

## Images of Fathers by Younger Generation in Modern Fiction: Socio-Psychological Analysis

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### Abstract

The study of the role of a father in the life of the younger generation is becoming relevant in the world community. This topic is discussed by psychologists, educators, philosophers, and sociologists, and contemporary authors invisibly join this discussion. The purpose of the article is to explore what influence fathers have on the formation of children-heroes and to analyze the socio-psychological types of paternal images in the pages of modern prose. This study used a content analysis design and qualitative approach to analyze data. In addition, quantitative analysis was also used to visualize qualitative data using numerical values and fix elements of text content (frequency of different types of fathers). Seven literary works were used as data sources. Results show images of fathers who, due to their work, neglect raising their children, or hero-fathers who are edifying, demanding, and suppress individuality, but there are also fathers who are loving, caring, and who have a beneficial effect on children. In addition, socio-psychological analysis reveals three types of “literary images”: the not-at-home father, father-judge, and father-friend. The authors show that modern writers of prose for adolescents are reflecting on the influence of paternity on children, and they confirm the opinion of researchers that the social environment changes the types of fathers both in life and in literature. The type of the not-at-home father has become widespread. This socio-psychological type of a father forms such traits in the child as irritability, vulnerability, excessive emotionality, and shame for the father.

**Keywords:** *Paternity, modern children’s and adolescent prose, artistic images, the influence of fathers, types of paternal images.*

### Introduction

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the role of the family in the life of the younger generation has increased as never before. However, with the growth of technological progress, more and more children are losing two-parent families. Many children stay in shelters and orphanages, or are brought up in families where either a mother or a father becomes the head of the family and the only adult. Most often, fathers leave families, resting the responsibility for raising a child on mothers. The reason is the failure of men to be good fathers, fear of responsibility, and polygamy (Akulina, 2015).

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That is why the topic of paternity is important. The influence of fathers on the formation of the younger generation has been of particular interest for a long time, but the activity of researchers is evident at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Camarero-Figuerola et al., 2020; Chung, 2020). This article aims to bridge a gap in studying the influence of fathers on the development of their children by taking into account literary material. Scientists, psychologists, and philosophers such as Rousseau (1896), Cohn (1984), Freud (2014), Barkan (2009), Bocharov (Borisenko, 2010), Borisenko (2010), Hollins and Hetherington (Shaw, 2012), Brett and McKean (Brett, 2015), Raeburn (2015), Lukovkina (2018), Abramova (2018), and Hardach (2019) argue that fathers are no less important in shaping the personality of the younger generation than mothers, and they provide practical advice on keeping families together and raising morally healthy children.

The issues of paternity and raising children have worried psychologists since the days of Rousseau (1896), who outlined his views on education in the pedagogical novel *Emile, or On Education*. Sigmund Freud also reflected on the father's role in children's development in his work. Nash (1965) drew attention to the insufficient study of the role of the father both in the culture and in the psychological literature, on the basis of which he tried to eliminate such a gap. Atkins (1984) examined how a child, during infancy and toddlerhood, acquires a psychic representation of its father. Randal and Wade (1986) stated that the absence of the father negatively affects children, since the father always acts as a protector, despite the fact that the war era is far in the past. Johnson (1996) reviewed numerous socio-psychological studies that complement the image of the father and demonstrate reflections on the role of the father in the development of children. Diversity issues, specifically ethnicity, which are often excluded in typical reviews of father absence, are integrated throughout the review.

Later, similar studies focused mainly on studying the relationship between a mother and a child (Bowlby et al., 2003). Until the 1970s, little was known about the role of fathers in the development of their children. Interest in the problem grew in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but isolated studies are observed that do not give a complete picture of the problem. Thus, Hollins and Hetherington (Shaw, 2012) pay attention to the influence of biological factors that have an impact on the social role of the father, which leads to a crisis of fatherhood. Their most important function of the father was seen as economic support for the mother, which would be an "emotional anchor for the child" (Hardach, 2019).

To our knowledge, there is no single study of the role of men in the process of raising children and adolescents, since it is easier to accept the practical advice of psychologists and teachers than to analyze one's own model of behavior by observing the world of books. Modern scientists see in this the main injustice and omission, because the influence of the father on the formation of the younger generation is vital and, according to Raeburn (2015), even affects the formation of the brain. Raeburn bases his research on studying the brains of children raised with fathers. Ultimately, Raeburn asks the title question, "Are fathers important in raising children?" and his answer is "yes."

Many writers invisibly joined this discussion, since the role of "literary pedagogy" is indisputable (Brownell & Rashid, 2020; Shastina, 2020). However, few researchers pay attention to the literary image of fathers; therefore, the degree of knowledge of the topic under study is low: There is not a single study on fathers' influence on children's fate in modern children's prose. For example, Muchemwa and Muponde (2007) studied the image of the father in Zimbabwean political and socio-psychological literature without highlighting the influence of fathers on the formation of children.

