Four Meanings of Fatherhood

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THE RESEARCH literature in psychology is rich with studies on the effect of parenting styles on the child. We know, for example, that parents who emphasize independence and self-reliance produce high achieving children (McClelland, 1961); those who use physical punishment frequently produce aggressive children (Steinmetz, 1979). We now know something about the effects of having a neglectful parent, an authoritarian parent, a warm supportive parent, and so forth.

In this paper, I would like to turn the focus on the parent, on the male parent in particular, by presenting him in a fourfold typology representing four different conceptions of the father role. I shall attempt to elaborate on these four father types along some critical dimensions. Finally, I will speculate on the personality and socio-historical antecedents of the different father types.

Activity and Affective Dimensions of Parenthood

There are many dimensions along which fathers can be classified, e.g., loving-hostile, restrictive-permissive, authoritarian-democratic. I propose to start with two dimensions chosen mainly for their conceptual simplicity, familiarity in psychology, and potential ease of measurement—the activity and affective dimensions of fatherhood. The activity dimension refers to how active a man is as a father, to his degree of involvement in the role of fatherhood. The affective dimension refers to the emotional tone of his involvement with the role; whether he positively relishes it or negatively disdains it. For purposes of our conceptual analysis, we shall classify fathers on the activity dimension as either high or low. On the affective dimension, fathers shall be dichotomized into positive vs. negative.

Note that these two dimensions represent two of the three dimensions in Osgood's (1967) work on the semantic differential; a tool with wide ranging applications in structuring the meaning of different ideas, persons, roles, and objects. The activity dimension here corresponds to his activity dimension, while the affective dimension corresponds to his evaluative dimension. Osgood's third dimension, potency, would also greatly enrich a conceptual analysis of the father role (how powerful is he?) but it introduces more complexities than we are ready to deal with at this point.

It should not be difficult to operationalize these two dimensions. Activity level could be measured in terms of the amount of time spent by the parent interacting with his children. It can also be gauged by the number of things that they do together, e.g., reading books, watching television, going to shows, shopping, eating out. Tests of his knowledge regarding his child would also be a good measure. Presumably a parent whose involvement with his child is high would know more accurately facts about his child such as his child's correct height and weight, his eating habits and preferences, his sleeping patterns, his preferred activities at home and school.

Affect could presumably be measured via scale items designed to tap the extent to which the parent enjoys the above activities. Does he prefer to read alone or with his child? Does he prefer to pursue hobbies such as stamp collecting or modelling aircraft alone or with his children? Does he enjoy involving children in activities like doing house repairs? Does he go shopping with his child grudgingly because there is no caretaker at home, or because he enjoys the company of his child? Is his outlook with regard to childrearing basically optimistic and positive or pessimistic and negative? These are all aspects of the activity and affective dimensions that could be included in the operationalization of the dimensions.

A Fourfold Typology of Fathers

By combining these two dimensions, we arrive at a 2 x 2 model containing four quadrants, each representing a unique father type. This fourfold typology is presented in Table 1. The first quadrant includes the father who is low on the activity dimension and negative on the affective dimension. He basically does not enjoy fathering and does not spend much time or effort on the role. His idea of fatherhood does not go much beyond the biological. Fatherhood to him is more or less equated with the siring of, and providing for offspring. I shall therefore call this type of father the PROCREATOR.

Through much of history, fathers have mainly been procreators. History is replete with harems wherein a king may not even know all his children. The machismo mystique through centuries tends to view fatherhood as basically a sign of virility wherein the act of procreating is seen as an end in itself. High infant mortality may have contributed to this state of affairs as it would be in a man's best sociobiological interest to procreate as often as possible and to minimize positive affect with children whom one might lose to sickness and death.

The second box includes men who are not very active as fathers, but whose affective involvement tends to be positive. This father type does not spend much time or effort in the role, but it is a role that he enjoys. I shall refer to him as the DILETTANTE. A good example from fiction is the father in the autobiographical novel of Betty Smith (1968), *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. Here a weak, alcoholic father is often out of the house for days at a time, but nevertheless has a warm and loving relationship with his daughter who apparently was left with fond memories of him. The overseas

Table 1. Affect x Activity

		AFFECT	
		Negative	Positive
ACTIVITY	low	**procreator**	**dilettante**
	high	**determinative**	**generative**

labor boom in the Philippines today has forced many fathers into the dilettante quadrant. The fathers, visiting in an average of one month each year, are nevertheless able to establish an affectionate relationship with their children (see Du-Lagrosa, 1986). The increasing number of marital separations also produces dilettantes as men separated from their wives leave home and the mother is left to take care of the children. The father, free of the stress that may accompany day to day child care and (with limited time to spend with his children), is usually full of warmth and positive affect when he visits his children.

