**Intersectionality and Fatherhood: Theorizing Non-Hegemonic Fatherhoods**

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**Abstract**

Contemporary research on fatherhood describes the father as multifaceted and dynamic, shaped by class, race, gender, and culture. However, many critics point to the need for more inclusive research that addresses an array of non-hegemonic fathering groups and develops theoretical frameworks capable of describing the social contexts that shape their existences. Similarly, we argue for a revision of the ways in which these groups of non-hegemonic fathers are represented in research by combining research on fatherhood with a framework based on intersectional theories. We have used an Israeli case study as an example, as Israel is a country characterized by traditional models of masculinity and fatherhood expressed through hegemonic models of masculinity, on the one hand, and normative family models on the other. These models of masculinity occur in a fragmented society featuring a variety of ethnicities and cultures and high levels of ethnic and class inequality.

Keywords: Fatherhood; Intersectionality; Diversity; Non-hegemonic fatherhood.

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**Introduction**

Fatherhood has evolved in the last decades from a neglected area of research to a rich and prosperous topic of scholarship (Lamb, 2000; Fagan et al., 2014). Today, studies of fatherhood have flourished and there is a wide variety of themes, disciplines, populations, and theoretical perspectives to be found in the field (Schoppe-Sulivan & Fagan, 2020). However, despite the remarkable development of theoretical and methodological frameworks in this area, one of the main critiques regarding fatherhood research is the need for still more inclusive research and theory capable of tackling the magnitude of the diversity and complexity of fathering characteristics and representations, especially among non-hegemonic, oppressed father populations (Coley, 2001). Even now, mainstream theories on fatherhood have been developed mostly based on the study of middle-class, Anglo-centered, dominant and mainstream fatherhood. Non-hegemonic, marginalized father groups have not received the same amount of attention (Roopnarine, 2015).

In this article, we seek to address this shortcoming by using a more inclusive theoretical perspective to examine alternative types of fatherhood. To do this, we incorporate a framework based on intersectional theories into current scholarship about fatherhood. Israeli research on non-hegemonic, marginalized fathers functions as a useful case study: Israel has a clear dominant model of both masculinity and the family, but also a very diverse population of fathers—ethnically, culturally, and socially. The article is divided in four sections: first, a brief review of studies about non-hegemonic and oft-ignored groups of fathers; second, an overview of the current debates on intersectional theories; third, examples of studies about marginalized fathers in Israel; and finally, a discussion about the implications of this research for the development of an intersectional theory that acknowledges non-hegemonic fatherhoods.

**Literature review**

**Marginalized Fatherhoods**

 Until only a few decades ago, scholarship on fatherhood was missing from social research (Lamb, 2010). Various explanations are given for the current expanding interest in this scholarly field (Schoppe & Fagan, 2020). Some believe that this interest in fatherhood is a response to the absence of fathers in prevalent psychoanalytic and developmental psychological theories (Madsen 2009), which resulted in calls for a revision of the role of fathers in child development. Another explanation focuses on the impact of feminism, which marked a turning point in the history of patriarchy as the previously uncontested authority of the father/husband became a main target in the fight for gender equality (Connors, 2011). A third explanation deals with the massive decline in the level of commitment biological fathers show to their families in many countries, especially those from low-income ethnic minority groups in the United States (Roy & Dyson, 2010; Cabrera et al., 2015). The first two explanations deal mainly with middle-class, White, Anglo-centered, normative fathers in a heterosexual marriage; even now, most fatherhood scholarship still centers on “white, American, middle-class men in monogamous marriages” (Inhorn et al., 2014. p. 2). According to Ball (2009), the literature on fathering largely represents the experiences of middle-class fathers of European heritage; this occurs despite the fact that, globally, most fathers do not fit this description. According to the United Nations official statistics, nearly half of the world’s population—and probably half of the global number of fathers—lives on less than $2.50 a day, and 1 billion children worldwide are living in poverty (United Nations, 2019). Most theoretical work on fatherhood has overlooked these particular groups, and the existing research/theories used to examine these non-hegemonic groups of fathers is done through an essentialist, Western, and middle-class lens, namely, *responsible fatherhood* or *deficit theory* discourse (Roer-Strier et al., 2005; Randles, 2018). For example, studies show that even under the harshest conditions of oppression and abuse, fatherhood and family life was a vital resource that helped Black men endure the oppression of slavery (Islam, 2019), despite the fact that these men were usually portrayed as absent/neglectful fathers (Hilde, 2020). According to Griswold (1999), slave fathers may have played a vital role in Black family life, even though their power was tightly circumscribed by their White masters. In the same vein, Canadian indigenous fathers—one of the most excluded and understudied groups of fathers—suffer from the same stereotypes (Ball, 2009; 2010) as Black fathers in Apartheid South Africa, who were also portrayed as unreliable and absent fathers despite evidence to the contrary (Richter et al., 2015).