The literary coverage of this problem can offer an important and useful example, especially since contemporary writers pay special attention to the formation of the younger generation in the pages of their works. The scientific novelty of this study lies in the fact that this work is the first to analyze and classify the images of fathers in children's and adolescent prose of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as well as to reveal the frequency of the appearance of a certain type of father in Russian and foreign children's literature and the influence of the father on the formation of the younger generation. To the authors' surprise, no studies were found based on literary material that examined the influence of fathers' images on the formation of children-heroes. For the objectivity of research results, the authors decided to use the works of various genres by both domestic and foreign writers.

The practical significance of the results lies in the fact that the classification of father types borrowed and tested by the authors can be used in the educational and scientific-cognitive process, as well as in other studies concerning the problems of paternity. Furthermore, the presented statistics on the frequency of images of fathers in children's literature can serve as a basis for psychological or literary studies.

### **Research Questions**

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What father images are perceived by children in modern children's and adolescent prose?
2. What socio-psychological types of fathers are represented in the literature of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

### **Literature Review**

In the last decade, due to various socio-political, economic, scientific, and clinical reasons, there has been a significant interest in journalism in studying the relationship between fathers and children; however, there are not many similar articles in the scientific community. There is an insufficient amount of empirical data, but they offer interesting interpretations of the above-stated questions of the research. Moreover, there are no articles based on literary material.

The emphasis in the study of the stated problem is shifted to the destruction of families (Bozhkova, 2020; Susilo, 2020), since due to the current trend of divorces, most children stay with either their father or their mother (in the overwhelming majority of cases), which inevitably leads to the impoverishment of the upbringing process, the growth of social problems, and problems of youth personal development. According to statistics issued by Cohn (1984), six out of 10 marriages end in divorce. Most often, the final choice of a child or a court is made not in the father's favor. McKean (2015) argues that children do not live in poverty with their fathers, they do better in school, are less likely to go to prison, abuse drugs and alcohol less often, are less obese, and have wider vocabularies.

Coles (2015) reflects that the number of children residing in single-father families in the United States quadrupled as a proportion of children's living arrangements during the past few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In general, research on single-father families evolved from qualitative studies focused on the well-being of single fathers to quantitative studies focusing on child outcomes and within-group variation among single fathers.

Rakhmanova (2008) notes that the role of fatherhood is decreasing due to the change of gender roles and the dominant role of men in the family changing. Women also have the right to be leaders, but they do not deny that the harmonious relationship between a boy and his dad allows for the shaping of character, feelings, professional self-determination, the formation of a worldview, as well as a style of behavior. The experience of these relationships can be both positive and negative.

Shaw (2012) also assumes that biological and social factors affecting fathers are directly related. This relation is expressed in the genetic memory of the male body: A man is born with a certain set of unconditioned reflexes that help him recognize paternity, and there are all the possibilities for him to master conditioned reflexes (accordingly, conditioned reflexes are social factors, unconditioned reflexes are biological factors). Scientists state that a biological predisposition to fatherhood, expressed to a greater or lesser extent, can suffer from the stress associated with the divorce process, so fathers begin to have a negative impact on the younger generation, and this is due to the contrast of behaviors: from overprotectiveness to indifference. There are directly opposite opinions regarding this issue. For example, Bocharov (“Psychological Aspects of Anxiety” (Borisenko, 2010)) and Cohn (“Paternity as a Component of Male Identity,” 1984) assume that if biological factors determine the psychophysiological readiness for paternity, then social factors regulate the implementation of this readiness. The specific style of paternity depends on many sociocultural characteristics and conditions; therefore, it varies significantly. Cohn (1984) assumes that for the successful functioning of the father’s role, its complete assimilation is necessary, which builds paternity into the stream of individual consciousness; in this case, the harmonious influence of fathers on children is possible. However, their research is based on the study of the impact of fathers on daughters. A woman may choose a future husband who resembles her father. In the image of a father, girls see an ideal man, a certain model, with which they will compare potential partners in the future.

Scientists agree that children, by nature, strongly believe their father, the words he says. Therefore, if the father abandoned the family, it hurts their unshakable confidence in a bright future. Many researchers are interested in the socio-psychological type of fatherhood, in connection with which a large number of classifications emerge. Today there are a large number of them, for example, the classification of Barkan (2009), which distinguishes the following types of fathers: “daddy-mommy,” “mommy-daddy,” “Karabas-Barabas,” “jumping dragonfly,” “tough nut,” “laid-back guy,” and “neither fish nor flesh” (Akulina, 2015).

Borisenko (2010) distinguishes the following classification of types of fathers, depending on the accepted social roles in the family: father-breadwinner, father-educator, and father-protector. For the reliability and completeness of the study, several classifications that are opposite in content will be used. One of them is the psychological classification of fathers by Abramova (2018), who

identified five types of fathers: father-friend, father-judge, father-breadwinner, father-psychotherapist, and the not-at-home father.