The third box depicts a father who spends much time and effort on the job, but does not really enjoy it. Fatherhood is to him a task, an obligation, a responsibility to bear, perhaps even a mission. The task of fatherhood is clear-cut; there are definite objectives to be reached, e.g., his child must become a consistent honor student or a distinguished doctor or a superior athlete. I shall call this type of father the DETERMINATIVE FATHER because he actively seeks to control his child's destiny and steers him towards definite directions. John Stuart Mill (1924) was probably raised by a determinative father who subjected him to Greek and Latin lessons as well as higher mathematics at what would be preschool years for other children. B.F. Skinner (1967) may also have been one as he raised his infant daughter in the controlled environment of a "baby box," consistent with his theoretical beliefs as a psychologist. In a way, Pygmalion fantasies and Frankenstein dreams are symbolic representations of the determinative father.

The fourth box includes fathers whose involvement with their children is high and who react to the experience in a positive way. If one views parenthood as a major life transition and a crisis, as Erickson (1980) does, then it is also a definite opportunity for personal growth, an opportunity to learn more about oneself and an opportunity for fulfillment. Success in meeting this life crisis can certainly lead to heightened personal maturity and as Erickson theorized, develop in the person an important sense of generativity. Assuming therefore, that the positive affect of the father comes from this enjoyment of facing a challenge and hurdling it, I shall call the fathers in this quadrant the GENERATIVE FATHER. A good example of the generative father from recent fiction is Ted Kramer in *Kramer vs. Kramer* (Korman, 1978) whose wife abandons him one day, leaving him to cope with their son. The experience of raising his son turns out to be a maturing one as well as a fulfilling one.

In the next few sections of this paper, I shall attempt to further characterize these four father types by comparing them along some critical dimensions—what a child means to them, how they see their primary role as fathers, and the way in which their role as fathers contributes to their personal identities.

The Meaning of the Child to the Parent

Let us start by comparing what the child means, or represents, to each of our four father types. To the procreative father, the child first and foremost, symbolizes immortality. There is actually growing recognition that the siring of children makes it a little easier to face death. This is probably true of all parents and there are probably strong sociobiological reasons behind it, but for the

procreator, this aspect has more primacy than it does for the other fathers. To the lower socioeconomic classes, this represents important biological continuity and genetic immortality; to the upper classes, it further represents an heir, a continuity of lineage, of family traditions, of family prominence. In either case, the child is a PROGENY before he is anything else.

To the dilettante, his child is very much like a PET. He enjoys the company of his child, but at his own convenience. If things get stressful, he can always withdraw from the scene. Or, his interactions with the children are limited but playful as in Henry W. Longfellow's famous poem where The Children's Hour is welcome as "a pause in the day's occupations". Separated men who spend time with their children are often forced to become dilettantes. Having only one day a week to spend with their child, the stress of childrearing becomes minimal and in fact is probably quite enjoyable as he can plan exciting activities for his weekly visits.

To the determinative father, his child represents a PROJECT. He begins with definitive ideas of how his child should turn out and proceeds to make a project out of it. He might be doing it to prove a point, e.g., that his ideas about childrearing are correct. Or, he might also be attempting to reach an elusive goal through his son, a goal that he might have failed to reach himself, say a boxer who never quite won a championship might set out to train his son to be a champion and thereby achieve some vicarious satisfaction.

To the generative father, a child is mainly a CHARGE. There is a basic respect for the child as an individual. The child is not his to shape or mold into whatever he feels like. Neither is the child someone who might provide some playful diversion when he feels the need for it. Rather, the child is first and foremost, a responsibility to nurture and care for, in terms of what is best for the child. In Erickson's view, the child symbolizes the future and his nurturance of the child is at the same time a nurturance of the future of the family, society, and the world.

Primary Role of the Father

Another dimension along which the four types of fathers differ is their view on their primary role or obligation as father. To the procreator, his main role as father is that of PROVIDER. Most fathers certainly see the role of provider as a major one, but to the procreator, it can often be the only one he sees. Having sired a child, he has an interest in seeing the child mature and continue the genetic linkage through future generations. Depending on his means and generosity, this can mean anything from the bare essentials to a good education to setting him up in business. Of course, in some (but certainly not rare) cases, the father may not even feel any obligation to provide for his offspring. Some men apparently make a goal of siring as many children as possible either to maximize the chances for genetic immortality or to prove their virility without much thought as to how the children will be cared for. Such men are the ultimate procreators.

