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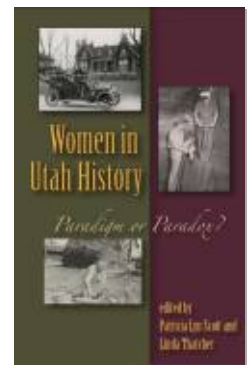
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Polygamous and Monogamous Mormon Women

A Comparison

Jessie L. Embry and Lois Kelley

For many people throughout the world, the words *Utah* and *Mormons* automatically bring associations of polygamy even though members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have not officially practiced plural marriage for at least a century. I¹ realized this when I knocked on a door as a Mormon missionary in Fredericton, New Brunswick, in 1974. The man who answered the door asked, “Isn’t that the Church where you can have more than one wife? Would both of you be available?” Utah historian Thomas G. Alexander frequently reminds me that I should not be surprised by such comments, explaining that for many the interesting aspects of history are sex and violence. For many, the most interesting part of polygamy is: “How did the women respond?”

Views of Mormon plural wives have changed over the years. Nineteenth-century contemporaries like author Harriet Beecher Stowe described Mormon polygamy as “a slavery which debases and degrades womanhood, motherhood, and family,” reflecting the nineteenth-century view that “polygamy destroyed the family and women’s unique place in it and made women unfit for their moral and social responsibilities.”²

While Stowe had a negative view of polygamy, recent scholars who have studied elite Mormon polygamous wives declare them the forerunners of modern feminists—especially in finances. According to one study, “Polygamy developed independent women who bore much of the financial responsibility for their families because husbands were often away on missions and even when they were home the wives were often left to manage their homes alone.”³

Based on the conclusions of nineteenth-century contemporaries and some twentieth-century studies, Mormon plural wives were unique. Yet a study of Mormon polygamous and monogamous wives in Utah during the

late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shows little difference in their lifestyles. As historian Julie Roy Jeffrey explained, “With its peculiar tensions and freedoms, polygamy did, of course, shape the Mormon female life on the frontier. . . . Yet Mormon women . . . shared with other pioneer women common frontier experiences and even ideas about woman’s place in the world. To be a Mormon woman on the Utah frontier was therefore, to be both the same as, and different from, pioneer women elsewhere.”⁴ This chapter examines the experiences of Utah women who lived in polygamous households and those who lived in monogamous families.⁵

SAMPLE

Our study is based on our examination of interviews, autobiographies, and diaries. Sociology professor Kimball Young and two graduate research assistants, James Hulett and Fay Ollerton, conducted the first set of interviews in the late 1930s. Hulett used them to write his dissertation, “The Sociological and Social Psychological Aspects of the Mormon Polygamous Family,” and Young used them extensively in his book *Isn’t One Wife Enough?*⁶ The Kimball Young Collection is in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. It contains Hulett’s and Ollerton’s notes from interviews with thirteen husbands, fifty wives, five husbands and wives, and eighty-three children of polygamous families. A second data source is the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies’s LDS Polygamy Oral History Project (1976–82), also housed in Perry Special Collections. Included are the transcriptions of interviews with more than 250 men and women who were children in plural marriages contracted before the Second Manifesto of 1904. In 1982 the Redd Center project added interviews with 150 men and women who were children in monogamous families from the same period, thus forming a comparison group.

Other interviews, diaries, and autobiographies are housed in both Archives of the Family and Church History Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives) and in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. Altogether, this essay looks at the experiences of approximately 400 plural wives and 150 monogamous women.

Informants’ observations in oral histories are the most severely limited in scope. Most children, especially in the nineteenth century, never asked their parents why they married in polygamy, how they divided money and goods, and how often they had sexual relations. Elsie Chamberlain Carroll, a daughter of Thomas Chamberlain and Eleanor Hoyt Chamberlain, who grew up in Kane County, added another reason: “I guess it is just natural to remember the pleasant things and forget the unpleasant.”⁷ However, often, their memories are the only sources available, and they provide valuable data that cannot be found elsewhere.

A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF MORMON POLYGAMY

Religious values underlie any discussion of Mormon polygamy. Latter-day Saints believe that the church Joseph Smith Jr. founded in 1830 restored truths lost from Christianity during a “great apostasy,” which followed the death of Christ’s apostles. As part of this restoration, he revised the Bible to correct errors in translation and recorded many revelations, often in answer to his questions. These revelations were canonized in the Doctrine and Covenants. As part of the restoration of all things, he received a revelation recorded as:

Prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same. . . .

If any man espouse a virgin, and desires to espouse another, and if the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth to him and to no one else.⁸

Smith had already been “sealed” to several plural wives before he recorded this revelation in July 1843, apparently at the request of his brother, Hyrum, who hoped to reduce the opposition of Joseph’s wife, Emma Hale Smith. He reportedly received this revelation as much as a decade earlier and, although the evidence is circumstantial, married his first plural wife, Fanny Alger, in 1835.⁹ However, he was never able to persuade Emma, except for two brief periods in 1843, to accept this practice.¹⁰

Before Joseph and Hyrum Smith’s assassinations in June 1844, only a few of the people in Nauvoo’s elite circle knew of or entered into the practice of polygamy. They used code words in an attempt to conceal the practice from the enemies of the church and from most church members and issued public statements denying that they were practicing polygamy. However, the rumors surfaced repeatedly. After the disaffection of John Cook Bennett, one-time mayor of Nauvoo, in the summer of 1842, he published a detailed exposé. Even more significant were the defections of William Law, a member of the First Presidency (consisting of the church president and two counselors), and his brother Wilson. With other dissidents, they organized a separate church and published the *Nauvoo Expositor* whose primary theme was opposition to polygamy. After the first number appeared in June 1844, Joseph Smith as mayor and the Nauvoo City Council ordered the press destroyed, an act that led to Smith’s arrest and death in Carthage, Illinois, later that month.¹¹

In 1846, the Mormons evacuated Nauvoo. By July 1847, they had reached the Great Basin and founded Salt Lake City. Brigham Young had energetically pursued Joseph Smith’s doctrine of polygamy, and its practice was an open secret in Utah. Brigham Young decided to publicly announce the

practice of plural marriage. In August 1852, Orson Pratt, an apostle who had left the church for a short time when Joseph Smith proposed marriage to Pratt's wife, made the announcement at a church conference and made a systematic defense of the practice as a religious principle with social benefits.¹²

Hosea Stout, an early Mormon who was involved in church and civic affairs, recorded in his diary: "Orson Pratt preached today on the subject of polygamy or plurality of wives as believed and practiced by the Latter day Saints. In the after noon the Revelation on the subject given to Joseph Smith . . . was publicly read for the first time to the great joy of the saints who have looked forward . . . for the time to come when we could publicly declare the . . . greatest principles of our holy religion."¹³

While Stout appreciated the public announcement, Americans in the larger society were shocked. Two years later in 1854, the Republican Party termed polygamy and slavery the "twin relics of barbarism." Opponents petitioned Congress to pass laws; and in 1862, Representative Justin S. Morrill of Vermont, introduced a bill that prohibited plural marriage in the territories, disincorporated the church, and restricted the church's ownership of property to \$50,000. Although Abraham Lincoln signed the bill, the nation was in the midst of the Civil War and he reportedly said, "You tell Brigham Young if he will leave me alone, I'll leave him alone."¹⁴

The Utah Territorial Legislature asked Congress to repeal the Morrill Act in 1867. Some federal officers saw this petition as an attempt to legalize polygamy, and the House Judiciary Committee asked why the law was not being enforced. Illinois Representative Shelby M. Cullom introduced a bill in late 1870 that called for greater federal control in Utah Territory. Women in Utah could vote; and three thousand Mormon women immediately signed a petition protesting the bill as unjust and asserting that they were not oppressed, as non-Mormons commonly believed. The Cullom Bill passed in the House of Representatives but failed in the Senate. Congress introduced several bills against polygamy during the 1870s; but only the Poland Act (1874), introduced by Vermont's Lake P. Poland, passed. It gave district courts all civil and criminal jurisdiction and limited the Mormon-controlled probate courts to estate settlement, guardianship, and divorce.¹⁵

Mormons continued to perform polygamous marriages and to live as plural families because they believed it was a religious practice protected by the freedom of religion clause in the First Amendment. To test the constitutionality of the laws, George Reynolds, Brigham Young's private secretary, agreed to become the test case in 1875. After a series of appeals, in January 1879 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Morrill Act's constitutionality. According to the court's opinion, "Laws are made for the government of actions, and while they cannot interfere with mere religious belief and opinion, they may with practices."¹⁶ John Taylor, who had become church president after Brigham Young's death in 1877, responded to the Reynolds ruling: "We are between the

hands of God and the hands of the Government of the United States. God has . . . commanded us to enter into these covenants with each other. . . . I know they are true, . . . and all the edicts and laws of Congress and legislators and decisions of courts could not change my opinion.”¹⁷

Three U.S. presidents—Rutherford B. Hayes in 1880 and James A. Garfield and Chester A. Arthur in 1881—spoke against the “barbarous system” of polygamy. Petitions against the practice flooded Congress during 1881 and 1882. In response, Congress passed the Edmunds Act in 1882, introduced by Senator George F. Edmunds, a Vermont Republican. A series of amendments to the Morrill Act, it restated that polygamy was a felony punishable by five years of imprisonment and a \$500 fine.