Another classification, which will be partially adhered to in this study, is a gemological classification by Lukovkina (2018). The researcher claims that the difference between stones is similar to the difference in people's temperaments. Talismans responsible for the physical condition of a person correspond to the characteristics of temperament and organism, which is the main criterion for selection. Agate is a stone most suitable for leaders, choleric people. Lapis lazuli is a stone of phlegmatic people. Despite the outward calmness, they have a strong core and character as hard as a diamond. They are good family men, they are stable and reliable, and always keep their promises. Such men do not punish their children but certainly educate them. Tourmaline is a stone of sanguine people. Fathers whose stone is tourmaline love their children very much, are constantly in contact with them, and charge them with positive emotions. Moonstone is a stone of melancholic people. Melancholic people are the most vulnerable personality type, influenced by external forces. Melancholic people seem to be saturated with all the cruel realities of life, and they concentrate negativity in themselves, accumulating and generating it. People of this type are distinguished by internal vulnerability and increased sensitivity. On the other hand, melancholic fathers are positive family men who are able to create strong family relationships, happy to read bedtime stories to their young children.

To the authors' surprise, over the past five years, there is little research on the influence of fathers on the formation of children. Since the vast literature on paternal influences has been thoroughly studied, in this article the focus will be on the literary material. In the study, the authors will adhere to the positions of the psychologists Hollins and Hetherington, who assure that the absence of fathers forces children to take on their role and blame them for the loss, while their love makes the child's personality resilient, strong, and stress-resistant. The authors also agree with the position of Bocharov (Borisenko, 2010), reflecting on the social decline in the father's role. For the convenience of analysis, the classifications by Lukovkina (2018) and Abramova (2018) will be applied to the analysis of literary characters.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This research is a content analysis design and uses a qualitative approach for the data analysis (Krippendorff, 2018). As content analysis, this study analyzed documents on literature and used

themes regarding paternity for the data analysis. The purposes of this study are to explore what influence fathers have on the formation of children's images and analyze the socio-psychological characteristics of paternal images in the pages of modern children's prose.

With the help of content analysis, the content of literary texts was analyzed, taking into account the theme of fatherhood and the selection of images of fathers, as well as consideration of the role of fathers in the formation of the younger generation, after which a quantitative assessment of the selected images of dads was carried out to highlight the frequency of occurrence of certain types of fathers in the works of prose for adolescents.

Such qualitative and quantitative approaches made it possible to identify the specific features of paternal images and prove their influence on the formation of the personality of the younger generation. This study reflects the contemporary social reality predicted in literary texts.

### Sources of Data

The source of the study was the corpus: modern children's prose, the study of the images of fathers, the qualities of their personality, which are capable of influencing the growing children. Qualitative data were analyzed, namely, seven images of fathers (Table 1).

**Table 1.**

#### *Sources of Data*

#	Author	Name of literary work	Main character (name)	Father
Children's prose				
1	Sush	"Dad by My Side"	Daughter	Father without name and indication of profession
2	Markus Mayaluoma	"Dad, Let's Go Pick Mushrooms"	Son and daughter	Father without name and indication of profession
3	Iva Procházková	"Granny with Wings"	Son Elias	Father is a programmer who creates computer games
Adolescent prose				
4	Tatyana Menshchikova	"My Father Lit the Stars"	Son Snail (nickname)	Technical school teacher
5	Sara Pennypacker	"Pax"	Son Peter	Military father
6	Elena Ozhich	"My Dad is a Boy"	Son	Lecturer, PhD in philology
7	Anna Nikolskaya	"Papateka"	Son Vitya Polovinkin	Stay-at-home dad

**Data Collection Procedure**

To collect data, this study includes five general stages of work as follows: (1) Analysis of domestic and foreign publications on the problem of fathers' influence on the formation of children. This aspect made it possible to see that there are no studies on a similar topic based on the material of children's and adolescent literature; (2) Selection of texts. The authors have selected works of modern children's and adolescent prose, highlighting the influence of fathers on the formation of the younger generation; (3) Selection of classifications of paternal images. A corpus of texts was formed. The total sample size was seven modern works; (4) Interpretation of works of modern literary texts. The quantitative method of content analysis made it possible to work with formal content units of the text and translate them into a percentage, reflecting the results in tables and diagrams. A qualitative figurative-thematic analysis made it possible to see the influence of types of fathers on the formation of the personality of the younger generation; and (5) The methods of generalization and systematization made it possible to draw conclusions, the semantic part of which is the confirmation of the unity of beliefs of writers, teachers, sociologists, and psychologists.

Specifically, data collection included the selection of factual material, the study of the images of fathers and their children in the works of modern writers who have received literary awards. For this purpose, the authors have selected works, the main images of which are fathers; after analyzing the characters, the types of fathers were established. The classification relied on the research by Lukovkina (2018) and Abramova (2018), who were focused on social and biological criteria for fathers' functions; therefore, the following types were identified: father-judge, father-friend, not-at-home father, father-psychotherapist, and father-breadwinner. Themes of analysis were classified into:

1. Influence of fathers on the younger generation cannot be denied. In families where fathers love and take care of children, spiritually and morally healthy individuals grow up. This is reflected in Table 2.
2. Indeed, the not-at-home father prevails, but a little less than father-friends. This means that fathers understand the importance of their participation in the formation of harmonious children. This is reflected in Diagram 1.