The dilettante father sees himself in a supporting role to that of the main caretaker, usually the mother. He is not to be bothered with the drudgery of day to day childrearing but is there to provide emotional support when he is needed, or to surprise the family or child with an oc-

casional treat. Essentially he is a FRIEND of second resort who the child can turn to when the main parent fails to respond to his needs.

The determinative father sees himself as a MOLDER of men. Whereas the dilettante gets involved only when he has to or wants to, the determinative father cannot leave his child alone. He has a whole range of ideas on what the child should wear, do, study, etc. Implicitly or explicitly, he sees the child as basically inept, or unmotivated, or worse, misguided and unable to make any decisions for himself. Many religious fanatics who hold a basically negative view of human nature tend to become determinative, believing that unless the child is continuously monitored, he will end up a "child of the devil". Abner Hale, the missionary father in James Michener's (1975) novel *Hawaii* was just such a fanatic who held a tight rein on all his children's activities (e.g., insisting that they wear warm "civilized" clothes in tropical Hawaii) with predictably disastrous results.

The generative father sees himself as a GUARDIAN. As such he is much like a protective custodian. Instead of providing and taking a hands-off attitude, he nourishes and provides guidance. Instead of occasionally helping out, he constantly watches over his child and is ever ready to help out. Rather than dictating the direction of his child's development, he is more like a gardener who cares for a plant and takes great pride in watching it blossom.

Sources of Satisfaction and Frustrations in Fatherhood

There are, of course, certain aspects and experiences of fatherhood that bring satisfaction to all parents, e.g., seeing one's children grow up beautifully, achieving spectacularly, becoming good persons. Aside from these commonalities, however, there are certain satisfactions and frustrations unique to each of the four father types.

To the procreator, his primary satisfaction is a sense of IMMORTALITY and the continuity of the lineage. Secondary satisfactions may also come from the proofs of his virility, and in some cases, the economic insurance that children may represent. (It is one of the ironies of life that those who give the least to their children are often the ones who expect the most from them.) His main frustrations come when his children (especially sons) fail to continue the lineage.

To the dilettante, his main satisfaction comes from the COMPANIONSHIP that his child provides. A child is much like a lifelong friend whom one can always count on for happy hours of fun and play. He also gets a good feeling when he is able to help a friend out. His main frustrations come when he is rebuffed by his children or when his children turn to someone else for advise or when they confide in someone else instead of him.

The determinative father, having definite goals for his child to attain, derives his satisfaction from the ACCOMPLISHMENT of those goals. His greatest frustration comes when his children's goals are different from his own and a child refuses to conform to his goals. His frustrations from such blocked goals can often lead to great hostility towards his children.

The generative father derives his main satisfaction from PERSONAL FULFILLMENT. This personal growth comes

from having successfully coped with the task of overseeing the development of a child. Of the four father types, it is the generative father whose goals for fatherhood dovetail the most with his child's personal goals. This is because he allows his children to define their own personal goals within limits. This personal growth aspect is often missed by people who note all the negatives of parenthood (e.g., Peck, 1971). But many of the harassments of parenthood are also often challenges to be met and success in meeting these challenges is often also a source of great satisfaction.

In an empirical study of the consequences of fathers' involvement in the family, Baruch and Barnett (1986) find that fathers who are more involved in family life experience a certain feeling of competence as a parent. They also exhibited greater sense of well-being which is operationalized to include higher self-esteem, more life satisfaction, and a family experience of richer quality. On the negative side, they also tend to become more critical of their wives' parenting.

Fatherhood and Identity

The roles a person plays in life often contribute in a major way to his identity formation. How does the role of fatherhood contribute to the identity formation of our four father types?

Baumeister (1986) in an incisive analysis of the concept of identity, delineates three major processes that contribute towards a person's definition of himself: (1) by assignment, as when one is born a Filipino; (2) through achievements—from simple ones like graduating from high school to complex ones such as establishing a financial empire; and (3) by the choices we make in life and the process of arriving at criteria that can be applied to making these choices; e.g., changing one's religion or arriving at a philosophy of life.

