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Most famous screenwriters

Galileo's scientific discoveries memorialized him as the father of modern astronomy. Adam Smith reaped the posthumous profits of notoriety as the father of capitalism, and Edgar Allen Poe's puzzling plotlines pinpointed him as the father of literary mystery. Similarly, as a pioneer and figurehead of his respective field, Dr. Benjamin Spock could be considered the father of modern parenting. His 1946 publication "The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care," has sold more than 50 million copies in more than 40 languages [source: Blue]. When the famous American pediatrician died in 1998, TIME magazine eulogized that Spock "singlehandedly changed the way parents raise their children" [source: Blue].On the home front, however, the parenting guru who urged moms and dads to trust their instincts wasn't quite so footloose and fancy-free with his own two sons, Mike and John. In 1968, the grown boys described a rather strict upbringing under a workaholic father [source: Hammel]. For his part, Spock acknowledged his emotional shortcomings as a parent and expressed remorse at his distance during Mike and John's formative years, which he attempted to compensate for in later life [source: Blue]. Like Spock, the following 10 famous fathers might not all deserve Dad of Year awards, but each is a fascinating case study in how career success intermingles with raising a family.Johann Sebastian Bach stands out as one of the most significant composers in the baroque and classical canon, and it's no wonder, since music blossomed throughout his family tree. When he was born in the rustic German city of Eisenach in 1685, family members were already well established as the go-to organists and violinists in the area, having delighted residents' ears since the first Bach relocated there from Hungary in 1600 [source: Pandl]. Once the prolific composer and teacher J.S. had his own expansive brood (he fathered 20 children, though only 10 made it to adulthood), his four sons also trained in the family's aural trade.The second-oldest son, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, became a leading classical musician. In fact, the student son surpassed his paternal master among contemporary circles, garnering more fame and notoriety during his lifetime [source: Montero and Coleman]. Just as J.S. Bach's work would go on to influence countless musicians, C.P.E. Bach and his precise technical skills -- which he attributed to his father's training -- also inspired Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven [source: Encyclopædia Britannica].The first time Albert Francis Charles Augustus Emmanuel from Germany met his British first cousin, queen-to-be Alexandrina Victoria, in 1836, the notion of the two marrying had already surfaced within their well-connected families [source: PBS]. With their uncle Leopold I, King of Belgium, acting as matchmaker, Queen Victoria popped the question to her lower-status suitor in 1839, and the couple wed the following year. Albert ultimately became heavily involved in Queen Victoria's daily affairs, serving as her personal secretary, confidant and father to their nine children.Although it took 17 years for the royal court to grant him the official title of Prince Consort, he and Victoria secured the future of the British crown with their second child, Prince Albert, who would become King Edward VII in 1901. All but one of Edward's brothers and sisters also married into other European royal houses, establishing diplomatic alliances with Germany, Prussia and Russia [source: PBS]. Incidentally, Albert's stern parenting toward his oldest son did little to steer the future monarch toward sound morals, and as a result, King Edward VII became known for his vice-loving nature [source: PBS]. Despite such rebellions, King Edward adopted his father's family at coronation, transitioning the throne to the House of Wettin, which would be renamed the House of Windsor by King George V.Like his contemporary Prince Albert, Charles Darwin also found his romantic match on a nearby branch of the family tree. Despite his knowledge about potential genetic mishaps from inbreeding, Darwin married his first cousin and devout Christian Emma Wedgwood - but not after plotting out the social and emotional pros and cons of the hypothetical nuptials in his journal, like any calculating scientist might [source: Keim]. Later, as Darwin hammered out the details of his theory of evolution, he and Emma had 10 children, although three died before the age of 11.Contemporary scholars have questioned whether the death of Darwin's oldest daughter, Annie, at the age of 10 years old, influenced the naturalist's decision to hold off on publishing "On the Origin of Species" for more than two decades [source: Krulwich]. Deeply distraught by Annie's death from tuberculosis, which may have been linked to inbreeding, Darwin was too overcome to even attend her funeral, and he might have sat on his groundbreaking book until 1859 as a way to shelter his grieving wife from public attention [source: Krulwich]. Later, he requested -- to no avail -- that the British government gather data on cousin marriage and health data from their offspring to examine the population-wide effects of inbreeding [source: Harmon].Born in 1869, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is known as the Father of India, but his paternal legacy at home remains much murkier. Now better known as Mahatma, which means "great-soul," a 14-year-old Gandhi entered into an arranged marriage with 13-year-old Katsurba Makanji, in keeping with Indian custom. The couple stayed together for the remainder of their lives, and Katsurba, nicknamed "Ba," died in 1944, four years before Gandhi's assassination.Before Gandhi took a vow of celibacy in 1906, he and Ba had four sons: Harilal, Manilal, Ramdas and Devdas [source: Manzoor]. Sparse accounts of Gandhi's family life describe a father who appeared more invested in the livelihood of Indian children at large than his own [source: Lal]. The oldest, Harilal, rebelled most visibly against his father's moralistic and political stances, drinking alcohol and trading coveted British clothing for cash [source: Manzoor]. In his own defense, Gandhi maintained that his detached treatment of his sons reflected his continual efforts to eradicate class privilege reinforced by the Indian caste system [source: Lal].In 1885, in the midst of building his fledgling career around neurology rather than psychoanalysis, Austrian Sigmund (listed on his birth certificate as "Sigismund") Freud married Martha Bernays. The eventual father of psychoanalysis also fathered six children: Mathilde, Jean Martin, Oliver, Ernst, Sophie and Anna. Given Freud's intensive theories on sexually fraught