth and never ends, but continues, when the son chooses his own beliefs and values, which are then challenged as he goes through life and adds hundreds of interactions to his experience.

**Masculine Expectations**

Wood (2009) discusses the qualifications of ‘growing up masculine.’ These are the objectives that society demands males must achieve in order to be fully accomplished in their “manhood.” The first is “Don’t be female.” From their infancy, boys are taught that they should in no way behave or think like women and girls. Doing so would, by this account, expose him to ridicule and being made fun of.

Next, males must be successful. As they are expected to play sports and to play well, grown men are expected to be employed and to excel in their chosen professions.

Being aggressive refers to males who appear to be daredevils and are praised for being reckless. Being tough is seen as appropriate and necessary if boys are to grow into men who can beat the competition and ultimately rise above competitors.

Where would men be without sex? Men are characterized as wanting sex at all times and having multiple partners. Achieving this apparently increases masculinity for heterosexual males. Men who remain virgins or who abstain from other forms of sexual pleasure are seen by society as weak.

Lastly, being self-reliant requires that “real men” do not need other people to aid them in any way. Masculinity is centered around self-reliance and men’s’ need to break away from constraints and “be a man.”

In most cases, fathers model several if not all five of these “requirements” placed on males by society. These behaviors are characterized to fit into the masculine ways of behaving. So, when a father emphasizes how important it is for his son not to be female, be successful, be aggressive, be sexual, and be self-reliant, the son is likely to embrace those characteristics and use them in their own definitions of masculinity.

What Daddies Do: Review of Related Literature

**Fatherhood as a Changing Culture:**

Morman and Floyd (2002) define fatherhood as “a familial role that is historically bound, in the sense that it is subject to social, economic, and political influences that can change expectations for how fathers should act” (p. 395). In regards to father-son relationships, a combination of evolving expectations of masculinity and what it means to be a “real man” are proof that the way fathering is “done” is changing. Morman and Floyd (2002) suggest a change in historical beliefs about fatherhood, and with it, a new era of father-son relationships. For instance, stereotypical views of fathers and sons show the duo doing projects together and being outdoors and active, whereas more recently the typical strong, outdoorsmen view is not as prevalent and has been traded in for the image of the affectionate, close, caring father. This is not to say that all fathers are now affectionate and caring, however this type of fathering is becoming more socially acceptable whereas several decades ago, it would have been more rare.

Floyd and Morman (2000) suggest that change is being facilitated by way of what they call the combined modeling-compensation hypothesis. This idea holds that positive, nurturing fathering patterns learned from fathers should be modeled by men toward their sons. Negative, distant patterns, however, should be compensated for in the ways men choose to change their communication patterns toward their sons. The researchers found that men whose fathers were either very unaffectionate or very affectionate showed more affection to their sons either as a modeling of affectionate fathering or a compensation for unaffectionate fathering.

Fathers have increasingly become more practiced at noticing and attending to their children’s needs and they are growing in the amount of closeness they create. Fathers seem to be realizing the changes in the culture of fathering. It is no longer enough to simply be there and serve as an authoritative figure. The image of the attentive, open-minded, affectionate father has replaced the distant, unattached father and that is the hallmark of the current, changing fathering culture. (Miller, 2011)

**Father’s response patterns affect son’s relational competence:**

Ashbourne, Daly, and Brown (2011) suggest that responsiveness on the part of fathers is influenced by their prioritization of what is important among values and perceptions. As these things change, son’s ideas of masculinity are affected because his father’s level of value on responsiveness has changed. Beatty and Dobos (1992) continue in a similar thought process by referencing unpredictable response patterns’ effects on apprehension experienced by sons and fathers themselves. Apprehension is defined as a fear that something unpleasant will happen. In regards to fathers and sons, apprehension is the fear that communication between the two will cause unpleasant results in the relationship. Unpredictable patterns of behavior, in whatever context, are able to produce higher levels of apprehension, thus hindering effective responsiveness between individuals.

