

Collett, Jessica, Kelcie Vercel, and Olevia Boykin. 2015. "Using Identity Processes to Understand Persistent Inequality in Parenting." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 78:345-364.

PRIMARY ARGUMENT: The author argues that the continuous inequalities in parenting is a result of the vagueness surrounding the identity standards for fatherhood, which ultimately grants men the liberty to interpret and define fatherhood for themselves, often in ways that disadvantage mothers.

IMPORTANT DEFINED CONCEPTS:

- Identity Standard: The norms for or requirements of a person's identity in a certain social setting or situation
- Self-Verification: the feeling a person experiences if their self-perception match their identity standard after going through a feedback loop of adopting an identity, engaging in behaviors fit for their identity in a social setting, and then getting feedback/ evaluations about their performance. The opposite of this is a self-discrepancy.
- "New Fatherhood": A modern phenomenon where fathers are encouraged to be actively engaged in family life by contributing to care work in the household and increasing commitment to their identity as a father.

PRIMARY FINDINGS:

1. Men with specific identity standards as "new fathers" tend to contribute more to care work in the household than men with vague definitions because they are able to translate such expectations into tangible behaviors.
2. Men with specific identity standards are much more likely to experience self-discrepancy than men with vague identity standards because they are able to locate the inconsistencies between their definitions and behaviors, thus allowing them to expend additional effort to enact their identity goals.
3. Men with specific identity standards generate greater commitment to fatherhood as they work to live up to such expectations, whereas men with vague identity standards give up or neglect their commitments towards family because of their inability to contribute.

KEY QUOTE: "This discrepancy, particularly in an identity that is difficult to discard given structural circumstances, prompts actors to make behavioral changes to work toward becoming the fathers they believe they should be. By investing more time and effort to live up to their expectations, fathers with specific standards generate confidence (e.g., positive emotion, efficacy) and commitment to the role while contributing to their households" (353)

QUESTION: How might men's expectations towards "new fatherhood" look like in different cultures and how may it impact the ways they carry out how they treat their children and household tasks?