## **Data Analysis**

To answer the research questions, the socio-philosophical and pedagogical literature on the problem of the article was analyzed, and the authors made sure that there was not a single study that would give an idea of fathers' influence on the formation of children, as well as their types in modern children's and adolescent prose, although modern authors are also engaged in the discussion and cover similar problems in fiction. At the same time, for the analysis of contemporary works of fiction, the authors used the basic operation of content-analytical research, coding. In a literary text, as an array of qualitative data, codes-images were recognized; the images of fathers in the works were the unit of analysis, which allowed to make the description more concise in accordance with the task facing the researcher, and the set of recognized images will differ depending on the contexts of interpreting the work.

To answer the first research question, the authors analyzed fathers' influence on the formation of the personality of the younger generation, using the method of Krippendorff (2018) content analysis:

1. Defining objects of research: Based on the authors' research question, a range of texts were chosen, i.e., a sample was made, since the content has a large volume, because the subject of research was literary texts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
2. Units and categories of analysis are defined: The images of fathers in the works of fiction of modern children's literature were subjected to detailed analysis;
3. A set of coding rules has been developed: The modern literary era, as well as the typology of images of father-heroes, has become the dominant criteria for the inclusion of these works in the authors' research interest;
4. Father images were encoded using the Abramova classification (2018);
5. Interpreting the obtained results, based on the objectives and theoretical context of the research. Thus, answering the first research question, the second step in the content analysis process is implemented.

In answering the second research question and defining the frequency of types of fathers in modern children's prose, the authors also used the method of Krippendorff (2018) on content analysis; a quantitative analysis was made to visualize data using numerical values, fixing elements of text content (e.g., frequency of different types of fathers) by using a table or a chart.

## Results and Discussion

**Research question 1.** What father images are perceived by children in modern children's and adolescent prose?

For convenience and clarity, the results are introduced in Table 2.

**Table 2.**

*The influence of fathers on the formation of the younger generation (based on the material of modern children's and adolescent prose)*

#	Author	Name of literary work	Main character (name)	Father's character traits	Father's image creation techniques	Father's influence on the formation of the child character
Children's prose						
1	Sush	"Dad by My Side"	Daughter	Caring, empathetic, loving, strong	Gesture portrait, description portrait, color writing	Cheerful, joyful, loving, active, stress-resistant daughter.
2	Markus Mayaluoma	"Dad, Let's Go Pick Mushrooms"	Son and daughter	Sensitive, loving, caring	Speech portrait	Children know how to sympathize, love their parents, and selflessly help others.
3	Iva Procházková	"Granny with Wings"	Son Elias	Prudent, selfish, irritable	Emotional portrait	Sensitive, holds a grudge against his parents, hates computer games that his father creates, does not understand adults, envies classmates from happy families, is lonely.
Adolescent prose						
4	Tatyana Menshchikova	"My Father Lit the Stars"	Son Snail (nickname)	Technical school teacher; instructive, fair, cruel	Speech and gesture portrait	Lonely, irritable, stress-prone.
5	Sara Pennypacker	"Pax"	Son Peter	Shut-in personality, aggressive, silent, tired	Impression portrait, smell	Resentment toward the father, isolation, loneliness, an attempt to escape from reality.
6	Elena Ozhich	"My Dad is a Boy"	Son	Teacher; infantile, romantic, indifferent to his son	Grotesque, hyperbole, portrait	Irritability, vulnerability,

						emotionality, shame for the father.
7	Anna Nikolskaya	“Papateka”	Son Vitya Polovinkin	Untidy, grumpy, detached from life	Grotesque, gesture portrait	Irritability, shame for the father, anger.

Table 2 is made to confirm the opinion of psychologists Hollins and Hetherington, described in Shaw (2012), who argued that it was impossible to bring up a child with a fully developed personality without paternal involvement. Indeed, in families where fathers love and take care of their children—in “Dad by My Side” by Sush and “Dad, Let’s Go Pick Mushrooms” by Mayaluoma—children are loved and protected, they know how to give love, and they grow up as stress-resistant reflective personalities. This is confirmed by the writers of modern children’s and adolescent prose (Krylova et al., 2020). In “Granny with Wings” by Procházková, “My Father Lit the Stars” by Menshchikova, “Pax” by Pennypacker, “My Dad is a Boy” by Ozhich, and “Papateka” by Nikolskaya, children are irritable, lonely, angry, and standoffish due to their fathers’ detachment, selfishness, indifference, and busyness, and in the future this can prevent them from becoming good fathers to their sons, since the writers pay attention to the interpersonal relations between fathers and sons in six out of the seven works under study.

Thus, in the story “Dad is near,” a caring, loving father is presented, who, thanks to these qualities, brings up a cheerful, active, and kind daughter. In “Dad, Let’s Go Pick Mushrooms,” the father is very sympathetic, childishly vulnerable, and anxious, so the children reciprocate and grow up able to feel and sympathize. In “Grandmother with Wings,” the father is constantly busy developing computer games and has no time for his son. The father is irritable and selfish, and such an upbringing forms an envious child suffering from loneliness, vulnerable and offended both by the father and by the people. In “My Father Lit the Stars,” the father is grumpy, edifying, and uncommunicative, and these qualities form irritability and apathy in his son. The father in “Pax” experiences the death of his wife and withdraws into himself, turning into an irritable, aggressive person, bringing up a sense of guilt, isolation, and resentment in his son. In “My Dad is a Boy,” the hero is indifferent and infantile, so his son is ashamed of him and does not want to grow up like that. In “Papateka,” the father brings his son to irritation and resentment with his pedantry and slowness.