Foster, Reese-Weber, and Kahn (2007) relate the idea of learned helplessness perspective in which the frequency of hassles, such as apprehension, communication tension, and work-related stress, leads to fathers feeling that they are not succeeding in parental efforts. He may then choose to give up on seeking ways to manage stressful behavior. As he gives up, he may avoid direct communication more often in an attempt to avoid the apprehension that has been created. Ultimately, this creates a barrier to his son’s ability to move toward and create good relationships.

All of these factors including responsiveness, level of apprehension in communication, and frequency of hassles contribute to how the son’s competence in social interactions is formed and utilized. It is clear that with higher levels of hassle and apprehension, the son’s social interactions are likely to become less competent and effective. As emotional competence is weakened, so is one’s idea of self-identity.

**Frequency and intensity of negatives:**

As a result of the experiment involving fathers’ parenting struggles and their effects on sons’ social competence, Foster, Reese-Webber, and Kahn (2007) determined that both the amount and regularity of hassles cause fathers to express themselves in more negative ways. These results show that the more fathers are exposed to stress related to parenting, the less likely they are to be able and active in managing their stresses.

Both fathers and sons can create apprehension, which is a serious relational hassle. Once enabled, apprehension can remain a contributing factor in future relational satisfaction if left unmanaged (Beatty & Dobos, 1992). Consequently, apprehension and satisfaction are normally negatively correlated. For example, as apprehension increases within a relationship, satisfaction decreases, and vice versa.

**Fathers, father/sons, and their sons: generations of feeling:**

Foster, Reese-Weber, and Kahn (2007) report that the ways in which fathers cope are indicators of how they express themselves in either negative or positive ways. In addition, those levels of expressiveness contributed to their sons’ socioemotional competence; how they handle themselves among peers and ability to handle social situations effectively. Perhaps more importantly than social challenges, Morman and Floyd (2002) expressed that fathers felt more closeness and expressed more affection to their sons than those sons felt or expressed toward them. Chiefly, this appears to be the result of fathers’ lack of effective coping methods and the poor response techniques they employ in situations where the son is in need of more than just a paternal figure, but a father who uses every method at his disposal to keep their relationship strong.

Floyd and Morman (2000) explain that the amount of affection men receive from their own fathers is strongly related to how strong the relationships with their fathers were. In the same way, the amount of satisfying behaviors exhibited toward their sons is greatly associated with the intimacy, involvement, and fulfillment of those relationships.

Research Questions

**RQ1:** How do fathers communicate to their sons what it means to be a man?

**RQ2:** Based on the father’s behaviors and use of language, how does this communication affect the son’s sense of gender identity?

Methodology

**Participants:**

For the present study, the audience targeted was males between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six at a small southeastern liberal arts university. The only requirement in order to participate was that the males had a father whom they knew and that the relationship between them had a significant impact on his life in some way, whether positive, negative, or both. Participants were recruited through the use of social media publicizing and by physical advertisements placed around the campus of the selected university. Also, student organizations made of predominantly males were made aware of the study and provided with the information to participate.

 Through all recruitment efforts, twenty-five participants participated in the study. All participants were male. 95% were between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three and 5% were between twenty-four and twenty-six. Participants were mostly Caucasian with the exception of three African American participants.

**Procedures:**

 Though the use of a survey format is typically used for purposes related to quantitative study, I employed it as a qualitative way of reaching a variety of unknown participants in order to gain their views and experiences through open-ended survey questions. Keyton (2011) explains that regardless of which qualitative methodologies are used, they all share certain characteristics such as the interest in the theoretical aspect and how people interpret communication processes. Also, qualitative research, in any form, allows the researcher to use “interpretive lenses” to analyze and explore how communicators develop and create meanings from their experiences. These similarities are key in the grounding of my research method because they explain that qualitative research need not be strictly constrained to the typical methods associated with it such as interviews or focus groups.