Because of the difficulty in establishing that a marriage ceremony had occurred (plural marriages were not registered in public records), the act made a misdemeanor of “unlawful cohabitation,” which merely required that the couple lived in the same dwelling. It was punishable by six months’ imprisonment and a \$300 fine. The law disenfranchised polygamous men and prohibited them from holding political offices. Those who practiced polygamy could not be on a jury, and those who professed a belief in the practice could not serve in a polygamy case. A board of five commissioners replaced the registration and election officers. Male voters had to take an oath that they did “not live or cohabit with more than one woman in the marriage relation.” In 1885 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the disenfranchisement of polygamists but voided the test oath. The commission replaced the oath by a new one that left out the terms “marriage relation.”¹⁸

The Edmunds Act did not succeed in suppressing polygamy, and after three years of debate, in 1887 it passed what one historian called the “hodge-podge Edmunds-Tucker Bill.” It required plural wives to testify against their husbands, dissolved the Perpetual Emigrating Fund (a revolving loan system institution to help Mormons immigrate to Utah from Europe), abolished the Nauvoo Legion (Utah militia), and provided a mechanism for acquiring the church property already disincorporated by the Morrill Act. Congress debated the Cullom-Struble Bill with even stricter measures in 1889; but it was seen as unnecessary after Wilford Woodruff, John Taylor’s successor as church president, issued the Manifesto in September 1890 withdrawing official support for new plural marriages.¹⁹

In the fifty years between the 1840s and the 1890s, all of these pressures affected the church, though they did not compel the Latter-day Saints to abolish polygamy. Each church president, including John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff, publicly affirmed the continual practice of polygamy. Even after the Manifesto, the church abandoned the practice but did not repudiate the religious doctrine of polygamy. During the late 1870s and especially during the 1880s when federal marshals and deputies flooded Utah Territory, raiding each community to arrest polygamous men, both husbands and wives went



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Joseph F. Smith's (1838–1918) family that included five wives, forty-eight children, including five adopted children. The photograph was taken on Smith's sixty-fourth birthday, November 13, 1904. Smith was the sixth president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

into hiding, on the “underground” to avoid arrest or to prevent testifying. John Taylor, who had argued he was not violating the law because he had not married a plural wife since before the Morrill Act, operated the church from hiding. Some polygamous groups who still practice plural marriage (“fundamentalists”) claim that Taylor, while he was in hiding, received a revelation that the practice of polygamy should continue and ordained several men to continue it outside official sanction. Acting on his new understanding, Taylor married an eighth wife, Josephine Roueche, in 1886. He died the next year.²⁰

As might be imagined, the transition away from authorized plural marriage was a time of enormous tensions, especially given the immense efforts and sacrifices of church leaders and members to continue living the “higher law” as federal pressures intensified. Wilford Woodruff initially supported the continued practice of polygamy; but the confiscation of the church's economic resources and especially the threat of seizing the church's four temples (the forty-year project of building the Salt Lake Temple came to fruition during his presidency in 1893), faced him with intolerable alternatives. In 1889, he told Salt Lake reporters that he had refused to authorize any new plural marriages since becoming church president.²¹

A year later on September 15, 1890, he recorded in his journal: “I have arrived at a point in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints where I am under the necessity of acting for the temporal salvation of the Church.” The next day, after consultation with some but not all of the apostles,

he issued a press release, the Manifesto: "I publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriages forbidden by the law of the land." Federal officials would not accept the declaration as binding without a sustaining vote by the church membership. They did so a week later at the general conference on October 6, 1890.²²

REASONS FOR LIVING "THE PRINCIPLE"

How did Mormon women react to these events? How did they feel about sharing their husbands? What motivated them to say yes (when they did). And then when that policy changed, how did they feel about giving up the practice of plural marriage? According to written accounts, Mormon women and men were shocked when they first heard that they would be expected to accept a new marriage pattern. The underlying reason that Mormons accepted this practice was they believed that God spoke to a prophet. Annie Richardson Johnson of the Mormon colonies in Mexico, and also a child of a polygamous family, explained, "Like Joseph Smith, polygamists had sealed their testimony, not only with their blood but with the power of acceptance when the principle of Plural Marriage was revealed. . . . This extreme test was possible only because they knew that theirs was the revealed Church of Jesus Christ directed by his priesthood and by revelation and that its blessings came through daily obedience to its principles."²³

The Mormons gave other reasons for accepting polygamy, but they were justifications of the religious motivations. One was having children who would then grow up in righteous homes. Mormons frequently claimed that children who grew up in polygamous families were more likely to serve missions, marry in the temple, and remain faithful Mormons.²⁴

Another reason was that polygamy solved the social problem of prostitution. Orson Pratt explained in his 1852 announcement speech that prostitution could be "prevented in the way the Lord devised in ancient times; that is by giving to his faithful servants a plurality of wives by which a numerous and faithful posterity can be raised up, and taught in the principles of righteousness and truth."²⁵ When Mormon women held a mass meeting in January 1870 to protest the Cullom Bill, they resolved: "We . . . are believers in the principle of plural marriage or polygamy . . . as an elevating social relationship and a preventative of many terrible evils which afflict our race."²⁶ Ida Stewart Pacey of Provo contended in a 1937 interview that polygamy cured the "social evil" of prostitution and that some men might not have been faithful husbands if they had not married plural wives.²⁷

However, as already noted, the primary motivation was religious. Eunice Stewart Harris summarized the way most polygamous men and women felt about the practice: "I want to bear testimony to my children, my grandchildren, and my great grandchildren, that I know to the very depth of my being that this order of marriage is true, that it was revealed from God, and I thank my Heavenly Father for my testimony."²⁸

Sociologist Kimball Young reached the same conclusion, “While we examine the wide range of motives which appear in our records of polygamous families, we note that there is nearly always a basic faith in the principle of plurality of wives. . . . Secondary motives . . . emerged, but since the deeper motives are hidden below the surface of our daily habits, it is not expected that writers of personal documents or informants in interviews would be able to expose their deeper desires in these matters.”²⁹

WOMEN’S REACTIONS TO POLYGAMY’S COMMENCEMENT AND TERMINATION

Despite profound religious motivation, accepting or living polygamy was seldom easy. In 1880 one apostle’s wife recalled her initial reactions to polygamy: “I went into the cellar and prayed, but it seemed that the more I prayed, the more my feelings became wrought up. But I did not give up. I stayed there. First I’d weep; then I’d rage in anger and then I’d pray. So I struggled until I was about exhausted. When I was about to give up the effort a great calm settled on my soul. Then I knew . . . polygamy was a true principle of the Lord.”³⁰

Mormons also had mixed reactions to the Manifesto, although most accepted it as revelation. Annie Gardner, the second wife of John Gardner of Pleasant Grove, spent time in Salt Lake City and Bountiful “on the underground” during the 1880s. She explained, “I was there in the Tabernacle the day of the Manifesto and I tell you it was an awful feeling. There President Woodruff read the Manifesto that made me no longer a wife and might make me homeless. I sat there by my mother and she looked at me and said, ‘How can you stand this?’ But I voted for it because it was the only thing to do. I raised my hand and voted a thing that would make me an unlawful wife.”³¹

Annie Clark Tanner of Farmington, Utah, whose mother was a plural wife and who married into polygamy herself, was on the underground in Franklin, Idaho, when the Manifesto was issued. She said:

With the long years of sacrifice just back of me, I was easily convinced that it was from the Lord. . . . It was just a coincidence that the doctrine of polygamy was abandoned on my birthday. My first birthday was an event made possible by it; my whole life had been shaped according to it. . . . I can remember so well the relief that I felt when I first realized that the Church had decided to abandon its position. For all of my earliest convictions, a great relief came over me. . . . I suppose [the Church’s] leaders may have realized, at last, that if our Church had anything worthwhile for mankind, they had better work with the government of our country rather than against it.³²

Although it is customary to see the announcement of the Manifesto as a decisive turning point, for Mormons at the time, it ushered in a transitional period that brought its own stresses and trials. At least part of the problem was the complexity of the situation. Even if no new plural marriages were authorized,

what was the status of existing marriages? And, during the next fourteen years, other plural marriages *were* secretly authorized by leading church officials, a mixed message that created great confusion. As D. Michael Quinn, who has done the most detailed research on that period, states: “For both the hierarchy and the general membership of the LDS Church, the Manifesto inaugurated an ambiguous era in the practice of plural marriage rivaled only by the status of polygamy during the lifetime of Joseph Smith.”³³

On October 7, 1890, the day after the general conference had voted to accept the Manifesto, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles met with all of the stake presidents. “President Woodruff drew the attention of the brethren to the fact that the Manifesto did not affect our present family relations but it simply stated that all plural marriages had ceased.” Woodruff’s counselor George Q. Cannon stated, “A man who will act the coward and shield himself behind the Manifesto by deserting his plural wives should be damned.”³⁴

Yet in June 1891, the church-owned *Deseret News* published an interview with Woodruff and Cannon. When asked whether they or any officer of the church would authorize a polygamous marriage or countenance unlawful cohabitation, they replied that they would not authorize marriages that did not obey the law.³⁵