In his rich ethnographic studies, Oscar Lewis framed impoverished fathers in Mexico and Central America through a theoretical deficit framework of the culture of poverty. Lewis’ (1961) remarks show that impoverished fathers living in the *vecindades* (slums) tended to abandon their families; when they remained with their families, they minimized emotional bonding with their children (Waller, 2019). The culture of poverty portrays the father as a machoistic, authoritarian figure mostly inattentive to the family sphere; this type of father was thought to be an untrustworthy provider and an inadequate nurturer. Contrarily, Fanon shows how colonization destroyed traditional family structures and especially traditional roles of fatherhood, which often did not align with Western patriarchal values (Gibson, 2003). Drawing on his experiences in Algeria, Fanon’s works are significant for their contribution to the understanding of the misrepresentations of fathers and fatherhood by colonizers (Stanovsky, 2007).

Today, the lack of portrayals of non-hegemonic fathers across industrialized nations is not surprising, given that the role of the breadwinner is still a shared component of hegemonic masculinity (Nelson, 2004; Kimmel et al., 2005). Poverty, marginalization, and social exclusion are all risk factors to the psychological well-being of fathers (Anderson et al., 2005). These variables exclude many fathers from the privileges of the dominant gender status, to the point where low-income working fathers are unable to meet the hegemonic standards that still often dictate what it means to be a man (Strier, 2005, 2008; Barker, 2005). Nelson and Edin (2015) show how significant economic and cultural changes have distorted the meaning of fatherhood among the urban poor. Through detailed ethnography, they provide examples of the structural obstacles faced by low-income fathers in their family life. Studies have shown that working-poor fathers have to cope with difficult challenges in order to prove their economic self-sufﬁciency, which is usually done by holding a decent job (Baxandall, 2004; Crompton, 1999).

In sum, two distinct research traditions emerge regarding the fatherhood of men from marginalized groups, which we may term deficit theory and structural theory. These two traditions diverge on the cause of paternal dysfunction: the first focuses on the deficits of these fathers, whereas the second points to structural reasons. However, this explicit dispute covers an implicit agreement between these traditions: both accept the assumption that non-hegemonic fathers fail to adequately fulfill their paternal role. In this paper, we wish to challenge the assumption of the inadequacy of non-hegemonic fatherhood. We propose the use of intersectionality theory to elucidate the complexity of fatherhood cultures and behaviors under multiple systems of oppression, offering a more complex view of marginalized fatherhoods.

 **Intersectionality**

Intersectional theories are a call to understand complexity (Cho et al., 2013). This theory seeks to gage the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, all of which are thought to create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage (Rogers et al., 2013). The aim of the theory is to describe and analyze the ways in which intersecting sets of identity affect individuals, groups, and institutions (Shields, 2008). Intersectionality is considered one of the main current theoretical frames through which to discuss the interlocked relations between different layers of oppression. It defies traditional atomistic approaches toward the study of race, gender, class, and sexuality by addressing these categories as interdependent factors that affect and limit people’s overall life experiences (Anderson, 2011). As with other critical theories, it tackles issues of power, privilege, and oppression, but it tends to complicate simplistic systems of analysis by recognizing the complexities of inequality (such as the fact that individuals may enjoy some privileges while concurrently suffering different forms of oppression linked to background or identity). According to Carasthatis (2014), intersectionality has evolved into the dominant path to conceptualize the relation between systems of oppression which construct our multiple identities and our social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege. Intersectionality means a turn from essentialist and exclusionary views of identity and oppression (Hancock 2007a, 2007b) to work toward understanding the complexities of gender, race, class, and sexuality through the prism of difference (Zinn et al., 2019).