 Originally, I planned to use interview methodology to gather information for the study. However, because of the nature of the questions related to father-son relationships, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) in charge of reviewing research proposals at my university ruled that the participants could be subject to psychological harm or emotional strain. The board decided that, for an undergraduate student, this type of research would not be appropriate.

 While the decision of the IRB did present an obstacle, I proceeded to convert the interview questions I wrote into open-ended survey questions. For example, rather than using interview questions to inquire about the participants’ opinions of their fathers, I used several rating scales where participants were able to rate their relationship with their father in terms of several different areas such as overall satisfaction, time spent together, and amount of affection shown. In doing this, I hoped to create a sort of interview setting online, figuratively speaking. The finished survey included several types of questions ranging from rating scales to open-ended questions that were answered with the participants’ discretion as to the length and content. All of the questions were written and transferred from the interview format by myself with some consultation from research mentors in the field of communication studies. (See Appendix A)

There were several issues that arose during the change between interviews and survey. First, the number of questions—about thirty with half being open-ended personal story questions—and the overall length of the survey proved to prevent participants from completing the entire thing. This caused some significant gaps in the findings because some participants skipped certain questions that were designed to interlock and were related to other questions. Therefore, without all questions being answered, it was difficult to link some participants’ experiences with the questions related to how they were affected by the experiences.

The main issue in this situation is the loss of the nonverbal communication and the opportunity to ask follow-up questions in order to gain a better understanding of the experiences the participants shared. The survey did not answer the research questions directly, but instead gave support for previous research mentioned in the literature review as well as provided several prospects for future research to be done.

**Data Analysis:**

Rather than switching to quantitative methodology to go along with the survey format of the research instrument, I chose to keep the qualitative aspect of my research goal and competed a thematic analysis of the responses given on the surveys. This analysis helped me to answer my research questions because I specifically crafted the themes based on the answers I looked for to the research questions, while still allowing new themes to arise.

 Themes were developed based on similarities in how the participants described how their fathers communicated to them what is to be a man and how they described their fathers behaviors in certain situations. Also, trends arose based on the participants’ perceptions of how they were affected by the interactions had with their fathers.

Findings

The goal in this research has been to understand how gender identity is created through father-son interactions and how those interactions affect the son’s sense of self. Through the qualitative survey conducted, I found three major trends related to the research questions and tying back to the research in my literature review. The first trend has to do with learned helplessness perspective (Foster, Resse-Webber, & Kahn, 2007). The second deals with the question of how gender identity is influenced by fathering patterns. The third trend supports the combined modeling-compensation hypothesis (Floyd & Mormon, 2000) and gives evidence related to what behaviors sons either want to continue with their children or discontinue. These three findings do not all directly answer my original research questions, however, they do provide further insight into the research of others and provides a solid grounding for further research on this topic.

**Theme I: How Fathers Learn to be Helpless:**

 The label, father, has multiple meanings and responsibilities that cultural traditional expectations have attached to it. One of these expectations involves fathers being expected to cope with stress in a way that is healthy and that does not discourage the rest of their family. This means that the father will be active in finding solutions, rationalizing the situation, and taking steps to understand his feelings and taking action toward betterment of himself and those around him (Foster, Reese-Webber, & Kahn, 2007). This can become a heavy burden, most especially when several stressors act at one time. Foster, Reese-Webber, & Kahn (2007) suggest that the more parenting hassles, the less rational the father will cope. This supports their idea of the learned-helplessness perspective; that a hassled father may start to believe that his fathering efforts are unsuccessful and therefore he gives up trying to cope with stresses.

