

Fathers Are People Too!

We all bring our gifts to parenthood and dad's gifts are what we should be celebrating on Father's Day, as opposed to some misconceived notion that his parenting feats don't need to be acknowledged



I feel rather guilty. Last month I spent my time and energy writing an entire article about taking back Mother's Day. This month, I gave nary a thought to the male version of the holiday. When I first contemplated writing a Father's Day article, I joked with my husband that it would be woefully short and read something like this: Give him what he really wants: sex and bacon. He smirked and admitted that he'd be happy with either one. The article went to the back burner.

As Father's Day gets closer, however, I realize I've missed the mark. Men actually do have feelings about their competency as parents and the way the world views their involvement. Lately they've been talking about these issues in the news and in the blogosphere. Men are tired of being praised for engaging in the most mundane parenting acts like doing their daughter's hair while wearing a baby in a front carrier. Then they're belittled for their seeming inability to do other tasks like dress a baby in matching clothes.

I get it. I have a friend who's a stay-at-home dad. He takes care of his four young children while his wife, the breadwinner, goes to work. I have, on several occasions, told him how impressed I am at what he does. Why haven't I said the same to the woman around the corner from him who stays home with her four kids? It's because I'm a reverse sexist. The fact that I think all men want sex and bacon for Father's Day proves my case.

It's so easy to stereotype men as unfeeling lugs who care only about beer and boobies. "But we are," my

brother told me one night over a beer, as he recalled his bachelor party at The Foxy Lady. While this might be true for some, it's certainly not for all, my brother included. I've seen him, the father of two young boys, reenacting G.I. Joe battles and explaining to them why the original *Star Wars* is so much better than the digital remake (they're only 3 and 9 months old, by the way). These are things I could never do, nor would I want to do them, and I think his wife feels the same way. We all bring our gifts to parenthood and dad's gifts are what we should be celebrating on Father's Day, as opposed to some misconceived notion that his parenting feats don't need to be acknowledged.

On Sunday I'll take my husband kayaking with the kids, per his request. We'll grill a steak or two and the kids will shower him with homemade cards. I will tell him that I appreciate what a wonderful father he is, not because he changes diapers or reads them bedtime stories, but rather for the gifts he brings to our family, that he's revered because he can defeat the gargantuan level on *Plants vs. Zombies* and never misses a baseball game.

On Monday, however, I'm back to reminding him how he has no ability to multi-task and can't dress our kids for shit. I know I'm stereotyping, but let's be real: those stereotypes exist for a reason.

Enjoy your day, dads!