In October 1891, when Woodruff testified on oath before Judge Charles F. Loofbourow, appointed to decide the fate of church property, he asked Woodruff if the Manifesto covered “living or associating in plural marriage by those already in the status.” Woodruff replied, “I intended the proclamation to cover the ground, to keep the law—to obey the law myself and expect the people to obey the law.” The judge thus had every reason to believe that the church also expected its members to dissolve plural marriages contracted before the Manifesto. However, on November 12, 1891, Woodruff told the First Presidency and the Twelve that “he was placed in such a position on the witness stand that he could not answer other than he did. Yet any man who deserts and neglects his wives or children because of the Manifesto, should be handled [tried] on his [membership].”³⁶

Some couples did separate after the Manifesto. John Brown was a bishop in Pleasant Grove. According to his daughters, “At the time of the Manifesto Father deeded the two homes to the wives. The Church recommended that. Men were supposed to give up their wives (plural) but they were supposed to support them and for safety the Church asked the men to deed the property equally to the wives.”³⁷ Elizabeth Ann Schurtz McDonald of Heber City, a second wife, said that her husband, William McDonald, deeded some of his property to her and provided for her as he had before but did not live with her until after the first wife had died. At that point he married Elizabeth as a legal wife. She explained, “He would have lived with both women, but he had an old country respect for law and his first wife determined that he give the second one up.”³⁸

Others interpreted the Manifesto as applying only to new marriages. All polygamous General Authorities (church leaders including the First Presidency, Council of the Twelve Apostles, church patriarch, First Council of Seventy, and Presiding Bishopric) continued to cohabit with their wives. Based on impressionistic evidence from family histories and records of births, “most” polygamists followed the General Authorities’ example.³⁹ Conover Wright, the son of Amos Russell Wright and his second wife, Martha Loella Weaver Wright, of Bennington, Idaho, commented in 1938: “After many years of practicing polygamy, it was unreasonable to expect the thing to cease immediately after the Manifesto. Of course, it was never intended that plural wives should stop having children but only that no more marriages should be contracted.”⁴⁰ This perspective reflects the private statements of General Authorities, not their public statements.

A few children reported that their fathers had specific sanction from church leaders to continue plural relationships. Lorin “Dutch” Leavitt of Bunkerville, Nevada, explained that his father had grown up with Anthony W. Ivins, who first served as a stake president in the Mormon colonies in Mexico and in 1907 was ordained an apostle. Because of this long-standing friendship, Leavitt’s father, Thomas Dudley Leavitt, asked his advice during the post-Manifesto period: “Now, Tony, you know I have the two families and two wives. What am I going to do? Am I going to give one of them up?’ . . . He said, ‘No, I don’t think the Lord intended you to give them up. But I can promise you that if you do keep them and take care of them the Lord will bless you for it.’”⁴¹

Nor did all new plural marriages end in 1890. Mormon church leaders authorized new plural marriages in both Mexico and Canada, although polygamy was against the law in both of these countries. Because the Canadian government threatened to enforce the law strictly, husbands lived with only one wife in that country, essentially having one legal wife in the United States and one in Canada. The Mexican government wanted colonists and chose to ignore the Mormon marriage practices, so plural families lived together openly.⁴²

Apostles also performed authorized marriages in the United States during the transitional period, although it led to difficult adjustments. For instance, Apostle Matthias Cowley was disfellowshipped in 1911 by the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve for performing plural marriages after 1904. He explained as his defense: “I was never instructed to go to a foreign land to perform those marriages. President Cannon told me to do these things or I would have never had done it.”⁴³ George Q. Cannon had been an assistant counselor to Brigham Young and was first counselor in three successive First Presidencies: John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Lorenzo Snow. He had died in 1901, ten years before Cowley’s trial.

In March 1904 Joseph F. Smith, who had succeeded Lorenzo Snow as church president in 1901, testified before the Senate Committee on Privileges

and Election, admitting his own continued cohabitation with his plural wives and the births of children to them. Then in consultation with the Quorum of the Twelve, Smith presented what historians have called the “Second Manifesto” at April general conference in 1904. It states: “Inasmuch as there are numerous reports in circulation that plural marriages have been entered into contrary to the official declaration of President Wilford Woodruff, . . . I . . . do hereby affirm and declare that no such marriages have been solemnized with the sanction, consent, or knowledge of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” He stiffened the terms of the Manifesto by announcing a punishment: “If any officer or member of the church shall assume to solemnize or enter into any such marriage he will be deemed in transgression against the church and will be liable to be dealt with according to the rules and regulations thereof and excommunicated therefrom.”⁴⁴

It was for his disregard of this Second Manifesto that Cowley was disciplined in 1911. John W. Taylor, another apostle and son of John Taylor, had also continued to perform plural marriages and had, in fact, taken plural wives after the Manifesto. He was also excommunicated in 1911. Both men were replaced in the quorum by men who were monogamously married.⁴⁵

In 1909 a committee of apostles including Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, Heber J. Grant, and George F. Richards met to investigate post-Manifesto polygamy. By 1910, church leaders had a new policy for dealing with polygamists. Those married after 1904 were excommunicated, and those married between 1890 and 1904 were not to have church callings where the members would have to sustain them.⁴⁶

With these more conspicuous efforts to comply with the law, a tacit agreement seemed to develop to let the passage of time and the death of the polygamous generation end the practice. However, many plural husbands and wives continued to cohabit until their deaths in the 1940s. Some plural wives were still living during the 1970s.⁴⁷ As the practice died out in the official church, however, it gathered strength and took more definite form among the fundamentalists, who are now estimated to number about 10,000.⁴⁸

NUMBER OF POLYGAMOUS FAMILIES

No definitive study has determined how many Mormons practiced polygamy between the 1840s and 1904. Stanley S. Ivins, the son of Anthony W. Ivins, studied 2,300 polygamous marriages and estimated that 15–20 percent of Mormon women entered plural marriage. He also pointed out that plural marriages were highly responsive to official encouragement from leaders, leading to a somewhat wavelike effect in numbers.⁴⁹ Historians Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton estimated that about 12 percent of Mormon wives were plural wives.⁵⁰ Larry Logue, who did an intensive study of St. George, documented that as many as two-thirds of the married women’s years and one-half of all child years until 1880 occurred in polygamous families.⁵¹ Historian Dean L. May’s 1976 study

of Kanab found that nearly a quarter (24 percent) of all the town inhabitants—men, women, and children—were members of polygamous families.⁵²

Geographer Lowell “Ben” Bennion examined households in the 1880s census and found that the numbers of plural families varied dramatically by community. In Washington County alone, the figure varied from almost 40 percent in St. George to just over 11 percent in Harrisburg/Leeds. In Kane County, the figures went from 10 percent in Rockville to 67 percent in Orderville. In Davis County slightly more than 5 percent practiced polygamy in South Weber in contrast to nearly 30 percent of the families in Bountiful. Springville in Utah County had 15 percent polygamous families. Bennion suggested that the higher percentage of polygamists in St. George reflected greater religious commitment in general since many Mormons had accepted calls from church leaders to settle there and had struggled hard in the harsh environment to fulfill their mission. Those in Orderville lived a United Order and were also committed to follow LDS Church leaders. Other areas might not have been as devout.⁵³

POLYGAMY STEREOTYPES

Was there a typical Mormon polygamous family? During the nineteenth century, cartoons showed Brigham Young in bed with many wives, fixing an image in the American mind of Young with his numerous wives as a typical plural husband. Maurine Whipple likewise helped fix more stereotypes in place in her popular 1941 novel *The Giant Joshua*. The family in her novel had three wives: the first wife, a second wife whom the husband married because she was a widow who needed someone to take care of her, and a much younger and prettier third wife. The husband both lusted for the third wife, who had grown up as an orphan in his household, and resented her for being so appealing. He married her when she was sixteen and he was in his forties. As elements of the plot, Whipple portrayed a brief romance between the third wife and the oldest son of the first wife (it ended when he was killed in an accident) and constant tensions between the first and third wives. The second wife rarely stood up for herself and was content to be a sort of servant in the first wife’s home. Despite these difficulties, the wives shared a home for years until the third wife demanded a space of her own and started building it herself.⁵⁴

While Whipple described problems that did occur in some families, they were never the norm. In fact, it is difficult to identify a “typical” Mormon polygamous family. Time of marriage, location, and personality, for example, all played major roles in a plural household, just as they did in a traditional monogamous home. For example, the respondents in the LDS Polygamy Oral History Project described turn-of-the-century polygamy with its many hardships. A generation earlier, those who lived “the principle” between 1852 and 1880 had to deal with poverty and internal dynamics but not with the added burden of formal and intense opposition from the government.

Maureen Whipple (1903–92),
author of *The Giant Joshua*,
published in 1941 depicting
the settlement of the St.
George, Utah, area.