 The results of this study yielded results in support of the learned helplessness perspective in that when the participants were asked to describe a time when their father was stressed or upset and his reaction, all of those who responded reported very similar reactions. The responses included, “He didn’t show it,” “he stayed away,” “he went for a drive,” “he stayed to himself,” “withdrawing,” “keeping to himself,” “hid his emotions,” and “became quiet.” These responses all have one thing in common; they show that the father withdrew from the stressful situation in some way rather than coping with the situation then and there. Of course, we do not know how he coped over time, which is something that can be addressed in future research, however the fact remains that he withdrew and that all of these participants saw it. The following question asked the participants to describe how their view of their father as a man was affected by his behavior during the stressful situation. While half of the participants views either stayed the same or somewhat increased, the other half’s view decreased in some way. This trend helps us to understand part of the answer to RQ1; that sons perceptions of what it is to be a man are affected by how their fathers cope with stresses. Therein is a solid grounds for future research on how such fathering behaviors affect sons’ own coping methods and ideas of how men should cope.

**Theme II: “Don’t Be Female” and “Don’t Show Emotion:”**

 The answer to RQ2 has been difficult to come by with the results that were given, however, there are hints in various questions’ responses about how sons’ gender identities are influenced by their fathers fathering methods and actions. Symbolic interactionism theory opens the doorway into understanding an entire world of symbols, signs, language patterns, and how we use them all individually and together in order to create meanings, reinforce them, and modify them over time. Father-son interactions have the potential to create any number of meanings in both the father and the son, as with any other relationship. It becomes interesting, though, when sons change their behaviors and perceptions of their own actions because of some language choice or action of their fathers. These changed meanings have the potential to stay with the sons for their entire lives if they are not addressed or reevaluated.

For example, one participant stated that he used to go to stay the night with friends on a regular basis. This was something that he enjoyed doing and seemed natural to him. His father, on the other hand, did not think that it was acceptable for a boy to attend sleepovers. He told the participant, “That is girly, only girls do that” and ordered him to stop. By issuing that command and ordering his son to stop an activity that he enjoyed simply because he deems it characteristic of the opposite sex, the father is affecting his son’s sense of what boys in general *should* do. This could potentially cause the son to understand what his father said as a fact, rather than his father’s own view. Foster, Reese-Webber, and Kahn (2007) explain that gendered behaviors that are acceptable by society are more likely to be modeled than those gendered behaviors that are traditionally associated with the opposite sex. So, it may be natural for a father who subscribes to traditional gender roles to act in the way that the participant described. However, an issue arises because he is affecting his son’s competence to choose for himself which roles he would like to be part of his own personal gender identity.

 Another participant described a situation where his grandfather on his father’s side of the family passed away. The participant stated, “He didn’t cry or show any emotion to his children. This is where I learned that men don’t cry, men do not show emotion.” Here, because of the direct reaction to his father’s behavior, this participant’s idea of acceptable masculine behaviors was changed. In a similar way, a question was included in the survey where participants were asked to state how acceptable certain behaviors are for men. Of those who responded, 56.3% thought that a man crying in public is unacceptable. How the respondents came to the conclusion that crying is unacceptable is unknown. However, study by Mormon and Floyd (2002) concluded that the father-son relationship is perhaps the most important predictor of sons’ future communicative behaviors. So, it is very possible that the percentage that found crying unacceptable were taught to believe that by their fathers. Further research could determine the origins of sons’ beliefs about gender roles how they are enforced.

 These results are related to the masculine expectations outlined by Wood (2009). The expectations that relate most directly to these results are the expectations that males “don’t be female,” and that they “be self-reliant” and not wear their hearts on their sleeves, for example. Mormon and Floyd (2002) explain that apprehension to communicate may be created and increased because of the expectations placed on males to identify with and act out the traditional masculine gender roles. These roles include the inhibited ability to express emotion and affection, the need for success, and a need for power and control. My participants possibly struggled with these gender roles that were placed in front of them like an exam they were supposed to pass with excellence. Further study is needed to examine exactly how sons respond to traditional gender roles, but these results certain support the claim that fathers affect their sons’ perceptions of what are and what are not appropriate ways for males to behave.