The father’s example is very important for boys and girls; the child adopts a model of behavior and learns to model and project relationships with the outside world. The psychologist Ruth

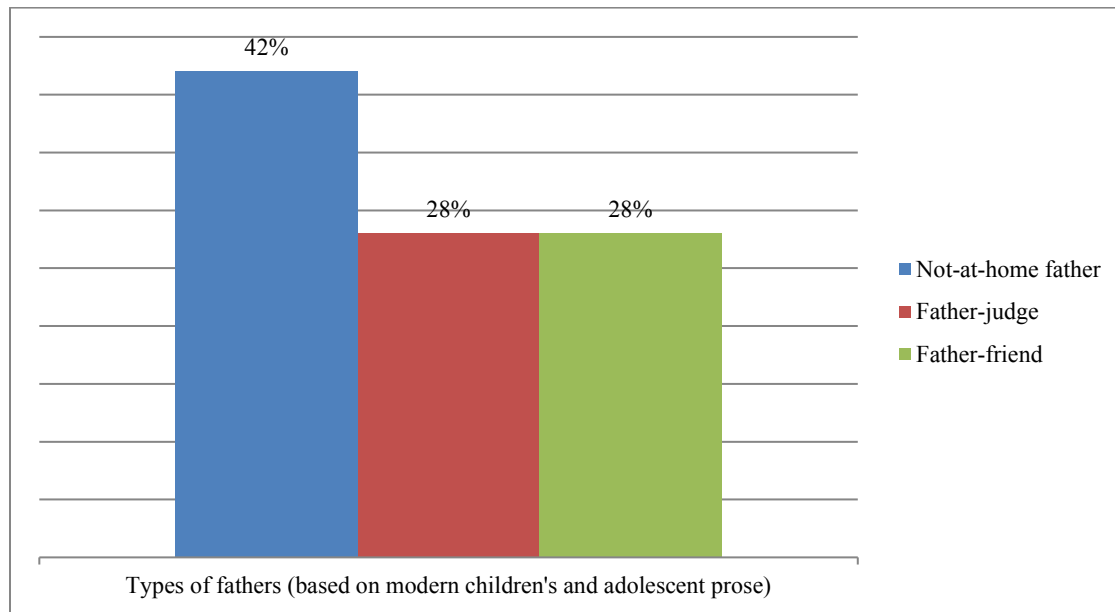
Feldman of Israel's Bar-Ilan University has found that, like mothers, fathers experience a hormonal boost when caring for their children, which helps bring them closer together. When fathers are the primary caregivers, their brains adapt to the task.

**Research question 2.** What socio-psychological types of fathers are represented in the literature of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

The answer to this question is shown in Diagram 1.

### Diagram 1

*The results of the analysis of types of paternal images in children's and adolescent prose*



As Diagram 1 suggests, in modern children's and adolescent prose, seven (100%) works have been analyzed. Of these, in three (42%) works ("Granny with Wings," "Pax," "My Dad is a Boy") the not-at-home father type dominates (Abramova, 2018); in two (28%) texts ("My Father Lit the Stars," "Papateka"), a father-judge dominates; in two (28%) works ("Dad by My Side," "Dad, Let's Go Pick Mushrooms"), a father-friend is the dominant type. This reflects reality, in which there are two extremes: Either fathers pay great attention to the upbringing of their children or, on the contrary, they are indifferent, making a kind of escape to work.

Social psychologist Abramova (2018) distinguishes several types of paternal images: father-friend, father-judge, not-at-home father, father-breadwinner, and father-psychotherapist. Only three of these types will be considered in detail, since they are frequent in the analyzed texts. It is always interesting to be with a father-friend, he knows a lot and knows how to do things, is fair, active,

enduring, and never offends anyone; these behavioral guidelines demonstrate a choleric person. The father-judge always demands order in everything; he is slow, judicious, always checks the fulfillment of his orders, and does not forgive carelessness and improper performance of duties. As a rule, such fathers are pedantically accurate; these are the components of a phlegmatic person. The not-at-home father does not interfere with anything, has a high working capacity, originality, knows how to make money, only rests at home, and if he is burdened with duties, he gets irritated and seeks to leave home; the type of temperament is sanguine (Abramova, 2018).

Regretfully, it has to be stated that father-judges and the not-at-home father are outside the psychic reality which they themselves have created (are creating); that is, they do not seem to live in a family, but are located in it, since they do not take responsibility for the content of relationships with family members, relying on their natural, spontaneous implementation and manifestation. The authors prove this when analyzing the types of fathers.