To both the procreator and the dilettante, whose involvement in fatherhood is limited, fatherhood conversely contributes minimally towards their personal identity. To them, fatherhood is what Baumeister would call an achievement via a single transformation. Just as a young man becomes an adult upon reaching the age of 18, so does a man become a father by siring a child. When he reflects on who he is, one component that gets included in his self-definition is: "I am a father." In a way it is not much different from saying "I am a college graduate" or "I am a driver."

To the determinative father, fatherhood is a project, a task to be accomplished. The contribution of fatherhood towards his self definition also comes via achievement. But unlike the procreator and dilettante whose criterion for successful achievement is quite simple (siring a child), successful fatherhood is much more complicated to the determinative father (having his child accomplish the things that have been mapped out for him). The degree of success he encounters in the goals he has set out defines his personal identity in a major way. The product of his efforts, his child, will reflect to a large extent the kind of person that he is. Success can be very beneficial to him and to the formation of a personal identity that is positive and attractive. However, a rebellious or uncooperative child or failure on the part of the child would usually be interpreted by the father as a failure on *his* part as well. This sense of failure becomes incorporated as

part of his self definition and might lead him towards a life crisis.

To the generative father, the experience of fatherhood can contribute to his personal identity by forcing him to reflect on various options in life and by establishing criteria by which to choose from these options. When one respects a child as an individual with his own preferences and ideas, one might be forced to rethink and perhaps reshape one's value system. Whereas one's value system has been sufficient as a guideline for one's life, now that one is to inculcate a set of values for one's children, the father might re-examine his value system first. Later, as his children grow up and get different ideas from peers and other grown ups, the father may be challenged by his children with regards to his value system. Some fathers undoubtedly are unable to cope with these challenges, but the open and flexible father should rightly view these challenges and the accompanying need to justify his values as opportunities for growth.

Some Personality Antecedents of the Four Father Types

Why are some fathers dilettantes and others generative, some procreators and others determinative? Since most men are at least in their twenties when they become fathers, some of their personality traits are already set and presumably play a major role in determining which of the four father types they become. In this section, I shall speculate about some personality antecedents that might be useful predictors of the different father roles.

The procreator is probably an authoritarian person. His concern over status hierarchies focuses his attention on his superiors while ignoring but expecting obedience from his status inferiors such as children. He is probably a believer that children should be seen and not heard. Those concerned with virility and immortality probably also have a strong power motivation which is one cornerstone of the authoritarian personality (Dillehay, 1978).

The dilettante could be suffering from a sense of alienation and at the same time feel a high need for affiliation. His sense of alienation limits his involvement in parenting while his need for affiliation is what propels him to want to be liked by his children. He seeks the love of his children but is unable to immerse himself fully into the whirl of parenthood.

The determinative father might be high on the need to achieve. As mentioned earlier, the child in fact may represent an opportunity for vicarious achievement or perhaps a chance to rectify some personal failure. His determinative streak also reflects a desire to retain control over most aspects of his life, and, by extension, the direction of his children's lives. Hence, he would probably score highest on internal control among the four types and probably also on Type A coronary prone behavior, which has been traced to a reluctance to relinquish control (cf. Strube and Werner, 1985) brought about by a feeling that they can always do better than others.

Following an Ericksonian framework, the generative father could be viewed as the product of six previous epigenetic stages. The successful resolutions of these stages and the legacies they leave with the individual all contribute to the making of

the generative father—trust, autonomy, initiative, industry, identity, and intimacy. Of these, I wish to emphasize two—trust and identity. Basic trust is a crucial component in the formation of the generative parent. The parent must first be able to trust the wisdom of nature and natural processes, the wisdom of the child, the basic goodness of the world around him. In terms of identity, the generative father must foremost have faith in himself in order not to feel threatened by the child as his replacement in the world, in order not to be overwhelmed by the prospects and responsibilities of parenthood. He should have the value commitments to have the confidence in his guidance of the next generation as well as the tolerance for deviations from his point of view. And lastly he should have the maturity to see him through the lengthy road of raising a child to adulthood.

The Father Role in the Philippines

On the whole, the Filipino father has taken a rather limited role in childrearing. This is especially so among lower income families. His main role has mainly been that of provider and disciplinarian (see Guthrie, 1968 and Licuanan, 1979). A study by Carunungan-Robles (1986) finds fathers with an even less important role as subjects perceived their mothers to be more nurturant, as well as more powerful and more punitive than their fathers. Carandang (1987) presents a detailed case study of a stressed family with a typically powerful mother and even refers to Philippine society as a matriarchal society. One should not be surprised therefore to find that Filipino fathers are mainly procreators or dilettantes.