**Theme III: What Kind of Fathering Would You Model?:**

 Everyone who has known their parents and interacted with them for any amount of time has known certain factors that they like and dislike about the way their parents chose to “do their parenting.” Unconsciously, we constantly reevaluate our perceptions of the way we are “supposed” to act based on how our parents, in particular, respond to our actions. This relates to the reflected appraisal perspective outlined by Wood (2010), which involves our perceptions of another’s view of us. So, when we see our parents’ reactions to our actions, we may choose to reflect their opinions in the ways we change our behaviors. These instances are termed self-fulfilling prophecies (Wood, 2012). The turning point in life is when we begin to think freely of our parents and start to understand where we want to act and rear our own lives. At that point, which may be very different for different people, we choose whether to model the behaviors that our parents employed in raising us, or to compensate for them in some way.

The participants of this study were asked to identify things that they would like to continue with their children in the future if they choose to have them. Responses included encouraging them to have their own path and promoting a strong work ethic. The most common responses involved some form of teaching they would like to continue and showing support to their children in some way, but the responses were not specific to the types of these actions they would like to continue. They were also asked to identify things they would not continue with their own children. Responses included not making them feel neglected, degrading them, belittling them, and not using physical violence as punishment. The responses to these two questions support the idea originated by Floyd and Mormon (2000) that men whose fathers were affectionate and supportive will likely chose to model their father’s behaviors while those whose fathers were distant and unsupportive will likely compensate for the behaviors that they did not approve of. They will carry out this compensation in the ways that they choose to raise their own sons. By doing this, he is filling the “void” that his father left empty of whatever type of emotion or treatment he felt deprived of. Again, future research is needed to determine specific behaviors that participants want to continue or not, how those behaviors affected them through childhood and maturity, and also why they would like to continue them or not. Chiefly, these findings cause a claim to arise; that sons have both things that they will and will not continue with their own children and that these are the result of their father’s parenting behaviors.

**Summary of Findings**

 The three themes have provided excellent prospects and groundwork for future research, which has been a goal throughout the research process. Because of the change in methodology outlined in the method section, the results here are different than an interview method would have yielded and have proven to not answer the research questions directly. However, findings remain to be significant and the information here has given great insight into how fathers affect their sons’ self-identity. This seems to be the first of many future puzzle pieces that will be put together to create a series of related research, which will reveal significant result and insight into the world of father-son relationships.

Suggestions for Future Research

My study has been through many revisions, many brainstorming sessions, and many speed bumps. Some of them could have been avoided and others were probably for the best. There are several things that I would change and add to this area of study for the purpose of future research. First, if I am able to continue this research at the graduate level, I will hope for the opportunity to conduct interviews as my method for collecting data. I believe that having the opportunity to record nonverbals, ask follow-up questions, and guide the participants’ thoughts is essential in order to attain results that are new, rather than simply backing up past research with survey responses. The survey worked well and provided many prospects and support for research in my literature review, however with the loss of the in-person aspect, the possibility of understanding how the participants’ experiences with their fathers affected their gender identities was also lost. However, as a researcher, I understand that the subject matter is of a personal nature and that the university did not want to risk my participants or I being put into a difficult situation.

Another aspect that I would change has to do with the participants. If I were to create another survey to continue the research, I would like to include more preface information explaining the goals of the study. I feel that my participants did not know what information to provide in their answers because, in a survey, there are only the directions prompting the participants to agree or disagree to the terms of the survey. I feel that if the general purpose of the study is explained, then they would be more inclined to provide more related answers rather than rambling about topics that are irrelevant. Also, there was a great deal of unanswered questions. I feel that if the participants were given an informational preface, that they would understand why the questions are open-ended. If the study were using interview methodology, however, I do not believe that this would be an issue, as I would have the opportunity to explain question rationale to the participants if they do not understand.