Guided by the opinion of Bocharov (Borisenko, 2010), the authors show that in literature, as in life, biological factors determine the psychophysiological readiness for paternity, while social factors regulate the implementation of this readiness. The specific style of paternity depends on many socio-cultural characteristics. Society does not impose certain requirements on the economic, social, age, and professional status of a man and, accordingly, a father; therefore, the number of not-at-home types increases (Abramova, 2018) and the number of father-friends is significantly reduced. This fact is to be proved in the further interpretation of the works and in the discussion on this issue.

Writers also entered the discussion regarding the influence of fathers on the formation of children. They analyze interpersonal relations in much more detail than psychologists and sociologists, which is why the authors interpreted the literary works, noted in Table 2. The number of works written directly for children (Bozhkova, 2018) is increasing, but the most important innovation is the works in which the father becomes the main and only character. Similar works, if we take into account the opinion of Lucey (2021), can be considered “spiritual capital.” Thus, “Dad by My Side” (Sush, 2018) can be a striking example. This is a work of the modern picture book genre. It contains colorful illustrations, which are a full-fledged part of this story, and the minimum amount of accompanying text from the perspective of a girl—this technique of first-person narration helps the reader feel in detail the described image of the father: “He always finds time for me, even if he is very busy”; “He comforts me when I am sad”; “There is always a place for me next to him”;

“When dad is by my side, nothing is impossible.” There is no storyline in this work; the text is a set of separate phrases, complemented by pictures, an integral element, but this does not interfere with the process of drawing up a portrait of the main character, a caring, sensitive, loving man, a “father-friend” who is the whole universe, model, and support for his child. Color also helps to reveal the father’s image. All the paintings are in soft pastel colors, and the father is depicted as slightly dark-skinned with pink cheeks. Pastel colors help to reveal the father’s character: warm, cozy, typical of sanguine people and tourmaline corresponding to this type of personality. Exaggeration in the depiction of the father’s image—he is almost three times larger than the girl, constantly smiling—helps to reveal the character’s attitude toward her dad: She considers him an almighty kind protector. The pronoun “we,” which is most often used in the book, says that the father and the daughter do everything together, like real friends. The verbs denoting the father’s actions are used only with a positive connotation and the meaning of dynamic actions: “consoles,” “tells,” “sings,” “protects,” “finds,” “knows”—this confirms that the father plays a prominent role in bringing up his daughter. The influence of the father on the formation of the child is reflected in Table 2.

In “Dad, Let’s Go Pick Mushrooms” by Markus Mayaluoma (2008), there is also an image of a father-friend. The children wait for him to come home every evening. As soon as the father’s car enters the yard, the children with “joyful squeals” begin to shout: “... daddy has come!” It is obvious from the children’s behavior that the father is a beloved member of the family. Sometimes it seems that the father is too harsh with his children, but this is just a put-on behavior as he cannot deny them anything. The children are glad that their dad succumbed to their urging, so they begin “...crazy packing up” for mushroom picking. It can be seen that the kids are worried about their father, packing things not only for themselves but for him as well—they take an atlas on the definition of mushrooms, so that “dad does not pick inedible mushrooms by mistake.” The man is very sensitive; when neighbors speak unflatteringly about his car, calling it “a sack of potatoes,” the father gets offended. He is quick-tempered: Upon finding that the children had carefully painted over all the mushrooms with felt-tip pens so that it became impossible to identify which mushrooms were poisonous, he “roared so that all the trees swayed.” However, when the children run into the bear, the father, without thinking about himself, takes care of the children’s safety. The man’s positive qualities are also indicated by those definitions he uses to encourage his children: “beloved,” “red-cheeked”—in all epithets, one can feel the father’s love and tenderness

toward the children. The head of the family, like an agate stone, gives his children warmth and irrepressible vital energy. The man takes care of his little children wholeheartedly, although sometimes he is angry with them. The influence of the father on the formation of the child is reflected in Table 2.

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, an interesting type of father appeared in children's literature: the not-at-home father. This is the type of father most often found in the literature of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The progressive frequency in the use of this type in children's literature is due to the characteristics of the new century. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, material wealth is valued most, not strong family ties; therefore, from the point of view of researchers such as Fedorov and Suslov (2021), juvenile delinquency is increasing, which is directly related to child-parent relationships. Teenagers do not forgive the indifference of their parents.

The head of the family in Iva Procházková's (2013) story "Granny with Wings" can be classified as a not-at-home father type. Elias's dad develops computer games, but these are the man's only interests. Elias notes with bitterness that his father does not know "how to make a real kite" and knows "nothing about princesses." Many children are jealous of Elias because his father is a computer genius who knows everything about games; however, Elias does not think so, because this work steals his father's attention from him. The boy gets very upset when his dad forgets his promises, and he worries, gets offended, hates games, and does not understand adults. One day, the mother promises Elias that the father will come to play with him on the playground, but the man does not come, since he "spent the whole evening at the computer." By means of confession, the reader understands how much the boy is offended by his father for inattention. Elias calls his father unbearable, poorly educated, the definition of an "obnoxious parent," which confirms the chilly relationship between father and son. Even the father's emotional portrait is perceived by the son negatively: "he is about to cry," "he shouted in his plaintive voice." The father answers "briefly and clearly" because he has no common topics for conversation with the child. Even during "serious conversations," Elias's father "drums nervously with his fingers on the table" since "at this time he is already on his way to work." The influence of the father on the formation of the child is reflected in Table 2.