parent-child relationships, such as the Oedipus complex, he doled out deliberately distant displays of affection toward the kids at home. To avoid the intimacy of hugs or kisses, Freud instead pinched his children's cheeks with his thumb and forefinger [source: PBS].Despite that physical detachment, the youngest child, Anna, carried on the Freudian torch, later conducting groundbreaking work in child psychoanalysis. Building on her father's research on the ego and id, or conscious and subconscious, Anna Freud developed the theory of conscious repression and defense mechanisms that humans wield from early ages in order to avoid pain [source: Encyclopædia Britannica]. In 1986, her London home was converted to the Freud Museum, a lasting testament to Anna's and Sigmund's influential daughter-father relationship.Not too long after oceanographer Jacques Cousteau and engineer Emile Gagnan invented a novel mechanism for breathing underwater in 1943, Cousteau tossed his 7-year-old son Jean-Michel overboard while on the ship Calypso. But not to worry: Cousteau and Gagnan's Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus -- a.k.a. SCUBA -- ensured that little Jean-Michel could easily weather the plunge [source: Ocean Futures Society].Traveling around the world aboard the Calypso, Jean-Michel and his younger brother Philippe learned how to scuba dive and observe undersea environments alongside their red cap-wearing father. Like a Partridge Family at sea -- perhaps singing the occasional shanty rather than '60s pop -- Cousteau, his sons and his wife Simone explored the ocean deep and broadcast their findings of previously unseen sea life in more than 80 documentary films [source: Israël]. In 1979, Philippe was killed in a seaplane accident, but Jean-Michel carries on his late father's aquatic environmentalism as a public voice for ocean conservation.In early June 1944, while training troops for impending battles in Normandy, U.S. Gen. George S. Patton penned a letter to his only son, George S. Patton III, who was then studying at West Point. In that brief father-son "sermon" on courage on the battlefield, Patton told the 20-year-old, "Cowards are those who let their timidity get the better of their manhood. You will never do that because of your bloodlines on both sides" [source: McKay and McKay]. A year later, Gen. Patton was killed in a car accident in Germany, but his son's military career continued, and he eventually earned the rank of Major General after fighting tours in the Vietnam and Korean wars [source: Stout]. And indeed, combat ran in the family as the 1944 letter attested; the elder George S. Patton Sr., George S. Patton III's grandfather, was a Confederate colonel in the Civil War [source: Patton].Once, when a close friend asked Muhammad Ali how he would react if the elder of his two sons wanted to pursue boxing, the three-time heavyweight champion of the world reportedly replied that he would first try to shoot down -- or rather, knock out -- the notion [source: Smith]. What Ali probably wasn't betting on, however, was that it would be not his son, but his youngest daughter Laila approaching him about her pugilistic career aspirations. Out of his nine children, Laila Ali was the only one to follow her father into the ring. Having battled Parkinson's disease, which was possibly exacerbated by trauma sustained during his vicious boxing bouts, Muhammad Ali intentionally didn't raise a family of fighters, since he understood the high risks that came with it. For that reason, Ali may have welcomed Laila's 2007 decision to hang up her gloves after eight years of boxing and start a family of her own [source: Clarke]. Ali died in 2016.In honor of what would have been Jim Henson's 75th birthday in 2011, his oldest son Brian offered this glimpse into growing up with the then-deceased Muppeteer: "He was one of those rare parents who was always ready to play again" [source: Henson]. No matter the game, Jim Henson, who invented Kermit and his gaggle of curious and clever Muppet friends, was always up for a rematch with his kids -- or any other creativity-stoking pastime. Fueled by this passion, Henson, who created "Sesame Street," the longest-running children's educational program in television history, sought to make learning fun at home and on screen.Henson and his wife Jane, who assisted him on his first regular televised puppet segment "Sam and Friends," had five children whom have remained actively involved in the family business. After their dad died in 1990, the Henson kids took the helm of Jim Henson Company, eventually selling the Muppets to Disney in 2004 [source: Barnes].Early in his writing career, horror master Stephen King decided to publish a few novels under the pseudonym Richard Bachman. But after the fifth Bachman book was released, the jig was up. The author of "Thinner" was actually Stephen King, the literary world discovered, and the revelation catapulted the book up the best-seller list [source: Neihart]. When King's younger son, Joseph, began peddling his first horror novel, "Heart-Shaped Box," to publishers, he took a cue from his dad and went with a pen name as well. But like history repeating itself, it didn't take long for folks to deduce the real identity of Joe Hill.Interviews with Joe Hill trace and retrace his desire to establish a writing reputation outside of his father's vast shadow, but it's a familial burden he doesn't seem to begrudge. In 2012, King and Hill announced a collaboration on a graphic novel series, "Road Rage," which will follow the adventures of an outlaw motorcycle gang [source: Truitt and Memmott]. It doesn't look like Joe Hill has any plans to abandon his pseudonym and go back to Joseph Hill King, though. After all, that's the name that's grappled up the best seller list. Like father, like son.If you look around the Internet for the world's most famous fathers, the names that pop up are generally celebrities. And certainly, Martin Sheen, Brad Pitt, Will Smith and the like are notable dads in their own ways. But with this 10 Famous Fathers list, I wanted to get out of Hollywood and highlight some of history's best-known men in whose case fatherhood might be more of a side note to their success. Each of these men clearly left an imprint on the modern world, whether in science classrooms or libraries or music halls, but they also profoundly impacted their children's lives -- some of whom followed in their father's footsteps and others who fled their fathers' awesome legacies.Related ArticlesBarnes, Brooks. "Fuzzy Renaissance." The New York Times, Sept. 18, 2008. (March 21, 2012) Laura, "Spock at 65: Five Ideas That Changed American Parenting." TIME, July 14, 2011. (March 21, 2012) Suzan, "Laila Ali Opens Up About Motherhood, New Show and Famous Dad." 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