Conclusion

It is clear after the present study that the relationship between a father and a son bases itself around several changing, growing factors such as responsiveness, affection, closeness, and attentiveness. I can conclude now that interactions between the two people are symbolic in nature and carry a heavy weight from the time of infancy and throughout the lives of both individuals. Also, I believe that the expectations placed on males, mentioned by Wood (2009) have a significant impact on how sons choose to create their own self and gender identities and that their father plays a part in channeling those societal expectations toward his son. Through the qualitative survey, I have explored these types interactions and expectations and provided proof of how perceptions are created within on one of the most historically significant relationships in the familial realm.

Throughout this entire thesis project, I have enjoyed seeing the pros and cons of preparing for and conducting research and how inspirations turn into thoughts, thoughts become ideas, and ideas progress into questions that have potential to be researched and to add significant information to growing areas of study. Though the process of my thesis has not gone exactly how I originally planed, the fact remains that results are better than no results and a research study is significant regardless of the state of the results because it is another learning experience; in this case, one that has been extremely insightful and important for me.

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| Appendix A |
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| **\***1. The following survey will require no external hardware or software. All informationthat you provide will remain anonymous. Please read each question and answer truthfully.ONLY MALES ARE ASKED TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY AS THE RESEARCH IS CONCERNED ONLY WITH FATHER­SON RELATIONSHIPS.By choosing AGREE you are agreeing to the following conditionsI consent to participate in the research project entitled: Because That’s What Daddies Do: Fatherhood’s Effects on Sons’ Idea of Masculinity and Gender Identitybeing conducted in the Department of Communication Studies by John W. Berry Jr.• I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time and to discontinue participation in this project without penalty.• I acknowledge that the general purpose of this study, the procedures to be followed, and the expected duration of my participation have been explained to me.• I acknowledge that I have the opportunity to obtain information regarding this research project, and that any questions I have will be answered to my full satisfaction.• I understand that no information will be presented which will identify me as the subject of this study unless I give my permission in writing.• I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand this consent form.I understand that if I have concerns or complaints about my treatment in this study, I am encouraged to contact the Office of Academic Affairs at Longwood University at (434) 395­2010 or Dr. Pamela Tracy at (434) 395­2238.mlj Agreemlj Disagree |
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| Father-Son Relationships |
| **\***3. What is your age range?mlj 18­20 mlj 21­23 mlj 24­264. What is your racial/ethnic background?mlj Caucasian (white) mlj African American mlj Hispanic/Latinomlj Asianmlj American Indianmlj Pacific Islandermlj Other (please specify) |
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| **\***5. Please rate your relationship with your father in terms of the following area.Very Dissatisfied Somewhat Dissatisfied Indifferent Somewhat Satisfied Very SatisfiedOverall Satisfaction nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj6. Please rate your relationship with your father in terms of the following area.Very little time Little time not a lot/not a little A fair amount of time A lot of timeTime spent together during nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkjyour childhood7. Please rate your relationship with your father in terms of the following area.Very Little time Little time Not a lot/Not a little A fair amount of time A lot of timeTime spent together now, nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkjas an adult |
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| The following questions will focus on your relationship and interactions with your father during the first seventeen (17) years of your life. Throughout the remainder of the survey, you may be able to list answers rather than answer in full sentences. So, please read the directions at thebeginning of each section and all of each question. |

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| Father-Son Relationships |
| 8. Please indicate the answer that best describes the mood or climate during your day­to­day interactions with your father during this time period.mlj Happy mlj Informationalmlj Sad mlj Discussion­orientedmlj Frustrated mlj Casualmlj Stressful mlj Formal/Detachedmlj Content9. Please describe a typical interaction that you had with your father during this time period. Discuss why this particular interaction stands out to you.5610. What were the subjects of the conversations you had with your father during this time period. (Feel free to make a list or briefly describe)5611. How comfortable were you during these interactions/conversations?Very Uncomfortable Uncomfortable Indifferent Comfortable Very ComfortableComfort Level nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj |
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| The following questions have to do with the relationship you had with your father throughout your life. You may draw from any time period during your lifetime to answer these questions.12. Please think of a time when you made a mistake or broke a rule. Describe the situation and how your father responded. Were you punished in some way?56 |