The term intersectionality was coined by Crenshaw, a Black feminist scholar, who claimed that feminist scholarship had largely ignored the experiences of Black women. In her view, feminist studies, practices, and activism had mainly centered on White, middle-class women (Crenshaw, 1989). Originally, intersectionality began as an explorative project to study the interconnection of different layers of oppression in the lives of women of color. Later, intersectional theory moved to focus on issues of social identity. Crenshaw, as well as Collins (1990), acknowledge that their theory rejects an additive model of identity. They seek a deconstruction of identities within oppressed groups in order to build a recognition of the deep complexities of identities and a reconstruction of said identities through collective political action. Afterward, Choo and Ferree (2010) advanced the intersectional theoretical project by addressing the range of ways scholars analyzed the social world.

Intersectionality has received its share of critique. Some call it a “buzzword” (Davis 2008). Others claim that its vagueness helps to depoliticize oppression. Some question the lingering association of intersectionality with women of color, which “obscures the very richness of the content—the multivocality for which intersectionality is known” (Hancock, 2007a, 249– 50). Interestingly, Crenshaw asserts that the intersectionality framework may provide a shared space for Black men and women to address issues of race and gender. In the context of this article we ask whether intersectionality—originally based on the critical study of women’s oppression—can be applied to the study of marginalized fatherhoods.

**Intersectionality, Hegemonic Masculinity, and Marginalized Fatherhoods**

This section examines the possible contributions and limitations of intersectionality as a theoretical construct to our understanding of non-hegemonic father groups. It also asks what the theoretical contribution of intersectionality to a deeper understanding of non-hegemonic forms of fatherhood may be. Christensen and Larsen (2008) suggest that the concept of intersectionality complements the concept of hegemonic masculinities in that it stresses the interactions between gender, class, and other differentiating categories, and at the same time articulates different power structures and their reciprocating constructions. Research shows that masculinity and fatherhood are both structured in part by sexuality, race, class, and age (Connell 1995; Hershey 1978; Plummer 1981). Differences of ethnicity, race, class, religion, and sexuality shape the structures and contexts in which fatherhood is enacted. Few studies of intersectional masculinities theorize gender as a hierarchy within which some men—and some versions of masculinity and fatherhood—are more dominant than others (Connell 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005). According to Connell, the authority, respect, status, and material benefits associated with masculinity—namely, the patriarchal dividend—are not distributed evenly across social groups. Accordingly, ethnicity, race, class, or sexuality limit the extent to which men are able to benefit from gender inequality. Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity has been especially influential in the deconstruction of essentialist and gendered views of masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is defined as a practice that legitimizes [men’s dominant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Androcentrism%22%20%5Co%20%22Androcentrism) position in society and justifies the subordination of women and the broader male population, and thus other marginalized ways of being a man. It is a configuration of gender practices which embody the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy. Accordingly, masculinity is framed as a contested, dynamic, changing, and hierarchical construction which is deeply embedded in class, gender, race, age, sex, and other divided and unequal social categories.

Consequently, fatherhood as a contextual, gendered, ethnic, and class-based construct is not immune to hegemonic, dominant societal images of masculinity. In this sense, intersectional theory can be seen as conducive to any intersectional analysis of fathers from non-hegemonic groups. Indeed, intersectional theory may amplify our theoretical understanding of the dynamics of the intersections of gender, class, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and other social categories in the enactment of fatherhood. As in the case of intersectional motherhoods, the construct of fatherhood is also arranged according to social processes such as marginalization, dominance, subordination, and other forms of oppression. In some ways, fatherhood reflects the social order as masculinity does. Hegemonic forms of fatherhood can be understood as formed in the intersections of gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and legitimated models of family organization, whereas other forms of fatherhood are relegated to the sidelines. These marginalized, subordinated fatherhood constructions intersect with gender and sexuality in the case of gay fatherhood, citizenship in the case of unregistered fathers, class in the case of working-poor fathers, or race and ethnicity in the case of Black and Hispanic fatherhoods in the United States. Such thinking is rooted in the idea of multiple fatherhoods which reflect the multiplicity of masculinity, the hybridity of other identities, and their embodiment in the hierarchical, unequal, social order. Research on men and fathers frames gender as interconnected with other variables of inequality. Thus, we believe that these two theoretical traditions—hegemonic masculinity and intersectionality—may allow us to challenge implicit assumptions regarding the inadequacy of non-hegemonic fathers. To illustrate our claim, we offer some case studies of fatherhood in Israel.