Though the involvement of the Filipino father with his children may be low, I should point out that in Philippine culture, the siring of offspring is considered to be a major accomplishment; so much so that study after study (e.g., Morais, 1981) find that children are assumed to have a lifelong *utang na loob* to their parents for having given them life.

In a sociological study of impoverished urban families, Decaesstecker (1978) finds that the average woman in this study had nine pregnancies and eight living children. Some of them "had so many children they didn't know what to do". More than half of the children she interviewed had very minimal interaction with their fathers. In most cases, the children perceived their fathers as inaccessible or unapproachable. Some daughters even saw their fathers as threatening persons who were potential rapists. The majority of the fathers were mainly procreators. However, a substantial minority did report that despite the minimal interaction they had with their fathers, they felt sincere liking and affection for him. For these children, he was sought as a sympathetic listener or counselor to their problems. These fathers can presumably be classified as dilettantes.

Jurilla's (1986) analysis of the covert motives of rural men for parenthood utilizes some ideas from depth psychology and emerges with a portrait of the Filipino father as dilettante. In her observation, most rural men tend to be economic failures and feel insecure and threatened by their wives' efficiency as homemaker, entrepreneur, and breadwinner. The men therefore try to assert their dominance and masculinity by playing the role of sexual aggressor, withholding emotional support and intimacy from their wives while impregnating

them as often as possible. Their love and affection are then reserved for their children. The fathers' inability to take on responsible roles at home coupled with their playful relationship with the children qualify them as dilettantes.

In another informative study, Bulatao (1975) surveys the advantages and disadvantages represented by children to Filipino parents. While his subjects included an equal number of fathers and mothers, his findings are still of much interest for the support they give to our fourfold typology of fatherhood. The perceived advantages of having children collapsed into 16 factors are:

- companionship, avoidance of loneliness
- love and affection
- play, relief from strain
- general happiness
- maturity, adulthood, learning from childrearing
- incentive to succeed
- fulfillment; extension of self, own values
- pleasure in children's growth
- to carry out parents' aspirations
- assistance in old age
- economic assistance, general help
- practical help with housework, on farm
- bond between spouses; family life
- continuity of family traditions, name
- religious obligations
- social benefits

It is interesting to note that the primary concerns of our four father types appear on the list of factors. To the procreator, there is the continuity of family traditions and name, economic assistance and practical help. To the dilettante, there is play, relief from strain, companionship, and avoidance of loneliness. To the determinative father, there is the extension of self and the carrying out of parents' aspirations. And to the generative father, there is maturity, personal growth through childrearing, pleasure in children's growth, and enrichment of family life. Of course, there are many values on the list that cut across two or more of our four father types; e.g., all of them can take pleasure in children's growth, feel love and affection for their children, and certainly appreciate help and assistance from their children. However, the different fathers would differ in the emphasis they place on the different values that children represent.

Another important finding in Bulatao's study comes from his correlations between various indices of social status and the perceived advantages of children (p. 94). In his pageful of correlations, the biggest ones are those between social status on the one hand, and the perception of children as bringing the parent more maturity and learning experiences, providing an incentive for the parent to succeed, and enriching the family life on the other. These same generative values also correlate positively with urbanism, and to a lesser degree, with exposure to mass media. It would appear, therefore, that the generative parental role is more likely to be found among the higher social classes and in the more modernized regions of the country.

Historical Evolution of Father Types

The relationship between modernity and generative values suggests that there might be a historical movement from procreative fathers in traditional societies to generative fathers in modern societies.

Through much of history, both in the East and West, the dominant father

role has by far been the procreative role. The implicit philosophy underlying fatherhood was: "I produced my child; he is therefore mine to do with as I please." Fathers in ancient China up to the nineteenth century could sell their daughters into prostitution or concubinage. In ancient Japan, fathers could banish their sons from the house while keeping their grandchildren.

The family structure remains relatively stable over the centuries in the Eastern world where today we still find a propensity towards patriarchy, where filial piety is still upheld as an ideal, and where parents (especially the father) can still make major decisions for the children.

In the Western world, however, the relationship between parents and children has apparently gone through several transitions. Psychohistorians such as Aries (1962) and de Mause (1974) have chronicled these transitions, and the interesting thing is that they seem to involve a parallel evolution through our four father roles.