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| Father-Son Relationships |
| 13. In regards to the previous question about your mistake, how did these interactions have an effect on the quality of your relationship with your father in terms of the following criteria?Significantly reduced Somewhat reduced Stayed the same Somewhat increased Significantly increasedTime spent together nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj Kindness he showed you mlj mlj mlj mlj mlj Your dependence on him nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj Attention he showed you mlj mlj mlj mlj mljYour opinion of his nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkjcharacterYour opinion of his mlj mlj mlj mlj mljfathering14. Please think of a time when you accomplished something during your childhood. Describe the situation and how your father responded.Were you rewarded in some way?5615. In regards to the previous question about your accomplishment, how did these interactions have an effect on the quality of your relationship with your father in terms of the following criteria?Significantly reduced Somewhat reduced Stayed the same Somewhat increased Significantly IncreasedTime spent together nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj Kindness he showed you mlj mlj mlj mlj mlj Your dependence on him nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj Attention he showed you mlj mlj mlj mlj mljYour opinion of his nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkjcharacterYour opinion of his mlj mlj mlj mlj mljfathering skills |
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| 16. During your childhood, what sort of activities were you interested in? This question is open­ended and can include any hobbies, interests, etc. (Feel free to list things)56 |

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| Father-Son Relationships |
| 17. In regards to the previous question about your childhood interests, how did your father feel about or react to these interests/activities?5618. Did your father ever tell you not to do something or behave in a certain way because"boys don't do that" or "this is what men do?"mlj Nevermlj Rarelymlj Sometimesmlj Oftenmlj Always19. Were you ever accused of being feminine or girly? If so, what sorts of words were used against you? How did this make you feel? (Feel free to list words or phrases)5620. Recall a time when your father was sad or stressed for some reason. Briefly, describe how he responded.5621. How did his response to sadness or stress affect your view of him as a man?Significantly reduced Somewhat reduced Stayed the same Somewhat increased Significantly increasedYour view of your father as nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkja man22. Are there any other interactions that happened in the past between you and your father than stand out as being memorable and/or significant?What were the event(s) and why were they memorable and/or significant?56 |
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| The following questions have to do with your relationship with your father from the time you entered college until the present. |

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| Father-Son Relationships |
| 23. What interests and/or activities do you enjoy now as a college student? (Feel free to list)5624. In regards to the previous question about your current interests/activities, do you believe that your father approves of the activities you described? Why or why not?5625. How do you think your father feels about the path you have chosen in college/life? Does he approve, disapprove, or is he indifferent? Explain.56 |
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| 26. Please indicate whether you feel that the following actions or qualities are acceptable as a man/for men.SomewhatVery Unacceptable Does not matter Somewhat acceptable Very Acceptable unacceptableHugging other males nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj Wearing camouflage mlj mlj mlj mlj mlj Crying in public nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj Wearing pink mlj mlj mlj mlj mlj Enjoying shopping nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj Having mlj mlj mlj mlj mljmanicures/pedicuresWearing skinny jeans nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj Wearing makeup mlj mlj mlj mlj mlj Driving sports cars nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkj nmlkjBeing dominate in mlj mlj mlj mlj mljrelationships27. Do you see yourself being a father in the future?mlj Yesmlj No |

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| Father-Son Relationships |
| 28. If you would like to be a father someday, would you prefer to have a boy, a girl, or a combination of both as your children?mlj Boy mlj Girl mlj Both29. In regards to your choice of boy, girl, or both as your children, why did you choose the one that you did?5630. What kinds of things from your experiences with your father would you want to continue through the next generation with your son (or daughter if you prefer only girls)?5631. Are there any things that you would NOT want to continue or do with your son (or daughter)? Why?56 |
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