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The sources used in this study question some stereotypes. For example, over half of Mormon polygamous men had only two wives. The majority did not charitably marry old maids and widows who needed financial support or lustfully wed young girls. Rather, a husband married his first wife usually when he was in his early twenties and the woman was in her late teens, the same pattern as most monogamous marriages. The second marriage occurred when the groom was in his late twenties to early thirties and the bride was again in her late teens. For the few men who married a third wife, he was typically in his late thirties and the wife again was in her late teens. Thus, the age difference between husband and wife increased but the brides remained about the same age.⁵⁵

Plural wives had about the same number of children as their monogamous counterparts, and first wives usually had more children than the other wives. This pattern was also true when a man monogamously married a second wife after his first had died. The second wife was usually younger than he was, but had fewer children than his first wife. However, even though plural wives had fewer children on average than monogamous wives, plural husbands clearly had more total children than monogamous husbands.⁵⁶

LIFE IN A POLYGAMOUS FAMILY

Since Mormons lived in polygamy for barely half a century and much of that time in secret, there was no time to establish accepted understandings or broadly applied rules of how families should be set up and how family members should react to each other. In contrast are long-term polygamous societies where many decisions are culturally modeled. For example, anthropologist Pamela Blakely found that Bahemba wives in eastern Zaire had separate homes with front doors that faced each other so they could visit while working; but in one case where the wives did not get along, the doors faced in opposite directions. Other African societies had cultural patterns developed over many years that standardized courtship patterns, living arrangements, and husband-visiting patterns.⁵⁷ But Mormonism's experience with polygamy lacked such a foundation, so most plural marriage patterns were minor adaptations of monogamous U.S. and European traditions.

Courtships and Proposals

The decision to marry a plural wife, the proposal, and her agreement may be considered a courtship stage. Nineteenth-century society, while it valued romantic love, did not see it as either a requirement or a justification for contracting marriage, whether monogamous or polygamous. As one nineteenth-century marriage manual explained, "A married couple should feel love for each other, . . . [but] the love should grow out of the relationship rather than be the cause of it." Religious motivations, temperance, family-centeredness, and physical considerations including beauty, intelligence, and health to ensure good offspring, the manual continued, were more important than love.⁵⁸

First wives most often cited religious reasons as their motivation in agreeing to a plural marriage. Sometimes the first wife even initiated the decision because she felt so strongly that accepting the principle was essential for her salvation and that of her husband. According to Emma Hoth McNeil of Logan, the second wife of William McNeil, "The first wife sanctioned it! She was more anxious about it than he was."⁵⁹

In a few cases, the first wife accepted polygamy because she had no children and wanted her husband to have offspring, an important element in LDS doctrine. After childless Wealthy Clark of Bountiful agreed to let her husband marry a plural wife, she had a child and considered its birth as a reward for her obedience, the fulfillment of a promise given to her by a Mormon church leader.⁶⁰

Young women who looked forward to marriage also had to decide if they would be willing to and capable of sharing their husbands. Most, though not all, were motivated by religious considerations as they contemplated marrying already-married men. Lula Roskelley Mortensen of Smithfield, Utah, said that, although her mother's parents were not polygamists, all of their children married

in the principle because “that’s when polygamy was flourishing the most.” She was responding to the stress laid on the principle in official church teachings. Also, she grew up in a plural household, since her father had married two sisters, Margaret and Agnes Wildman.⁶¹ Laura Fackrell Chamberlain, the second wife of Thomas Chamberlain of Orderville said, “I accepted polygamy just as natural as anything. My own father had three wives and I believed in the Principle. I wanted to live it so I could get the blessings.”⁶² For some polygamy was just the norm. Sigrid Hockenson Skanchy, the third wife of Anthon Skanchy of Logan observed that “a girl would judge the man and if he suited her she would take him in those days and not pay attention to polygamy”—meaning that she did not rule out a married man.⁶³

Mary Minerva Clark Bennion of Farmington, Utah, prayed that she would be guided to the man that she should marry. She dreamed of meeting people after church; as she shook one man’s hand, a dove landed on his shoulder. Later as she was shaking her husband-to-be’s hand, that dream flashed back and she accepted it as her confirmation, even though he was already married.⁶⁴

Others had more practical motivations. Heber C. Maughan pointed out that his mother, Elizabeth Prater Maughan, married Peter Maughan of Cache Valley because she was unhappy living with her brother and being financially dependent on him.⁶⁵ According to Winnifred Harker Smith, her mother, Sarah Elizabeth Carter Harker, agreed to be a plural wife because the first wife, Alice Jane Bennion of Taylorville, was ill and unable to care for her children. She said, “I had a boyfriend I could have married, but I saw the need of somebody to take care of a family.”⁶⁶

While the belief is widespread that church leaders had to “call” men to marry polygamously or at least give permission before a man could contract a plural marriage, these examples show that the decision to marry in polygamy did not come from one source. Based on my research, there was not a typical courtship and marriage for polygamy just as there is not for monogamous marriages. Some indeed married because Brigham Young (or another church leader) instructed them to. Others heard general advice that polygamy was an important gospel principle and applied it personally. Some had deep personal convictions, reinforced by spiritual experiences, that polygamy was essential for their salvation in the next life. There probably were some men who lusted after a young woman. Although documentation on such cases is rarer, it is clear that the motivations for plural marriage ranged from the pure to the not-so-pure.

Living Arrangements and Visiting Schedules

After a plural marriage occurred, those involved had to determine household arrangements. As in other aspects of Mormon polygamy, no one pattern controlled where wives lived and how often husbands visited. However, some of the more common patterns can be identified. Often the wives shared a home just after a second marriage; but when it became financially possible,

the husband provided a separate dwelling for each wife. Usually the wives lived in the same community, but schooling arrangements, economic conditions, pressure from law enforcement, and personal preference sometimes determined that wives lived in different towns. As children were born, grew, and left home, living arrangements also changed. Another frequent cause of change was when a wife, particularly one who was pregnant or who had a new baby, had to go on the underground to avoid being forced to testify against her husband.

Because most plural wives lived separately, husbands developed rotating schedules so that they visited each family at regular intervals. Sometimes when wives did not live in the same community, the husband visited irregularly, or only on weekends or at harvest time.

In 150 cases of couples from the Redd Center oral histories, 47 percent of the wives shared homes for a while after the husband married an additional wife. Nearly one-quarter of the wives lived in separate homes in the same town, and 19 percent lived in different towns.

A small fraction of the wives continued to share homes once they started having children. But 55 percent had separate homes in the same town after children arrived. Caroline Pederson Hansen shared a two-room home with her husband's first wife, Bengta, after her marriage in 1878 but prayed secretly for a separate house. After her husband returned from a seven-month mission, her father gave her some land, and her husband built a small adobe house. She later wrote, "I shall never forget how happy I was, and as soon as we were in and I was alone, I bowed down before the Lord and poured out my soul in prayer and gratitude for having a house of my own."⁶⁷

James Carson Allen had separate homes for his wives, Betsy and Ellen, in Cove, Cache County, until the children were old enough to go to high school. Then Betsy moved to Logan to keep house for the children who were attending Brigham Young College in Logan, while Nellie remained in Cove about fifteen miles away with the younger children. Evan B. Murray, the son of William Archibald Murray and his second wife, Amanda Bailey Murray, of Wellsville, said that both the children's needs and economics determined where his father's two wives, Amanda and Sara Jane Park Murray, lived. "One house was on the farm where most of the boys from both families lived, and one house was in town which served as a place for children to live who were working or going to school."⁶⁸

Just as there was no standard living arrangement in plural homes, there was no predetermined plan for how much time the husband spent with each wife, although he was expected to establish some pattern of visiting each family. Of the 156 families used in this study, 27 percent of the husbands changed homes nightly, 21 percent moved every week, 8 percent had no routine, and 21 percent stayed primarily with one wife. Douglas Cannon recalled that his father, David Henry Cannon, "used to be in our home every third night, regular as clockwork. He stayed at one house one night, the next house the next night,

and our house the third night.” David worked in the St. George Temple all day, “but he was home at one or the other of these homes every night,” all of which were easily accessible in St. George. Douglas also recalled it was his responsibility each day to take his father’s shaving kit to the home where he would be staying.⁶⁹

Wives were sometimes lonely. Martha Hughes Cannon, the fourth wife of Angus Cannon of Salt Lake City, wrote in February 1888 that she had “a thorough knowledge from God, that the *principle* for which we are battling and striving to maintain in purity upon the earth is ordained by Him, and that we are chosen instruments in His hands to engage in so great a calling.” Still, she acknowledged: “Even with this assurance grounded in one’s heart, we do not escape trial and temptations, grievances at times in our nature.”⁷⁰ Emmeline B. Wells, the sixth wife of Daniel H. Wells of Salt Lake City, lamented: “Oh if my husband could only love me even a little. . . . He is surrounded by love on every side, and I am cast out.”⁷¹ Julia Winter Smith, the second wife of Samuel Smith of Salt Lake City, commented, “He didn’t spend his time equally with us. He had to be where his business was and other interests. There were months at a time when I was down on that ten acre lot alone with the children.”⁷² Children occasionally disagreed on why their fathers adopted a certain schedule. Meda Lucille Jenkins Parker said that her father, John Jenkins of Newton, stayed mainly with her mother, the third wife, Anna Marie Jensen Jenkins, because “there was more room down there for animals.”⁷³ Archie Jenkins, a son of the second wife, Annie Clarke Jenkins, said that, when his father stayed more with another family, “we felt sometimes maybe there was a little more fatherly love in the first family than we were receiving. . . . My mother was a very unselfish woman. She never complained, and she just took things in stride as the days went on.”⁷⁴ He did not mention the need to take care of animals.