**Non-Hegemonic Views of Fatherhood: The Israeli Case**

Israeli fatherhood exists within the intersection of four dominant social trends characterizing Israeli society: a dominant model of hegemonic masculinity; a robust and pervasive model of a normative family; a diverse society, composed of a variety of ethnicities and cultures; and high levels of ethnic and class inequality.

First, Israeli culture has traditionally favored a particular model of hegemonic masculinity. This model is deeply influenced by Zionist ideology and by the ever-present Arab-Israeli—specifically Palestinian-Israeli—conflict. Therefore, Israeli hegemonic masculinity is dominated by the image of the combat soldier, and especially the Ashkenazi (of European origin) soldier (Grosswirth Kachtan, 2019; Lomsky-Feder & Ben-Ari, 1999; Sasson-Levy, 2002, 2011).

Besides the model of the Jewish-Ashkenazi soldier, many other contesting forms of masculinity have been described in literature. Ultra-Orthodox masculinity (Hakak, 2009), gay masculinity (Kaplan & Ben-Ari, 2000), and Mizrahi masculinity (Grosswirth Kachtan, 2019; Sasson-Levy, 2002, 2011) have all been described in relation to the hegemonic model. In the spirit of Connel’s conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity, alternative masculinities are seen as constructed in relation to the hegemonic model—they may be complicit, subordinate, or marginalized by the hegemonic masculinity, or protest against it, but are relational to it (Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2019).

Another significant aspect affecting Israeli fatherhood is the robust model of the normative family which characterizes Israeli society. One of the most prominent aspects of Israeli families is their size: the fertility rate in Israel is 3.11 children per woman—not only the highest among the OECD countries, but almost double the average for OECD countries (which is 1.7) (Anson & Ajayi, 2018; Okun, 2016). This high fertility rate, which has been rising in recent decades, results in large families with many children. Other notable aspects of Israeli families—such as high marriage rates, low divorce rates, low numbers of single families, and low age of first marriage—are not as exceptional as the fertility rate, but still emphasize the importance of the family in Israeli culture. This importance is expressed not only through these statistical data, but also through the centrality of the family in Israeli culture. Research shows that Israelis consider the family to be one of the most essential social institutions (Gavriel-Fried & Shilo, 2017). As Fogiel-Bijaoui & Rutlinger-Reiner (2013, p. viii) note, “marriage is perceived as the legitimate framework for bringing children into the world… The woman is constructed first of all in terms of wife and mother.” However, although Israeli familism devotes a central place to children and mothers, space for fathers is much more limited. While the participation of men in childcare and housework has risen somewhat in recent decades, it is still low both compared to women and men in other countries (Gont, 2007; Anabi, 2019; Kaplan, 2018). The centrality of the family does not open a space for men to expand their role as fathers; instead, it enforces traditional divisions of gender roles (Perez, 2010).

The third aspect affecting Israeli fatherhood is its diversity. Israeli society is comprised of a multitude of groups, separated along ethnic, national, religious, and class lines. Division is apparent between Jews and Palestinians, native-born and immigrants, Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Jews, secular, religious, and Ultra-Orthodox Jews, and other groups. One of the main factors fueling these divisions is the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which plays a major role in the relations between groups (Strier, 2015).

The fourth aspect is connected to the rising inequality in Israeli society. More than three decades of rampant neoliberalism have caused a steep rise in inequality, bringing inequality and poverty in Israel to very high levels (Lavee & Strier, 2018). Israel is ranked among the highest in both inequality and poverty within the OECD, severely impacting social cohesion (OECD, 2018). Poverty is not distributed evenly among the groups in the Israeli society, with some groups—especially Palestinian citizens and Ultra-Orthodox Jews—suffering from poverty rates of over 50% (Andbald, Gotleib, Heller, & Karadi, 2019).

These four particular conditions set a challenging background for the rise of alternative models of fatherhood in Israel. Very strong cultural perceptions of hegemonic masculinity, on the one hand, and the form and role of the normative family on the other, leave a narrow space for the development of a participatory model of fatherhood, with social division and rising inequality limiting the ability of men from excluded groups to influence cultural models on a nationwide scale. However, although this fractured and tangled reality limits the creation of nationwide models of caring fatherhood, at the same time it also enables the growth and development of alternative models of fatherhood within the margins. Two examples of such models may serve as precursors to the model of marginalized fatherhood.

