



Research Project Proposal

Laurence Cawley

# Brave Faces

## An Overview

Just two per cent of families in the UK are classified as those of “lone fathers” (1). From the age of three until nine years old, my own family (my father and I) was one of them.

I might never have conceived of lone fatherhood forming a photographic project had I not seen a guest lecture at the University Falmouth by the Romanian artist Andre Nacu, who provided a fleeting glimpse of a piece of work he had done with a lone mother and her children.

“What about lone fathers?” Cried out a previously unheard voice inside me.

Indeed, Laurence, what about them? The starting point in answering that question, begins with my own father, Peter.

“What about you, Dad?”

His response - supportive, engaging and substantive as always - came in the form of an unpublished manuscript for a novel, called Brave Faces. In it, he tells the story of his marital break-up with my mother and our early years together.

## Objectives

Partly, I want to respond to his writing, and to our memories of those early years together, visually through the prism of collected photographic stories of contemporary lone fathers. More than that, I want to explore the realities - psychological, economic and social - of modern single fatherhood, and question society’s preconceptions about what ‘family’ actually means. What does it mean to belong? To ‘parent’? To ‘father’. To be nurtured and raised?

My most important audience is those to whom this project might matter - my father, his fellow lone fathers and the children, new partners and families of single parent dads. But I believe if I get my work right, there is a far wider potential audience for this work, dealing as it will with questions of loss, the dynamics of family and a softer, stronger, form of masculinity than that most often portrayed.

## Work in Progress

Thinking about this project has made me realise how much of my personal work has been a subliminal attempt to answer this very question. My work with my own daughter, Emma, charting her 16<sup>th</sup> year, is as much about our shifting relationship at the cusp of her adulthood and my own fathering of a young lass oozing with potential eager to establish

(1) Office of National Statistics. General Household Survey (2005)



her own place in this world.

And a micro-project I have done with parents whose children have taken their own lives, is about familial love and loss and, despite my own rationalisations, no doubt resonates so strongly with me because of my own mother's disappearance from our lives.

## Research

So far, so seemingly simple. But then you find yourself reading Claude Levi-Strauss on the concept of 'family' and you realise the idea of 'family' is, itself, very far from simple. Certainly, the conjugal family is the most common structure globally. But it is far from the only system. Among the Nayar of the Malabar coast, for example, family authority and raising of children rests not with the father

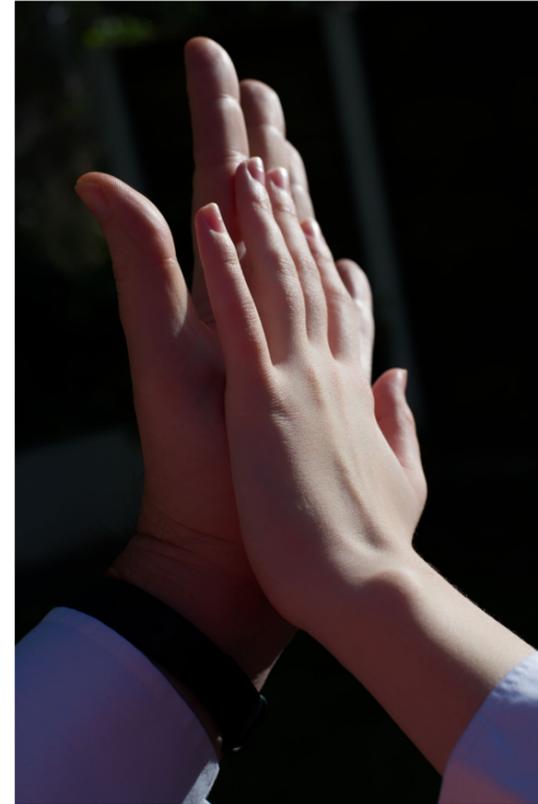
- a negligible figure - but by a wife's brothers (2).

My research strategy is triple pronged - literary, visual and data-based.

Data wise, I want to establish the numerical terrain of my subject area: How many single fathers are there in the UK? How many children do they have? How have they become single fathers - through widowhood or marital separation? What are their ethnic/economic backgrounds? What is the geographical spread of lone fatherhood? (See appendix 3)

The literary research will focus on the meaning of 'family' and 'loss' and photography's relationships with both. (See appendix 2).

The visual strand involves considering the various photographers who have dealt with



families, relationships, domesticity and loss. (See appendix 4).