Sometimes the decision to stay with only one wife was based on family income. When George Conrad Naegle and his families left Mexico during the revolution in 1912, Sabra Naegle Foremaster’s mother (third wife Maggie Romney Naegle) was dead, and Sabra was living with her father’s other families. Sabra said, that during the 1920s when her father decided to move from St. George to Salt Lake City to sell insurance, his fifth wife, Jennie Dora Jameson, insisted that he take her and her family because she was tired of the criticism about polygamy and the other surviving wife (fourth wife Philinda Keeler Naegle) could support herself with tailoring and teaching. “Father hoped to be able to support both families, but after three years he was not able to help Linnie.” Eventually Linnie moved to New Mexico to be near her parents.⁷⁵

Age and children were also considerations in deciding where a husband would live. An older husband sometimes “settled down” with just one wife. Ida Stewart Pacey of Provo said of her father, Andrew J. Stewart, Jr., “A man has his ‘gallivanting’ when he can be interested in more than one woman. That is until he is about 50 years old. After then, even the polygamist, in my experience



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Polygamist home located in Lake Shore, Utah, ca. 1890. (Note the entrances on both sides of the house.)

seems to settle down at one place.”⁷⁶ Franklin Lyman Stout said his father, David Fisk Stout, of Mexico and then Logan, lived with the youngest wife in his later years because she had a younger family who needed his help. The children of his other three wives were grown at that point.⁷⁷

On a rotational schedule, it was natural that a husband/father’s visit was something of an occasion. Wasel Black Washburn of Blanding was thrilled when her father’s visit fell on Christmas. Elna Cowley Austin, a daughter of Mormon Apostle Matthias Cowley said that, when he came to see her mother, Luella Smith Parkinson in Logan, “his visits were marvelous. We prepared for them. Mother was just singing and so thrilled. ‘Oh, Papa is coming. Now all of you be just as nice as you can, for Papa will be here.’” In contrast, other families were relieved when the man left. Alma Elizabeth Mineer Felt of Salt Lake City, the second wife of Joseph Felt, said, “He spent a week with each one of us, and I tell you, I was as glad to see his back as I was to see his face. As I grew older, more and more I valued my independence and my personal freedom.”⁷⁸

RELATIONSHIPS OF PLURAL WIVES

In addition to working out a relationship and schedule with the husband, plural wives also had to determine how they would relate to their husband’s

other wives. In a modern context where romantic love and sexual relationships constitute an exclusive bond in marriage, polygamy elicits the emotional question of how one woman regarded another woman who had her church's sanction for sharing her husband's affections and bed. As might be expected, the reports range from idyllic harmony in a shared conviction of doing God's will to open jealousies and tensions. Marital relationships caused some problems; but others, while ultimately stemming from sharing a husband resulted more from economic pressures, personality differences, and unfulfilled expectations, which were similar to any family's problems.

Mary E. Croshaw Farrell of Smithfield, the fourth wife of George H. Farrell, felt that most domestic disagreements in polygamous families were caused by financial problems.⁷⁹ Charles Smith Merrill, a son of Clarence Merrill and his first wife Bathsheba Smith Merrill, added, "Polygamy is ideal for a celestial personage because you are not worrying ever about something to eat or something to buy or if one wife's skirt is made of silk and the other of cotton. . . . Aunt Julia and my mother didn't get along too well because my mother had money and [Aunt Julia] . . . didn't have any money to buy her a new dress or anything for herself. There was a lot of black air around there." He did not explain how his mother got more money than Julia.⁸⁰ Julia was a daughter of George A. Smith, a counselor in the First Presidency, and Bathsheba Wilson Bigler Smith, his first wife; thus, she may have inherited some money after her father's death in 1875; or her mother, who lived until 1910, may have given her presents. Clarence's plural wife divorced him, citing his unwillingness or inability to provide for her and her children. She explained, "My trouble wasn't polygamy. That was nothing. Bathsheba was a lovely, kind person and we got along. She was good to me. . . . But . . . he could not support me and I could not endure it because I was ambitious for myself and children."⁸¹

When money was tight, personality differences could exacerbate jealousies. Julia Bateman Jensen, a daughter of Samuel Bateman and his first wife, saw the second wife as a "petty, whimper kind." When her mother had a new dress, the second wife insisted she should have one. She continued to complain even when Julia's mother was living away from Samuel and being supported by Julia. Even then, if Julia bought her mother a new dress, the second wife also got one.⁸² Mary Jane Rigby Roskelley of Smithfield complained of being "very poor." She felt that the five wives had to get everything on their own. Their husband provided the "stuff" such as "land, and cows, and sheep" to earn a living but they had to do the work. She felt that her sister and co-wife, Maggie, had an advantage because she had a millinery store and "didn't have to milk cows like we did."⁸³

What appeared to be unequal divisions of financial resources and time often led to disputes. William Roskelley of Smithfield married two sisters, Margaret and Agnes Wildman Roskelley. The children's combined stories show that William may have favored Margaret. When William filed on a homestead

in Weston, Idaho, he settled Margaret on the claim in a one-room log house. There she struggled with crop failures, visiting tramps, and new babies, but she stayed until William acquired title. In return, William promised to build Margaret a new home. He did; but because of financial setbacks, it took him five years to complete the eleven-room house. Agnes, in contrast, lived in smaller homes. The first family recognized that the second family resented them for having a larger home, but they justified the difference because Margaret had twelve children while Agnes had only four; and Margaret had earned the house by living on the homestead.⁸⁴

Living arrangements were not the only area of dispute. According to Zina Roskelley Bell, a daughter of the first wife, Margaret, her father felt that he should not live with both wives openly after the Manifesto. Instead he spent the night occasionally with Agnes but lived most of the time with Margaret. Zina continued, "I felt bad . . . because I felt like my aunt was neglected as a wife when my mother had my father most of the time." William also allowed Margaret to divide the fruit and other produce that he provided. Margaret split the supplies according to the number of children in each family so she got more. Rebecca Roskelley Lewis, Margaret's daughter, said, "They tried to be fair, really!" But Agnes's daughter, Lula Roskelley Mortensen, felt that Margaret tried to control her mother. "The pantry window [at Margaret's home] had so many memories attached, . . . the peg for the milk pail, the bucket for the eggs and the mail and other things that were meant for us. This was sort of a watch tower to observe the happenings at our home and to keep a tab on everything."⁸⁵

Shared goods and equipment could create hard feelings, but most families worked out ways to resolve their differences. Ann Amelia Chamberlain Esplin said that her father's five wives had to share the washing tubs and each wife had her own washing day. But rather than resenting this schedule, the wives learned to share. She cited as an example one day when Laura asked to use the washing machine when it was Ann's turn. Ann dumped her water out and sent the equipment over. "One of the other ladies said, 'I wouldn't do it if I were you. She knows what her washday is.' . . . [Ann] said, 'I can wash tomorrow and it may not be convenient for her to do that.'" Daughter Ann explained: "That's the spirit they carried through. They'd have to live in peace."⁸⁶

The issue of sexual jealousy was difficult to identify in the sources because of their reticence to talk of such matters. Isabel McFarland Bingham of Smithfield, the second wife of Parley Pratt Bingham and the younger sister of Margaret, the first wife, married Parley because she was "dead in love" with him. She explained, "Certainly she [Margaret] was jealous sometimes. So was I. It's natural enough to be jealous and my sister was human. Yes, I'm sure she had a pretty hard time in the early days. But we understood the situation and did everything we could to make her feel all right. She was the first wife and she had a right to be jealous." She continued, "I guess she shed buckets of tears, and I shed plenty, too. We knew she was going through an awful trial. I never did

get cross with her. No, I don't feel as if the second wife has as much right to be jealous as has the first."⁸⁷

Elizabeth (Lizzie) Adams McFarland, the third wife of John M. McFarland of St. George, acknowledged the pressures of polygamy: "Looking back I can't blame either of his wives for any of their actions towards me. I'd have done the same or worse. They had the harder lot to bear, seeing me, a young woman, come into the family. I know if that had come to me I'd have made a lot of trouble. We were jealous. No woman can help being jealous, if she loves her husband. But we went into it knowing what to expect. I have heard women say that when their husband was spending their times with the other wives, that they spent the night in agony. We weren't like that. We knew it had to be and we knew that he loved us all. . . . In a few years we got over the jealousies, and we were happy together, but for all that, the only real happiness of its kind I had was when I was alone with my husband in Mexico."⁸⁸

Equally important were the women's personalities and how they adjusted to the polygamous lifestyle or how adept they were at schooling or concealing their feelings. Ruth May Fox of Salt Lake City said that her husband Jesse Fox's second wife "was a good woman, but we were not alike in many ways. I was more reserved."⁸⁹ Margaret and Agnes Wildman Roskelley had very different personalities. Lula Roskelley Mortensen, Agnes's daughter, said, "Aunt Maggie was a small woman with a fierce scowl, piercing black eyes and a shrill voice. . . . I was scared to death of both her and Dad." Even Margaret's children recognized that their mother had some less than desirable characteristics. Her daughter, Roxey Roskelley Rogers, explained that her mother "could just turn you off. She didn't know you existed." Another of Margaret's daughters, Rebecca Roskelley Lewis, felt that her mother was strong willed. "She didn't argue or cause any trouble, but I think she had her own mind about things." In contrast, Lula said Agnes was a "gentle, quiet, submissive, wonderful woman (too gentle for own good). . . . She never asserted her rights or desires, always trying to 'get along' and 'be agreeable' especially in this situation of plural marriage." Her half-sister, Rebecca, explained it as: Agnes "didn't have spunk as she should have had."⁹⁰

Given the many opportunities and motivations for disagreement, Mormon plural wives seem surprisingly congenial. Of 197 families for which information was available, almost half the wives had only minor disputes. Only about 13 percent reported jealousy so intense that a wife left her husband or avoided the other wives completely. About 30 percent did not show jealousy. Since much of this information came from children, they might not have known about minor disputes or their mothers' hidden feelings, and some acknowledged that they had no way of knowing what their mothers really thought or felt. Still a commitment to the institution of plural marriage and the religious commitments that led the wives into polygamy also motivated them to overcome jealousies. Although there were differences and even jealousies between wives, most were minor and easily resolved or suppressed.