Wagner (2017) describes emerging models of Haredi (Jewish Ultra-Orthodox) fatherhood. Ultra-Orthodox society in Israel is characterized by conservative models of gender relations. However, unlike most Western cultures, the Haredi culture does not idolize the soldier or the breadwinner as models of masculinity, but rather focuses on religious education. Haredi men are exempt from military service and receive a pension that allows them to refrain from participating in the labor market so that they can spend their time on religious studies instead. Combined with very high fertility rates, high levels of poverty, and a growing number of women joining the labor market, Haredi fathers are finding themselves in situations where they are often taking a large part in childcare and housework. However, as Wagner (2017) notes, these fathers do not adopt the secular-liberal model of ‘New Masculinity’ and ‘Involved Fatherhood’. Instead, they develop new perceptions of fatherhood and new practices of fathering, combining the need for paternal involvement with the Haredi rejection of modernity and the sanctification of tradition. Taking a major part in childcare and housework is not seen as an attempt to imitate secular-liberal ideals of gender equality, but rather as an attempt to preserve traditional values.

Another model of fatherhood emerging from the margins is that of Palestinian-Israeli fathers in egalitarian families. The Palestinian society in Israel is characterized as conservative, familyist, and paternalist. Khoury (2018) examines the experiences of Palestinian fathers in egalitarian families and describes their attempts to define their fatherhood between their conservative immediate surroundings and their life as part of a marginalized minority. Khoury finds that these fathers selectively accept elements from the traditional Palestinian culture and combine them with elements from Western (often American) ideologies of gender equality, creating a unique ideology of fatherhood.

These case studies show that fathers from excluded and non-hegemonic groups perceive fatherhood and practice fathering in novel and creative ways. Although they often deviate from hegemonic norms of fatherhood, they generally acknowledge these norms and combine them with perceptions originating in their own cultures in order to create their own paths to fatherhood. These cases call for more inclusive, context- and diversity-informed fatherhood studies by incorporating intersectionality into current scholarship on fathers.

**Discussion**

In this article, we propose a more inclusive and non-judgmental theoretical perspective to tackle the study of marginalized fatherhoods. Using studies of marginalized fathers in Israel as an example, we suggest that incorporating intersectionality into research will help develop a critical perspective on existing knowledge on fatherhood and the fathering practices of non-hegemonic groups. This may help challenge common representations of fatherhood in the margins as insufficient and lacking. The marginalization of non-hegemonic fathers in fatherhood studies is not limited to the scarcity of studies. The research that does already exist relies on conceptions of Western, White, middle-class fatherhood as the gold standard of good fatherhood. As a result, when marginalized fathers fail to conform to those standards, they are judged as lacking. However, as we have demonstrated, their non-compliance with these norms does not mean that they neglect fatherhood, but rather that there are alternative norms of caring for children and families. Considering the examples of fatherhood emerging in the Israeli context allows us a critical look at previous perceptions of fatherhood within marginalized communities. As discussed earlier, these fathers have been studied from one of two perspectives: the deficit theory and the structural perspective. From the perspective of the deficit theory, fathers from excluded groups are seen as non-functional and often bear sole responsibility for the insufficient care and lack of resources burdening their families. The disadvantaged position of children in marginalized families is attributed, at least partly, to the behavior of these fathers. The structural perspective challenges these perceptions by claiming that fathers from excluded groups fail to provide for their children and families not because of their personal or cultural shortcomings, but rather because of their structural position within society. Ethnic and racial discrimination, precarious workforce positions, and other forms of exclusion prevent these fathers from adequately fulfilling their role.

Although these two perspectives disagree on the source of paternal shortcomings, they implicitly agree upon their existence. Both agree that fathers from excluded and marginalized groups are underperforming in their roles as fathers. While they propose different reasons for this underperformanc­e, both theories agree that these fathers fail to provide the necessary support to their children and families—be it because of cultural or personal failings, or because of poverty, exclusion, and discrimination. We, however, wish to challenge this assumption of underperformance. Although many fathers from excluded groups do not conform to White middle-class norms of fatherhood, the view of their fatherhood as “underperforming” is misguided; instead, they develop alternative perceptions and practices of fatherhood, combining elements from the hegemonic culture with those of their own marginalized culture. From this perspective, fathers are not the source of their families’—and society’s—problems, as per the deficit theory. Nor are they helpless victims of outside forces, as structural theories portray them. Rather, we offer an alternative perspective that views these fathers as having identities, agencies, and capacities to develop an alternative model of fatherhood, including independent norms and practices of fatherhood.