The only photographer of whom

I am aware that has looked specifically at single fatherhood is Harry Borden, with his project Single Parent Dads.

His work is beautiful, and speaks volumes of the successful nurturing of which lone fathers are capable of. But it speaks less

of the very real struggles of single parent fathers - economic, social and psychological. These are the issues I want to explore visually and will, I believe, be the first to do so when it comes to single parent fathers. To this end, I am turning my research gaze to the likes of Christopher



Anderson ('Son'), Elinor Carrucci ('Mother'), Ilisa Katz Rissman ('Significant Others') and Masaki Yamamo ('Guts') amongst others. Ultimately, my work is about the dynamics of nurture between people and for that I am keen to cast my research net as widely as possible. Since a key strand of my project is a responding to my father's writing, it will be essential to explore the work of photographers who have similarly responded to written texts such as Anjali Pinto (responding to 'The Winter's Wife' by Jennifer Chang) and Jillian Pattinson's visual response to her brother's poetry,

## Skills

As part of this project I would very much like to make my work with a camera given to me by my father - a Linhof Super Technika. I'll admit there is a sentimental element at play here - the gifting of a superb piece of relevant equipment from a father to a son

(2) Levi-Strauss, Claude. (1985). 'The Family', in Levi-Strauss, Claude. The

View from Afar. Basic Books, pp 37-72.

and the metaphor of (film) development within such a project - but at a practical level there is the promise of high image quality from the 6x7 negative. It might prove impractical in use within much of the work I do and I have very little experience using it, but will include as part of my research plan the learning of its proper use and testing its applicability to the project.

Another deficiency in my skillset is marketing, and all that this entails. I am currently volunteering with the Francesca Maffeo gallery and will seek expert advice and direction potential eventual outlets whether for exhibition - possibly in the form of a pop-up exhibition informed by my lone-father geographical data - or publication, or both.

I would also like to create a dedicated website for this project during its creation where images made can be posted and

responded to as the project progresses.

I hope this will both engage my most important audience and be able to enable further collaboration with other lone fathers, who I hope will be encouraged to share their own experiences and perhaps allow me time to document aspects of their lives. This will also assist in potential pitches to outside organisations, whether exhibition spaces, potential publishers or funding bodies, in demonstrating the project's creative worth and established audience. In this, the creation of a virtual network of lone fathers I will be seeking advice from my wife Sarah, a director of marketing for a charity.

### Timescales

Most of the elements of my research plan overlap and are interdependent so will be pursued

simultaneously over the coming year. So, rather than a calendar of research inputs, I propose a schedule of research goals.

By June 2020:

- Complete data work on single parent fathers.
- To have a solid critical groundwork in the various meanings of 'family' and how it relates to my planned work.
- To have a clear idea of how this project will eventually be presented - whether in exhibition or book or both.

By November 2020:

- To have considered the various photographers in Appendix 4 and to have a clear idea of where my own practice fits in amongst them and the areas in which I will be ploughing fresh photographic ground.



- To have established a list of possible fathers to work with and for preliminary meetings and shoots to have begun.
- Created a website about the project and associated social media accounts to assist in

- the development of the project.
- Completed preliminary work on finding an eventual outlet for the project and to have developed a rough marketing plan.

- Evaluate project thus far and identify any gaps in research/ planning.

By April 2021:

- To have established a list of potential venues for a pop-up exhibition based on the gleaned lone father data.
- To have acquired the necessary skills with the Linhof camera to either feel comfortable with its use or to opt instead for digital image capture.

### Costs

**Research materials** - books £200

**Website domain** (self-hosted) £20

What follows is based on a flexible working assumption of working with five families in England each

requiring three days of periodic shooting though some possibly less, others more.