Mary Elizabeth Woolley Chamberlain, the sixth wife of Thomas Chamberlain, explained how personality and religious commitment combined to lead to good relationships. "Right now I want to pay a tribute of love and appreciation to those wives. . . . A better set of women never lived. If they ever had any ill feeling or jealousy toward me, it was locked in their hearts, and never came to the surface, for they have always treated me with the greatest love and respect. I love them as dearly as my own sisters, and there is nothing I would not do to help them if I could."⁹¹ Alma Elizabeth Mineer Felt recalled visiting the third wife in California when they were both older. During a gin rummy game, a non-Mormon player, in casual conversation, wondered how plural wives got along. "I pointed to my rummy partner and said that we were polygamists and had lived in the same house together. They thought it quite remarkable that polygamist wives could play rummy peacefully together."⁹²

Women in plural marriage had ample opportunity and motive to fight for increased status, gain a greater share of their husbands' affections, acquire greater power in the family, or dominate a greater share of the family resources. Yet the wives got along remarkably well. Kimball Young pointed out that only 23 percent of the marriages in his study showed considerable to severe conflict. Some disagreements led to formal divorce, although, given the ambiguous status of plural marriages during much of this period, it is sometimes difficult to tell when a separated couple felt that their marriage was "over." A liberal territorial divorce law made a split easy for the first wife.⁹³ David Osborne, a polygamist from Hyrum, separated from his second wife after they wrote and signed their own agreement of settlement.⁹⁴

Plural wives, like other women in the nineteenth century, united particularly over the common tasks of women: childbirth and illness. One historian called this special effort "the sisterhood of the sickbed."⁹⁵ Elizabeth Ann Schurtz McDonald, the second wife of William McDonald said, "I nursed a great many of [the first wife's] children. She had trouble with her milk and I didn't so when we had children together, I always helped to take care of them. When she was sick, I went right into her home and stayed with her."⁹⁶

In a few cases, the wives became even closer than husband and wife. Cynthia and Kesiah Allen, the two wives of Ira Allen, shared a home in Hyrum for thirty years. After Allen returned from serving time in the penitentiary for unlawful cohabitation, he felt he was under a legal obligation to live with only one. He reportedly said, "Two women who have lived together for 30 years in such peace and harmony and reared their children under one roof and eaten at one table, shall never be separated by me." He moved to a vacant house where he lived alone.⁹⁷ The 1870 and 1880 census reports verify that Cynthia and Kesiah Allen lived in the same house.

As these examples demonstrate, plural marriage could intensify the conflicts that would occur in any marriage. Mormon polygamy did not endure for enough generations to normalize patterns of behavior. As a result, co-wives

modeled their relationships on other female relationships common from their European American background: mother-daughter (especially if there was an age difference), friends, and most commonly, sisters. In 25 percent of the families sampled for this study, the wives were biological sisters. Kimball Young reported that 20 percent of the men in his study married sisters, following an Old Testament pattern. But even if the wives were not related, the sister pattern seemed to fit, since it accommodated both affection but also competition and jealousy commonly found among siblings.⁹⁸

WOMEN'S ROLES

Courtships, living arrangements, husbands' schedules, and relationships with co-wives were distinctive elements in polygamy, but they fit into an already existing social framework that accommodated plural marriages. A comparison of the plural and monogamous wives documented in the Kimball Young collection and the LDS Polygamy and LDS Family Life Oral History Projects at the Redd Center show that polygamous and monogamous wives did the same work. Rather than being forced from the home as Harriet Beecher Stowe suggested or seizing opportunities to establish feminist careers, plural wives, like their monogamous counterparts, departed from the traditional work norm only when pressing circumstances required it, returning to these roles whenever possible. In a parallel situation, historians have found that women performed masculine tasks primarily while crossing the plains.⁹⁹

For the most part, wives worked within their homes, gardens, and yards. Women made virtually every household item except furniture—soap, clothes (often carding, spinning, and weaving), and rugs. They also raised or processed almost all the food their families ate except wheat and flour. They grew extensive gardens and tended orchards. To provide the cash to buy sugar, baking powder, or other items that they could not produce, some sold the excess butter, eggs, and other produce, sold weaving, laundered, cooked, or took in boarders. A few worked outside the home, but usually only for short periods of time during economic emergencies and then only in occupations such as teaching children and nursing that were an “extension of the domestic expressive role.”¹⁰⁰

Polygamy has produced two economic stereotypes. One is that polygamous men were well-to-do church and community leaders who could afford to support plural wives. Their wives were “proto-feminists,” involved in activities outside the home and frequently with careers like doctor, editor, midwife, and social reformer. It is true that prominent church leaders usually were more affluent. David Cannon said that the families of his father, George Mousley Cannon, were not “a real example of how polygamy was because I think we were better off than a lot of polygamous families.”¹⁰¹

It is also true that many plural wives were involved in church auxiliaries, clubs, and the suffrage movement. Scholars frequently refer to Ellis Shipp and

Romania Pratt who went to the eastern United States to study medicine and Martha Hughes Cannon who was a doctor and became a member of the Utah State Senate, winning in a multi-candidate race that also included her husband. According to these studies, these elite women could be both mothers and careerists because their sister wives helped care for their children.

It is true that Ellis Shipp sometimes left her children with a sister wife while she went to medical school. But the question remains: Did polygamy prompt Shipp to become a doctor? Or was Shipp simply like other talented and ambitious women throughout the United States at the turn of the century who found a way to be active in the community and in the home? In other words, did polygamy liberate the elite women or was it simply another factor in a complex formula that allowed certain women the luxury of stepping out of their traditional roles?

Probably this “either/or” question is really a “both/and” one. Many women who served on the general boards of the Relief Society, Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association, and Primary, who became active in the women’s club movement around the turn of the century, and who supervised the women suffrage movement in Utah were the daughters and wives of Mormon church leaders who were, more frequently than “ordinary” members, likely to be polygamists. But just as in other areas of the United States, these women probably would have had leadership positions without polygamy because of their education, comparative affluence, and social position, largely derived from their fathers’ and husbands’ status. Like the elite women who formed clubs in Memphis, Tennessee, Mormon plural wives were active in social reform in Utah.¹⁰² But if they had been the monogamous wives of their husbands, they would have still occupied a privileged social position.

The second economic stereotype is that polygamous men were not able to support their large families so many wives were forced to provide for themselves. While some plural wives like Belle Harris Merrill Nelson Berry felt that their husbands did not provide adequately for them and their children, polygamy was not the only cause. Some Mormon families struggled economically because of poor land, crop failures, and many other problems common across the frontier. Some wives, both monogamous and polygamous, described their poverty and the need to provide some of their own support. Monogamous wife Molly Law Jacobs gleaned wheat so that she could earn money for bacon.¹⁰³ Lydia Hall Turner, the daughter of a monogamous marriage, said, “Mother made straw hats to sell. We would glean the wheat, cut the heads off, and soak the straw in water. I braided the straw while she sewed.”¹⁰⁴ Rose Brown Haynes and Mrs. Clark, daughters of John Brown’s second and third wives, recalled that one wife took in washings and spent the money on “all of us.” They added, “Each wife did whatever she could.”¹⁰⁵ Plural wife Sarah Jardine Shumway of Clarkston kept boarders so she could buy the things she wanted for her home.¹⁰⁶

Although polygamy raised the level of need, it also increased the number of hands to do the work, generally an advantage in a labor-intensive economy. Mary Ann Mansfield Bentley, the wife of Israel Bentley of St. George, divided the workload with her co-wives. Isabel, the first wife, had no children, so twice a year she traveled from southern Utah to Salt Lake City to trade the family's molasses, dried fruit, and other goods for needed materials. Joan, the second wife, wove cloth. Margaret, the third wife, kept their communally occupied home. Marie, another wife and Mary Ann's full sister, dried fruit to sell for supplies. Mary Ann also helped Joan with the weaving and Margaret with the housework. She added, "Besides these heavier duties there was [sic] always carpet rags to sew, quilts to make, stockings to knit, clothing to sew, and in fact so many things to do that our recreation usually consisted in a change of occupation only."¹⁰⁷