The children's book industry develops very fast. Currently, many psychological books are published to help parents and their teenage children find peace and understand each other (Anand & Hsu, 2020; Shatunova et al., 2021). However, the difficulties of this period are not only

presented in scientific-educational literature; many children's literary works reveal the difficulties of a teenager's communication with parents. Fathers often do not understand their children and find the reason for puberty rebellion in a bad temper. Adults think that the behavior of a teenager is a desire to annoy the parents and to do everything to spite them.

The story "My Father Lit the Stars" by Tatyana Menshchikova (2019) describes the life and inner experiences of the main character, a boy nicknamed "Snail." The first-person narrative technique helps to better understand the feelings of the main character. The teenager got the nickname "Snail" because he is constantly late, although he leaves home "an hour earlier" before a certain time. The boy tries to get rid of this habit of being late everywhere, but he is very bad at it because no one believes in his capabilities. He lived most of his life with his mother and confesses that the time he spent with her was "the happiest." After 12 years, Snail learns that he has a father. It is worth noting that the father appeared in Snail's life at the beginning of the adolescent period. The man belongs to the melancholic personality type; he is a private person who does not show emotions. Like a moonstone, he emits a cold and faded light that cannot warm Snail. The man remains cold and indifferent to his son, constantly comparing him with other children. Any conversation between Snail and his father becomes another reason for "giving an instructive lecture," therefore, at the beginning of the story, the man acts as a "father-judge": He criticizes Snail for everything he does, starting from everyday things like "cooking pasta in a wrong way" and ending with life values and manners. Despite all this, the boy tries to get closer to his father, but he hears nothing but "eternal bunching that he didn't turn off the light in the room, or didn't make the bed." The boy speaks of his father dryly, describing his appearance with typical phrases without detail: "in his early fifties," "about two meters tall." The man does not believe in the abilities and uniqueness of his son; he does not see a personality in him. All this has a bad effect on the child, and the boy starts thinking that the father is right. That is why, when at school Snail is asked to write an essay about his father, the boy gets a psychosomatic effect: "someone turned on the freezer in the stomach." The child understands that he does not know anything about his father, especially his positive personality traits. The turning point comes when Snail learns what a wonderful technical school teacher his father was. The boy realizes that all the street lights are "lit by dad's students, he's all that." Father and son began a long journey toward rapprochement. The influence of the father on the formation of the child is reflected in Table 2.



In the children's literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, there is a motive of war. Many of these literary works do not name a specific historical battle but introduce only a generalized image of war. One such novel is "Pax" by Sara Pennypacker (2016). The key figures in this story are the father and son, who interact directly or indirectly throughout the story. The story starts with the scene when the father forces his son Peter to take his tame fox Pax into the forest. At the beginning of the story, an evaluative portrait of the father is introduced: "his gentle voice did not fit with the strong smell of lies." Already the man's bad temper is obvious. The man's gesture portrait during the scene complements the first impression of the character: "pushed the car door," "walking wide, headed for the gravel," "unclenched his hand"—all this characterizes the father as a strong and emotionless person. Peter's dad acts as a not-at-home father. The man never has time for his child, he is always at work, "almost never at home." Since the father is constantly absent from the child's life, he simply does not know his son or his hobbies, and he does not understand Peter's affection for Pax. The boy feels the latent threat posed by his father, so over time, "he learned to be quiet. He didn't get underfoot." Peter's father became private and aggressive after his wife died. The boy recalls the time when his mother died, confessing that his father reacted rather strangely to this tragedy: At first, he was silent, and then, "his father's face seemed to ossify, the same expression of threat was always frozen on it." The man, trying to forget the death of his wife, plunged into his own affairs, not noticing his son and absolutely not understanding him; this is primarily reflected in the moment when the father forces his son to get rid of his fox friend. Peter's grandfather tells him that when his father was 10 years old, he had a "faithful dog" and never went anywhere without it. The grandfather shared his son's affection and did not forbid him to play with the dog. The father, who understood the value of human life and family ties only in the war, whose shoulders were "shaking with sobs," could finally give his son "loving and protective embraces," which the boy "dreamed of for so many years," while the son, unfortunately, will no longer be able to forgive his father's lies and accept his later repentance. Peter allows himself to be hugged but quickly pulls away because he realizes that his father was lying, knowingly endangering Pax's life. It turns out that his father is not "a man lost in family relationships" but "a man who is sick with war." In the story, the father is shown as melancholic. Such people take personal losses very hard; they cannot rehabilitate for a long time. By his character, the father does not give his son warmth or tenderness, he lives only his own life, and the life of his son goes unnoticed. The influence of the father on the formation of the child is reflected in Table 2.