**Insurance** (equipment and public liability) £120

**Travel**  
£750 (Max 15 trips x £50 fuel)

**Subsistence**  
£150 (15 x £10)

**Accommodation**  
£500 (5 x £100 - I know people in most parts of the UK upon whose hospitality I could reasonably rely)

**Film - 120 Kodak Portra 400**  
  
£250 (45 rolls on the basis of 3 rolls per shoot)

**Developing** (self-scanning)  
£202.50 (£4.50 per roll)

**My time** (notional)  
£13,500 (45 days (two days of processing/editing per

day of shooting, based on a day rate of £300)

**Total (not inc my time)**  
**£2,192**

**Total (inc my time)**  
**£15,692.50**

(All images used in this document are part of my ongoing project "16", with my daughter Emma)



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## Appendix 1:

### Photographers

Sian Davey, Looking for Alice

Sian Davey, Martha

Christopher Anderson, Son

Harry Borden, Single Parent Dads

Emma Hardy, Homework

Hannah Altman, Indoor Voices

Ilisa Katz Rissman, Significant Others

Matt Eich, I love you, I'm Leaving  
<https://www.huckmag.com/art-and-culture/photography-2/matt-eich-photographer-family-i-love-you-im-leaving/>

Masaki Yamamo, Guts <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/photo-booth/a-japanese-photographers-view-of-life-in-his-familys-one-room-home>

Olivia Arthur, Waiting for Lorelai  
<https://www.magnumphotos.com/arts-culture/society-arts-culture/olivia-arthur-waiting-for-waiting-for-lorelei/>

Richard Billingham, Ray's a Laugh

Ellinor Carucci, Mother

Masculinities, Issue 7892, BJP

Family. Aperture Magazine, Issue 233, Winter 2018.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/17/us/how-poems-inspire-pictures.html>

<https://meanjin.com.au/essays/the-art-of-collaboration-poetry-and-photography/>

## Appendix 2:

### Literary texts

Cawley, Peter. Brave Faces. Unpublished.

Derrida, Jacques. (2001). The Work of Mourning, University of Chicago Press.

Durkheim, Emile. (1888). Introduction à la sociologie de la famille. Annales de la faculté du lettres du Bordeaux. 10:257-282.

Levi-Strauss, Claude. (1985). 'The Family', in Levi-Strauss, Claude. The View from Afar. Basic Books, pp 37-72.

Thorne, Barry. ed. (1982). Rethinking the Family. New York, NY: Longman.

Laslett, Peter and Richard Wall. eds. (1972). House-hold and Family in Past Time, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Skolnick, Arlene S. and Jerome H. Skolnick. (2010). Family in Transition. 16th edn. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Company.

Brown, Elspeth, and Thy Phu, eds. (2014). Feeling Photography. Durham: Duke University Press

Hirsch, Marianne. (1997). Family Frames: Photography, Narrative & Postmemory. Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press.

Hirsch, Marianne, ed. (1999). The Familial Gaze. Hanover: Dartmouth.

Olin, Margaret. (2012). Touching Photographs. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Orpana, Jennifer and Parsons, Sarah. (2017). 'Seeing Family'. In Photography and Culture. Pp 95-98.

## Appendix 3:

### Data sources

Families: The composition of families and households, including data on lone parents, married couples and civil partnership families. Household size and household types, including people living alone, multi-family households and households where members are all unrelated are also provided. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families>

<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/138ca035-a90c-4e37-80f5-4c73eeb6ae04/general-household-survey>

Photography Risk Assessment form



Please read the Risk Assessment Guidelines before completing this form which contains further resources, available from [The Photography Centre](#).

- Please save a copy of this form to your computer
- You will need to attach a risk assessment form to your Research Project Proposal and your Final Major Project Proposal.

Photographer's Name:	Laurence Cawley	Date(s) of Shoot:	From June 2020
Assistants' Names:			
Module Leader:	Jesse Alexander		
Location:	Various domestic locations around England		
Description of work:	Documenting the lives of lone parent fathers and their children. Anticipated that all photography will take place in a domestic setting.		

Persons at Risk

Identify all those at risk

Technical Staff:	Academic Staff:	Students:	x	Admin Staff:		Canteen Staff:	
Contractors:	General Public:	x	Visitors:	Estates Staff:		Library Staff:	
Cleaning Staff:	Emergency Personnel:						

Other:	Especially at risk:	The children of the lone fathers
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Check list				
Equipment X	Flash/tungsten	Stands/tripods X	Hot lights	Smoke machine/fire
Flammable materials	Risk of Fire	Welfare of Assistant	Welfare of model X	Working at Heights
Location	Transport to location X	Parking X	Vehicles/traffic	Weather conditions
Public X	Confined spaces X	Derelict Buildings	Animals	Children X
Tides	Compressed Gases	Water X	Noise	Chemicals

PRIMARY RISK ASSESSMENT Example			
HAZARD	What kind of hazards are there at the site or in your task? i.e. Light stand	RISK OF	What risks do those hazards create? i.e. Light stand falling over