With no established pattern on how to divide work, each family adapted its monogamous traditions to meet its specific needs. For example, in the Nathaniel Morris Hodges family, the first two wives, sisters Louisa and Anna Weston, usually lived together on the family ranch near Bear Lake. Louisa, who liked working outside, took charge of the cows. Anna did most of the housework. Charlotte Hancock, the third wife, had her own home.¹⁰⁸

A variation of the financially independent plural wife involves the absent missionary-husbands. While married men with young children are not called on missions now, it was a common practice at the turn of the century whether they were polygamous or monogamous. Usually these missions lasted two or three years. Just as wives crossing the plains sometimes stepped out of their traditional roles to take on masculine chores, so did the wives of missionaries. But they returned to their domestic roles as soon as possible after their husbands returned. Polygamy was not a factor in this temporary change of work assignments.¹⁰⁹

There was no typical way that the wives of missionary husbands cared for their families. Quite frequently, the women became as self-sufficient as possible. Caroline Pederson Hansen, speaking for herself and her co-wife, wrote in her autobiography, "We were very thankful and proud of our husband that he was considered worthy to go on another mission. The Lord has blessed us greatly during the past three years. We had no debts, we each had our own comfortable little home, we were well provided with clothing, we had our cows to milk, some chickens and pigs. The same farms we had gave us some income. We had wood stacked up to last us and we got along happily."¹¹⁰ Joseph Gibbons and his first wife, Mercy Weston Gibbons, moved from Ogden to Laketown near Bear Lake. When Joseph went on a mission, Mercy took over the farm and reported proudly that Joseph was "kind of surprised when he came back and found what a nice farm we had built up while he was gone."¹¹¹

Other families of missionaries received help from the church or from neighbors. Arthur O. Chapman, a son in a monogamous family, recalled that the stake quorum of seventies helped support his father while his mother took



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Dr. Ellis Reynolds Shipp (1847–1939) with one of her graduating classes in obstetrics and nursing, ca 1899.

in laundry to support the family.¹¹² When John Brown of Pleasant Grove went on a mission, his two wives, one of them pregnant, were about to move into a new home. “The people in the community helped.” The cobbler gave shoes and the storekeeper let the family have what they needed. Other neighbors let them stay in their home during the winter while the men finished the new house.¹¹³ Marianne Stettler of Logan, the only wife of Samuel Stettler, had neighbors and friends who helped with the farm work.¹¹⁴ Henry Earl Day remembered his mother stepping into the gap left when his father went on a mission. “[She] still had the chores. She still had a team of horses. . . . We had some cows, and she had to milk the cows every day.” Fortunately, however, “my Uncle Arza took over the farm and ran the farm when Father left.”¹¹⁵

ECONOMIC INFLUENCES ON WOMEN

A prolonged agricultural depression between 1890 and World War II also changed economic conditions for both monogamous and polygamous families. Monogamous child Vera Christensen recalled constant moves to find work between Richfield and Elsinore between 1910 and 1913, when she was born because “the cattle and sheep business was going downhill.” The family then moved to Pima, Arizona, and to farming communities in Idaho. As the children grew, “it became a series of moves from one farm to another ranch to another farm. We would move out to a farm in the summer and back into the town where the schools were because both my father and mother wanted us children

to have good advantages with a good education. By the time my father and mother had reached their twenty-fifth anniversary we had moved twenty-six times.” During the 1930s, her father started working at Ironton Steel Plant near Provo so that Vera’s brothers could attend Brigham Young University. When her father was laid off, he tried to find carpentry jobs. Her mother went back to school and completed a teaching certificate. Utah did not allow married women to teach, so the family returned to Idaho. Later they lived in Logan so that her mother could work in Idaho and her father could find jobs in Cache Valley.¹¹⁶

The polygamous families forced to leave Mexico in 1912 suffered sometimes irreversible financial losses. Charles Edmund Richardson, an attorney in Mexico, wanted to keep all of his families together in Thatcher, Arizona. His second wife, Sarah, however, saw little hope of breaking out of the spiral of poverty and moved to Snowflake, Arizona, where she could be near her brothers. Initially the other three wives stayed in Thatcher, but Edmund had trouble finding work. Sadie, the first wife, and Becky, the third, could earn extra money, but Daisy, the fourth, was so crippled with arthritis that she was unable to provide for herself. Finally, acting on the advice of the stake president, she moved to Logan where her father helped care for her and her children.¹¹⁷

The death of a husband had profound negative effects on the family’s economic condition. Lizzie McFarland, the third wife of John M. McFarland of St. George recalled that, after her husband died in 1900, the wives divided the property equally. The other wives had children who could help them, but Lizzie’s children were too small. She cleaned the schoolhouse, then worked in hotels, and also did washing, ironing, and cooking.¹¹⁸

Thomas Chamberlain of Orderville, who died in 1918, left each of his six wives with a good home but no ready money. Mary Elizabeth Woolley Chamberlain, the sixth wife, recalled that her sons worked in the fields, while Mary made and sold butter. She baked cookies, which she sold to tourists, and she also made and sold hats.¹¹⁹

Monogamous wives also had to provide for themselves during widowhood. Lula A. Rigby Larsen’s father, William Frederick Rigby Jr., died when she was four, leaving her mother, Sarah Angeline Clarke Rigby, to care for twelve children. She recalled, “We did not have a lot of money, but we always had good food because we grew big gardens. We had our own chickens. We had milk, and we had meat.” Her mother sold butter. “People in town would request that they get Sarah Rigby’s butter because they had used it year after year and liked it.” The family also sold eggs. Lula remembered her mother would let her use one egg to spend for candy. But although Sarah took care of her children and provided a happy home life, Lula said her mother took William’s death “very hard. She had been president of the Primary and president of the Relief Society and had been very active in the Church. I suppose it was because of the sorrow, strain and all. After that I don’t remember her going out too much.”¹²⁰

SUMMARY

Did Mormon polygamy move Utah women into a lifespan pattern different than those women who were monogamous? While some nineteenth-century contemporaries of those women argued that polygamy destroyed the family and later scholars applauded the plural wives' independence, my conclusion, based on the data reported here, is that neither case was typical. Individual situations and personalities were important in how plural wives responded to their situations.

Since the Mormon church did not have established rules on how to set up a plural household, wives and husbands adapted monogamous traditions to create a new lifestyle. Such distinctive elements as courtship, marriage, and living arrangements required variations from the monogamous pattern; but as the many examples show, no uniform pattern existed. In the same way that no two monogamous families are ever exactly the same, no two polygamous families were either. Plural wives had to relate to another wife or wives and to her children (and also to her husband's relationship to that other wife and children). They modeled those relationships on relationships inherited from the larger monogamous culture. Because of their religious commitment and their acceptance of polygamy as God's commandment, many plural wives overlooked or suppressed the expected jealousies and worked hard on adapting themselves to their new marriage style.

A focus on how polygamy was different from monogamy overlooks the many ways in which women's lives were the same in both polygamous and monogamous households. Women did the same type of work in both. They depended on similar resources when the husband was absent, whether he was working out of the community, serving a mission, or dead. Polygamy did not create a unique family style but rather adapted traditional nineteenth- and early twentieth-century women's roles.

NOTES

1. Lois Kelley was writing the original article on polygamy for this volume. Unfortunately, her death prevented her from finishing it. Her friends attempted to complete the chapter as a memorial to her but it was not sufficiently close to completion. While Lois would not have agreed with all of my conclusions, I have tried to use some of her material to give her a voice in this book. —Jessie L. Embry
2. Harriet Beecher Stowe, quoted in Julie Roy Jeffrey, *Frontier Women: The Trans-Mississippi West, 1840–1880* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979), 149.
3. Joan Smyth Iverson, "Feminist Implications of Mormon Polygyny," *Feminist Studies* 10 (1984): 502–22; see also Stephanie Smith Goodman, "Plural Wives," in *Mormon Sisters*, edited by Claudia L. Bushman (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing, 1976), 104–5.
4. Julie Roy Jeffrey, *Frontier Women: Civilizing the West?: 1840–1880*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979), 182; rev. ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 150. This quotation combines the wording from both editions.