Another example of a not-at-home father is the dad from “My Dad is a Boy” by Elena Ozhich. The narration is first-person. From the first lines of the story, it becomes clear that the boy lacks his father’s love and attention. “Everyone is busy at home.” Dad is always busy and talks to the boy only when he wants his son to do something so that he “does not hang out in the yard.” When the city government prohibits children from playing in the yard alone, the father takes his son for a walk “like a dog,” but then the father gets tired of it and replaces the walk time with the work he loves. Since the father rarely communicates with his son, he does not understand the fact that the boy has already grown up. Therefore, when the man joins his son and his friends, he starts annoying them. The image of the father in this story is not static due to the technique of artistic exaggeration: An adult man turns into a child again, and only after that does he find common ground with his son. Certainly, this transformation hides an allegory technique: To understand a child, an adult needs to become a child himself. The father invited the children to show the games he played in childhood, and when playing he turned into a dad-boy. Then a real boy and a dad-boy have to exist on equal terms. The son even sometimes has to take care of his “younger” father. As in distant childhood, the boy and his father start spending time together again, they play, eat, talk. The boy is incredibly happy that his father finally paid attention to him and became an “active father.” The influence of the father on the formation of the child is reflected in Table 2.

A separate classification of the types of fathers is introduced in the story “Papateka” by Anna Nikolskaya (2015). The narration is from the perspective of the main character, a boy named Vitya. This literary technique makes it possible to feel the character’s emotions as much as possible, to understand his feelings. In the first lines, the boy confesses that he wants his dad to disappear “and preferably go missing.” Even the look of his father is unpleasant to Vitya; this is understood by the boy’s description of his father’s appearance: “he scratches his belly under his pajamas,” “bald,” “long, like a member of the ostrich family”—this comparison shows the boy’s attitude toward his father, an unpleasant and cowardly person. Vitya blames his father for all his troubles, believing that if he “flies away with the alien,” they “will take the good life with mum.” The father preaches morality and likes to “punish justly,” acting as a father-judge. The father is forced to play two roles in the family, both mom and dad, and he performs each of them not very well; the meals he cooks are “virtually inedible,” and he is very rarely interested in his son’s life. Vitya’s mother went to work, and her participation in the family’s life is only through a video conversation. The offended and angry boy, who wandered the street for a long time, is given a unique opportunity in a magic

house called Papateka to choose the dad of his dreams. The exchange terms are simple: The boy “hires” the new ideal dad and hands over his own dad to the glass crypt “for storage.” The boy gives in to temptation and chooses a new parent. First, the child chooses a father by external qualities, then by internal ones. The child changes his fathers over and over again until he realizes that they are all “the same” and his own dad is an ideal father, combining all the best human qualities in optimal proportions. It is noteworthy that none of the dads suited the boy, and more than anything he wanted to get his father back. At the end of the story, the characters finally build a harmonious relationship.

The aforementioned authors create psychological portraits of fathers and talk about the relationships of fathers and children, paying special attention to the influence of fathers on the formation of their personalities. The modern writers’ views on fatherhood are not reviewed by researchers, thus their advice is neglected. This article is partly intended to fill this gap.

The authors are convinced that in fiction, the problem of the influence of fathers on the formation of the younger generation is solved much more actively than in the social, psychological literature of the last decade. The writers express their position clearly, and it is close to Hardach (2019), who is convinced that children with emotionally involved fathers show better mental development. In addition, having interpreted the works, the authors cannot but agree with the opinions expressed by Bocharov (Borisenko, 2010), who stated that in literature, as in life, biological factors determine the psychophysiological readiness for paternity, while social factors regulate the implementation of this readiness; Rakhmanova (2008), who claims that paternal influence contributes to the formation of character, professional self-determination, and the formation of a worldview, as well as a style of behavior; and Abramova (2018), whose classification of the types of fathers seems to the authors to be true and very convenient.

With this article, the gap begins to be bridged, associated with the lack of literary coverage of the above-stated problem, and it is believed that there should be more such studies, since the authors have discovered a large array of works of fiction covering the topic of the influence of fathers on the development of children.

### Conclusions

In summary, this study indicates that psychologists, educators, sociologists, and writers agree to receive the role of paternity and the misunderstanding of fathers and children. In general, harmonious relationships between fathers and children contribute to the formation of a harmonious, viable, and responsive personality that can feel and sympathize. The father's behavior model is especially important for the son; therefore, in six of the seven studied literary works the sons are the main characters. Specifically, in the analyzed children's and adolescent literature of the 21st century, there are three types of fathers: the not-at-home father, father-judge, and father-friend. This is primarily due to the psychological characteristics of world perception by children and adolescents. All emotions are too strong. Adolescents are most sensitive to injustice. Fathers who are almost never at home because of work cannot reach common ground with their children, while the fathers who participate in the lives of their children cannot find the right approach to upbringing. Therefore, there are father-judges who criticize their children's every move. Such men do not understand that it is very difficult for teenagers to survive the period of adolescence, the time of self-determination and restructuring of life guidelines. Reading the outlined works of fiction by fathers together with their children will help to solve the problems of interpersonal relations and even help to look at oneself from the outside.

This study has limitations since its subject is to highlight the specific functions of electronic literature, in particular, a digital book. Therefore, future research shall be based on studying the features of hyper literature. In this study, the concept of a "hypertext book" was mentioned and it needs to be thoroughly studied. Research is also needed to distinguish between a digital book and a game.

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