HAZARD	Working with children	RISK OF	Harm to child
CONTROL MEASURE	<p>I will be applying the BBC's child protection policy in approaching this work which states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child at all times.</li> <li>Always act within professional boundaries - ensure all contact with children is essential to the project you are working on.</li> <li>Remember they are children first, and contributors or participants second.</li> <li>Never give out your personal contact details, do not 'friend' or 'follow' children you are working with on social networking sites.</li> <li>Do not assume sole responsibility for a child and only take on practical caring responsibilities such as taking a child to the toilet in an emergency. If a child needs care alert the parent or chaperone.</li> <li>Never lose sight of the fact that you are with children - behave appropriately and use appropriate language at all times.</li> <li>Listen to and respect children at all times, don't patronise them and avoid favouritism.</li> <li>Treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination.</li> </ul>		
HAZARD	Equipment - camera, tripod and lighting kit	RISK OF	Damage, water, loss
CONTROL MEASURE	<p>Keep an inventory of kit for each shoot and check each item back in at the end of each shoot. Use one protective bag for camera/lenses/accessories, one for the tripod and one for the lighting kit. Do not store water with kit. Keep all kit locked in the boot of car when not in use during transportation.</p>		
HAZARD	Trailing cable from Rotolight Anova/Legs of Tripod	RISK OF	Slips, trips or falls - myself or subjects (especially children)
CONTROL MEASURE	<p>Carefully assess each shooting location and position lighting power cable in as out of way positions as possible and explain to subjects where the cable is and cover cable with mat. If this risk, for whatever reason, cannot be mitigated, use the V-mount battery pack for the lighting. Do not leave tripod/lighting stand and light unattended at any time. When arriving at location, always spend a few minutes familiarising yourself with the area you will be working in. Check for rough ground, ice or slippery surfaces, obstructions etc before recording/filming on the move. Wear shoes suitable for the local environment and weather conditions.</p>		
HAZARD	Manual handling	RISK OF	Injury
CONTROL MEASURE	<p>Park as close to location as possible. Use safe lifting techniques e.g. plan where it is going, get close to the load, bend the knees, keep the back straight, and avoid over-stretching and twisting the back when carrying or placing the load. Wear suitable footwear with non-slip soles.</p>		

HAZARD	Vehicle/Travel	RISK OF	Injury
CONTROL MEASURE	<p>Ensure vehicle is properly taxed, insured and has required MOT certificate. Before each journey carry out basic vehicle checks - tyre pressures, all lights working, fluid levels.</p>		
HAZARD	Lone working	RISK OF	Injury, stress, harm
CONTROL MEASURE	<p>Carry first aid equipment Let partner know where I will be going, who I will be seeing, how long I expect to be working for and when I will be expected home. Text after each threshold to ensure my whereabouts are known and accounted for. Ensure mobile telephone is charged and take a reserve power pack on each shoot.</p>		

<b>On site risk assessment:</b> these are control measures that arose on your shoot	
<b>Emergency Information and Procedures</b>	
Phone	Charged mobile phone with full signal / Nearest Payphone / Landline
Medical Expertise	Are you or a member of your team First Aid qualified? Do you know where the nearest one is?
Emergency Procedure	In the event of an emergency dial 999 or 112 ensure that you or someone with you can accurately describe where you are (ideally nearest postcode)
Medical Treatment	Minor Injuries Unit, Falmouth Hospital Open weekdays 8am to 8pm A&E Treliske Hospital, Truro, Open 24 hours
Evacuation procedures	Ambulance can evacuate from main road.
Incident/accident reporting	All incidents or accidents should be reported to tutor at Falmouth University

<b>Assessment carried out by</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have ensured that I have reviewed the hazards and risks associated with this project and taken necessary steps to remove hazards where possible or reduced the risks associated with the remaining hazards to a minimum.</li> <li>I have recorded the main hazards, risks and control measures in this document.</li> <li>I have ensured that those working with me have been briefed on the nature of the tasks they are to perform, and are aware of the hazards associated with the task and the measures in place to reduce the risks associated with those hazards. (if applicable)</li> <li>I will continually assess hazards and risks 'live' on site to ensure that nothing has been overlooked or has changed since initial assessment.</li> </ul>	
Signed:	Date:
	April 22, 2020

<b>Assessment reviewed by</b>