Through the early centuries of history parents widely practiced infanticide (cf. Durant, 1935), sold their children, accepted child sacrifices, and even sodomized them (de Mause). Here, the procreative outlook was obviously predominant. During the Middle Ages, parents started feeling more affection for their children though they still farmed them out to wet nurses (van de Walle, 1975), placed them as apprentices in foster homes (Aries, 1962), and sent many sons to monasteries. Parents had now become dilettantes. With the Renaissance, the apprenticeship system gave way to the school system and formal schooling (Aries, 1962). With most of the schools controlled by religious orders, the view of the child was that of a vulnerable soul who had to be vigilantly guarded and molded into a God-fearing and virtuous person, thus encouraging a determinative parenting style. Finally, in modern times, parents and families have become child-centered as evidenced by institutions and practices such as child therapy, de-schooling, children's rights, and even birth without violence (de Mause). Concomitant with this child-centeredness is a generative parental role.

These four stages in the evolution of parent-child relations have been labeled by deMause as the infanticidal, abandonment, intrusive, and helping modes respectively. DeMause notes that these changes in the tone of the parent-child relationship are characterized by increasing hostility of the parent towards the child, and greater empathy on the part of the parent to the child. DeMause further believes that each transition in the parent role presents an improvement over the previous parent role. This is based on his concept of psychogenesis, where individuals presumably learn from their experiences *as children* and try to improve on the way they relate to *their* children in the next generation.

Extensions to the Mother

While I have chosen to focus on fathers in this paper, I believe that the fourfold typology presented is also valid for mothers, albeit with modifications. Since mothers usually bear the brunt of child-rearing, it might be difficult to imagine mothers whose involvement with children is minimal. Hence, just as fathers are more likely to be procreators and dilettantes, the distribution of mothers will likely be skewed towards determinative and generative mothers.

Nevertheless, there certainly are procreative mothers who see their role as mainly that of bearing children. They bear four, five, six, even nine children. Among the lower classes, the mothers may become so involved in trying to scrape up a living that most, if not all, of the childrearing is left to the older children. The rich, on the other hand, have the luxury of simply assigning each child to a *yaya* who ends up knowing much more about the child than the mother does.

Dilettante mothers also certainly exist, some by choice and others by necessity. Some women professionals or executives routinely spend such long hours at work that they are only able to interact with their children on weekends. The overseas labor boom has affected not only our men but also our women. Many Filipino mothers today take jobs abroad, leaving their children behind to be visited a few weeks every year. These visits are usually warm, playful and positive in emotional tone.

Determinative mothers are plenty. Because of the way traditional sex roles are structured, it is more likely for fathers to become dilettantes and for mothers to become determinative. First of all, the latter's sphere of influence on the child is traditionally much greater. Secondly, her greater involvement in childrearing is apt to make parenting less fun and more goal oriented. As Dodson (1974) notes, the mother-child relationship is generally more businesslike while the father-child relationship is more playful.

Moreover, the mother's greater involvement in childrearing also allows the mothers a better chance to achieve a sense of generativity from parenthood. The greater interaction, the burden of problems posed to them by the children—these lead to a greater sense of satisfaction and accomplishment when the children all turn out well.

Summary and Conclusions

In this paper, I have tried to introduce a conceptualization of the father role based on the activity and affective aspects of fathering, resulting in a typology of four father types. I have also tried to analyze the Filipino father within the framework of this conceptual scheme and attempted to trace the evolution of the four father types through history.

In closing, I wish to contemplate briefly the question as to whether there is one father type that is particularly suited for today's society. The modern world of increasing transience, novelty, and diversity which Toffler (1971) foresaw almost a generation ago is now our world. Though many still view the Philippines as a traditional society, there is no doubt that our country is inexorably moving toward this common global future. With the pace of change accelerating in the modern age, we are now caught in what Margaret Mead (1970) has termed a prefigurative culture. Our children will be facing a future largely unfamiliar to us, and our life experiences as parents may be, for the most part, irrelevant to the world that our children will inhabit.

Who then is the ideal parent for circumstances such as these? He should be involved with his children to the degree that he can provide them with a sense of stability and anchorage. On the other hand, he cannot be too directive in that the children will have to make their own adaptations to what will be a continuously changing world.

All these point to the generative father as representing the ideal combination of concern and commitment. The best thing parents can do is to raise their children for general competence and adjustment. The guidance that positively involved but undictatorial fathers provide could very well be the form of parenting that gives today's child the maximum chance of coping with *his* adult world.

Note

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