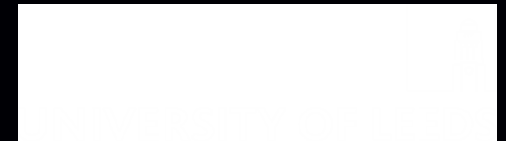




The Leverhulme Trust



Men, Poverty and Lifetimes of Care: Using QL data and secondary analysis to explore men's gendered routes through poverty

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'Masculinities, roles and transitions'

@dratarrant



Men, masculinities and poverty

- Masculinities in crisis' still?
 - Youth transitions/feckless, absent fathers/man deserts!
- 'Poverty is a gendered experience (Chant, 2006)
 - Miller (2007); Ridge and Millar (2009)
- Since the 2008 recession, poverty incidences between men and women are converging (Dermott and Pantiasiz, 2014),
 - Related to age and familial interdependencies
- Little evidence about:
 - The relationship between men, masculinities and poverty (Bennett and Daly, 2014) and
 - Masculinity and class (Morgan, 2006)

What we do know

- Poverty has particular impacts on men's physical and emotional health,
- Higher rates of heart disease, alcohol abuse and suicide,
- Men are particularly affected by stress;
 - Related to being unable to fulfill a provider role when employment prospects are limited (e.g. Yeandle *et al*, 2003)
 - Managing debt and low-income (Goode, 2012; Pascall, 2008),
- Poverty and low-income work emasculates men and they risk falling short of cultural expectations about what it means to be a man (Fodor, 2006; Strier, 2014).

Research questions

- 1) What are the routine care responsibilities of men in low-income localities and what resources and constraints affect how they 'do' family and care on an everyday basis?
- 2) How do culture, gender, class and personal biographies impact on, and give meaning to their experience of caring (giving and receiving) over time and how do these translate within family networks?
- 3) How might current policy and practice solutions be developed to create the conditions in which the various rewards of caregiving by men can flourish, including in economically deprived families?

Overview of the Project

- “Men, poverty and lifetimes of care”
- Two phases:
 - Qualitative Secondary Analysis of two existing Timescapes datasets; Following Young Fathers (FYF) and Intergenerational Exchange (IGE)
 - Primary data collection – multiple interviews + mapping and photovoice



Summary of general findings

Multiple, yet distinct trajectories:

- 1) Teenage fatherhood and wider, local interdependencies across households,
- 2) Marry young women in the locality, become fathers to multiple children, described as 'crap dads', take and sell drugs, in and out of the churn of employment, prison stints, remain in the locality.
- 3) Second partners – protecting women from abusive ex-partners in localities.
- 4) Men hit by multiple rounds of redundancy, anger and depression, kinship carers – *“recession, it’s all the same to me son”* (Emmel and Hughes, 2012).

Providing protection

Then he, [ex-partner] said to [current partner], "Well come up to my house," and gave him the address where he was. So [current partner] did, just to prove the point of he can't push people around. But he never came out. And obviously we knew he was there because he was on a curfew and he had, er, one of them electric things round his... So he had to be in. So really he knows not to sort of confront me. Which I feel safe now, in that we, that I know somebody will sort of... That'll stand up. I mean [current partner's] not violent. He's far from violent. But he's like 6 foot 2, quite big. He's sort of scary.... and he, he's, he like treats the kids as his own.

Josie, age 42, wave 1, IGE

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Geoff: I know for a fact I won't work again, I won't work again now.

Margaret: And I, I want to go to work but I can't do it you see.

Geoff: Unfortunately I don't think I will and this is a, this is a, this is the hard part I can't get, get me head round, you know what I mean? This is the worst part for me because like [support worker] said, I've worked all me life and like I say I had to give up a good job up financially. I couldn't take it. There were so much pressure on me. The, the pressure I mean I admire any woman who will look after their grandkids or anything but, er, it's bloody hard work. Financially wise and everything else it's, it's tiring sometimes. I mean esp...especially obviously at our age it's not easy because financial wise and you just think you know you get like [granddaughter], I mean she's 12, don't get me wrong she's a nice kid but, er, "Can you get me this gran, can you get me that?" and you can't tell her, you can't just tell her, "Oh we're sorry we can't afford it darling"

Men's wider interdependencies

I: ...you stopped [younger brother] doing what you and [twin brother] had done (getting in trouble around the estate).

Well that's obvious, he's my younger brother, you know what I mean? I wouldn't let him do the things what I did when I was younger. I might not have been caught for anything like it, you know what I mean, but it still, I didn't do it, but I still want, I wouldn't want my younger brother to do it.

Jamie, son of Sheila (IGE), Wave 1

Brothers and
uncles

me first brother he's, he's in, he's, he's in Hull Prison...like all Uncles and all them have all been in prison and all that, you see. So...in a way I...seen it all. Like prison and...and it's horrible, you see. It's just...horrid really.

I: Yeah. Have you learnt anything from them then in a way, with them being in prison?

Yeah, keep outta trouble [laughs]

Andrew, father to 8 month old (FYF), Wave 1

Conclusions

- **Substantive:** Men experience poverty too and in specifically gendered ways,
 - Opportunities for alternative trajectories can be constrained, influencing ways of 'being a man'
 - Wider interdependencies play a role in mediating some of the effects of low-income life.
- **Methodological innovation:** QSA and use of under-utilised existing data (especially QL), might help us to work with different temporalities and extend the scope of evidence pertaining to the evolution of masculinities,