We suggest that to analyze this alternative view of marginalized fathers, it is necessary to further the study of these groups using an intersectional theory. This perspective may contribute to identifying interlocking matrixes and vectors of oppression and privilege of non-hegemonic father groups, which are key to understanding the situation of fathers who often belong to a multitude of marginalized categories.

Thus, intersectional theories lead us to adopt a view that focuses on the matrixes of oppression that these fathers are subject to, on the one hand, and to the position of the fathers on the other. From this perspective, we can pay attention not to the ways people on the outside perceive the fatherhood of these men but to their own views, perceptions, and norms. From this position, we can understand the ways in which fathers from non-hegemonic groups combine their understandings of their position, insights taken from cultures they belong to, and hegemonic perceptions of fatherhood to create novel ways to care for their children and families in their complex positions of oppression.

However, applying intersectional theories to the study of fatherhood is not without theoretical difficulties. As these theories were developed from feminist perspectives, applying them to men and fathers is not self-evident or simple. From the perspective of intersectional theories, can men be considered excluded or marginalized on the axis of gender? The fundamental assumption of intersectional theories is that they are used to study and promote the standpoint of marginalized and excluded people whose voices are usually silenced. We believe that although these questions pose a substantial theoretical challenge for the application of these theories, this challenge can be overcome. Overcoming this challenge requires, first, applying the proposed theoretical perspective with an eye open to issues of power and oppression, and specifically to more complex systems of power. Acknowledging that actors can be oppressed and, at the same time, oppress others, and keeping a lookout for situations of this nature, may compensate for some of the theoretical hardship.

However, attentiveness to power relations is not sufficient by itself. The position of men, and specifically of fathers, in these feminist theories in general requires further study (Doucet & Lee, 2014). Although the question exceeds the scope of this paper, we believe that it is a necessary step in providing a better understanding of fathers, and men in general, in marginalized positions. We believe that a critical view of marginalized fatherhoods, based on intersectionality and focused on the agency of marginalized fathers, has potential both for research and for social activism. It expands the range of tools available for analyzing complex and intersectional systems of oppression, enables the adoption of a perspective “from the margins,” and encourages social action for structural change. First, the perspective of relegated fatherhood expands the range of tools for analyzing systems of oppression by applying the theoretical framework of intersectionality to fathers from marginalized groups. By doing so, it enables us to see the complex matrix of power governing the lives of these fathers—including the exclusion and discrimination of ethnic, national, or other backgrounds, precarious positions in the workforce, and conflicting gender ideals and norms. Moreover, adopting this perspective allows us to understand not only what comprises the matrix of forces affecting marginalized fathers, but how fathers contend with these forces, what meaning they confer to their actions and choices, and how what they consider fatherhood and fathering to be. By doing so, we avoid the dichotomy between the “deadbeat dad” of the deficit theory and the marginalized father of structural theories.

Finally, this theory may prove to be conducive to social action toward changing the structural social constraints ­­­of non-hegemonic groups by providing a shared ground for mothers and fathers to challenge systemic intersectional systems of oppression. Understanding the viewpoint of these fathers and hearing their voices, alongside those of their spouses and their children, opens new directions and possibilities for the formation of coalitions, social action, and social change. However, this paper offers but a first step in a long path. Applying this framework requires much widening and deepening. First, as we have mentioned above, some theoretical issues remain unanswered and require further elaboration—many more may also arise and demand answers. Beyond that, much empirical work is still needed in order to substantiate this theory and to give meaning to our claims about hearing the voices of marginalized fathers. Above, we have shown some examples of the required research. However, many more studies of many more marginalized fathers from a variety of backgrounds and situations are still needed for this theory to fulfill the goals mentioned above. To hear the voices of these fathers, this research must go beyond including them as research subjects whose voices are collected and curated by scholars; it must include them as research participants through participatory methodologies of research. Only in this way can the agency of these fathers be adequately represented, both ethically and methodologically.

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