5. My focus here is the experiences of plural wives and how they compare to those of monogamous wives during the same time period in Utah. While this paper provides some historical background, interested readers should turn to other sources for a more complete background, beginning with the two bibliographic essays, Martha Sonntag Bradley, "Out of the Closet and into the Fire: The New Mormon Historians' Take on Polygamy," and Todd Compton, "The New Mormon Women's History," in *Excavating Mormon Pasts: The New Historiography of the Last Half Century*, edited by Newell G. Bringhurst and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2004), 303–23, and 273–303 respectively; Davis Bitton, "Mormon Polygamy [1907–77]," *Journal of Mormon History* (1977): 1–118; Patricia Lyn Scott, "Mormon Polygamy: A Bibliography, 1977–92," *Journal of Mormon History* 19 (Spring 1993): 1993–55); and Patricia Lyn Scott, "Mormon Polygamy: A Bibliography, 1900–2004," in *Wrestling with the Principle: Essays from the Journal of Mormon History*, edited by Lavina Fielding Anderson, introduction by Larry Foster (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, forthcoming).
6. James Edward Hulett, Jr., "The Sociological and Social Psychological Aspects of the Mormon Polygamous Family" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1939); Kimball Young, *Isn't One Wife Enough?* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1954).
7. Elsie Chamberlain Carroll, interviewed by James Hulett, 1937, 4, Kimball Young Collection, Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
8. Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981), section 132, verses 3, 61; hereafter parenthetically in the text as D&C by section and verse.
9. Todd Compton, "Fanny Alger Smith Custer," *Journal of Mormon History* 22 (Spring 1996): 174–207; and his *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 25–43.
10. Emma's opposition is referred to in verses 51–57 of this revelation and, when Hyrum read it to her, she not only rejected its content but burned it. Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986), 4, 6; Danel W. Bachman, "New Light on an Old Hypothesis: The Ohio Origins of the Revelation on Eternal Life," *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978), 19–32; Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippets Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith: Prophet's Wife, "Elect Lady," Polygamy's Foe* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1984), 152, also see 95–105, 130–56, 297–98.
11. Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 22–23, 65–69.
12. Orson Pratt, August 29, 1952, *Journal of Discourses*, 27 vols. (Liverpool and London: Latter-day Saint Book Depot, 1843–86), 1:53–66.
13. Juanita Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 2:449–50.
14. Quoted in Gustive O. Larson, "Government, Politics, and Conflict," in *Utah's History*, edited by Richard D. Poll, Thomas G. Alexander, Eugene E. Campbell, and David E. Miller (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 244.

15. Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 107–9; Larson, “Government, Politics, and Conflict,” 250–52.
16. Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 108.
17. Quoted in Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 111; Larson, “Government, Politics, and Conflict,” 254; Bruce A. Van Orden, *Prisoner for Conscience Sake: The Life of George Reynolds* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992); Sarah Barringer Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2002); Sarah Barringer Gordon and Kathryn M. Daynes, *Prosecution of Mormon Polygamists in Utah Territory* (forthcoming).
18. Larson, “The Crusade and Manifesto,” in *Utah’s History*, 259–60.
19. *Ibid.*, 267.
20. D. Michael Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriage, 1890–1904,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Spring 1985): 29–30; Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 132.
21. Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 138.
22. Official Declaration 1, Doctrine and Covenants; Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 147.
23. Annie Richardson Johnson, *Heartbeats of Colonia Diaz* (Mesa, Ariz.: n.pub., 1972), 294.
24. Quoted in Jessie L. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 45–46.
25. *Journal of Discourses*, 1:60–62.
26. Van Wagoner, *Polygamy*, 109.
27. Ida Stewart Pacy, interviewed by Hames Hullett, 1937, Kimball Young Collection.
28. Eunice Stewart Harris, Life Story, n.d.
29. Young, *Isn’t One Wife Enough*, 118–19.
30. Quoted in Nels Anderson, *Deseret Saints* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1942), 131–32. H. H. Bancroft, whom Anderson is quoting, identifies her as “wife #1 of a leading apostle.”
31. Annie Gardner, interviewed by James Hulett, n.d., 3, Young Collection.
32. Annie Clark Tanner, *A Mormon Mother* (Salt Lake City: Tanner Trust Fund, University of Utah Library, 1976), 129–30.
33. Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriage,” 48–49.
34. *Ibid.*, 49; Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 147.
35. Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriage,” 49.
36. Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991), 271–73.
37. Rose B. Hayes and Mrs. [full name not given] Clark, interviewed by Fay Ollerton, 1936, 7, Young Collection.
38. Elizabeth Ann Schurtz McDonald, interviewed by James Hulett, 1936, 1, Young Collection.
39. Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriage,” 51.
40. Conover Wright, interviewed by James Hulett, 1938, 2, Young Collection.

41. Lorin “Dutch” Leavitt, Oral History, interviewed by Leonard Grover, 1980, 5, LDS Polygamy Oral History Project, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter Polygamy Oral History Project).
42. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families*, 14–15.
43. Quoted in Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 161.
44. *Ibid.*, 169, 174.
45. B. Carmon Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 265, 326.
46. Van Wagoner, *Polygamy: A History*, 169, 174; Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 67–68.
47. In 1979, Maude Taylor Bentley, the third wife of Joseph D. Bentley, died, prompting Eugene E. Campbell, BYU professor of history, to suggest that the Redd Center interview the children of polygamous families who were senior citizens. The Redd Center contacted one plural wife who refused to be interviewed. Edward Christian Eyring and his wives, Caroline Romney Eyring and Emma Romney Eyring, are just one example of a plural husband and wives who died in the 1940s. Soon afterward, the Charles Redd Center launched its LDS Polygamy Oral History Project.
48. The only comprehensive treatment of contemporary plural marriage with Mormon roots is Brian C. Hales, *Modern Polygamy and Mormon Fundamentalists: The Generations after the Manifesto* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, forthcoming), which spends more than two-thirds of its pages on post-1904 developments. Martha Sonntag Bradley, *Kidnapped from That Land: The Government Raids on the Short Creek Polygamists* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993), focuses on one group. Attorney Ken Driggs has written several significant legal articles: “After the Manifesto: Modern Polygamy and Fundamentalist Mormons,” *Journal of Church and State* 32 (Spring 1990): 367-89; “Twentieth-Century Polygamy and Fundamentalist Mormons in Southern Utah,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 24 (Winter 1991): 44-58; “Utah Supreme Court Decides Polygamist Adoption Case,” *Sunstone* 15 (September 1991): 67-68; and “Who Shall Raise the Children?: Vera Black and the Rights of Polygamous Utah Parents,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 60 (Winter 1992): 27-46. Three anthropological/sociological studies are Irwin Altman and Joseph Ginat, *Polygamous Families in Contemporary Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), and two works by Janet Bennion: *Women of Principle: Female Networking in Contemporary Mormon Polygamy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), and *Desert Patriarchy: Mormon and Mennonite Communities in the Chihuahuan Valley* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004). The LDS Church considers fundamentalists schismatics.
49. Stanley Ivins, “Notes on Polygamy,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 35 (Fall 1967): 311–17.
50. Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 199.

51. Larry Logue, "A Time of Marriage: Monogamy and Polygamy in a Mormon Town," *Journal of Mormon History* 11 (1984): 3–26.
52. Dean L. May, "People on the Mormon Frontier: Kanab's Families of 1874," *Journal of Family History* 1 (Winter 1976): 169–89.
53. Lowell "Ben" Bennion, "The Incidence of Mormon Polygamy in 1880: 'Dixie' versus Davis Stake," *Journal of Mormon History* 11 (1984): 30–31, 36–37; Lowell "Ben" Bennion, "The Geography of Polygamy Among the Mormons in 1880," Paper presented at the Mormon History Association annual meeting, May 11, 1984, Provo, Utah. A forthcoming book by Lowell "Ben" Bennion, Kathryn M. Daynes, Charles "Chuck" Hatch, with Thomas Carter, *Plural Wives and Tangled Lives: Polygamy's Place in Mormon Society, 1850s-1880s* is examining Utah communities (one per county) and will answer many questions about the numbers of polygamists in the state.
54. See Jessie L. Embry, "Overworked Stereotypes or Accurate Historical Images: The Images of Polygamy in *Giant Joshua*," *Sunstone* 14 (April 1990): 42–46.
55. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families*, 31, 35–36.
56. See charts in Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families*, 37.
57. Pamela A. R. Blakely, "Co-Wives in Africa: A Discussion of Polygyny in Eastern Zaire," Lecture presented for the Women's Research Institute, Brigham Young University, January 23, 1985.
58. Michael Gordon, "The Ideal Husband as Depicted in the Nineteenth-Century Marriage Manual," in *The American Man*, edited by Elizabeth H. Pleck and John N. Pleck (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980), 150–54.
59. Emma Hoth McNeil, interviewed by James Hulett, 1938, 2, Young Collection.
60. Bryant R. Clark, Oral History, interviewed by Chris Nelson, 1981, 5–6, Polygamy Oral History Project.
61. Lula Roskelley Mortensen, Oral History, interviewed by Jessie L. Embry, 1976, 13, Polygamy Oral History Project.
62. Laura Fackrell Chamberlain, Oral History, interviewed by James Hulett, 1935, 1–2, Young Collection.
63. Sigrid H. Skanchy, interviewed by James Hulett, 1937, 1–2, Young Collection.
64. Theodore C. Bennion, Oral History, interviewed by Jessie L. Embry, 1976, 3, Polygamy Oral History Project.
65. Heber C. Maughan, interviewed by James Hulett, 1937, 2, Young Collection.
66. Winnifred Harker Smith, Oral History, interviewed by Jessie L. Embry, 1982, 15, Polygamy Oral History Project.
67. Caroline Pederson Hansen, "Autobiography," in *Our Pioneer Heritage*, compiled by Kate B. Carter, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1958–77), 12:71.
68. Clarence Allen, Oral History, interviewed by James Comish, 1979, 2–3, LDS Polygamy Project; Evan B. Murray, interviewed by Hulett, 1937, Young Collection.
69. Douglas Cannon, oral history, interviewed by Leonard Grover, 1980, 1, 6, Polygamy Oral History Project.

70. Quoted in Jean Bickmore White, "Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon: Doctor, Wife, Legislator, Exile," in *Sister Saints*, edited by Vicky Burgess-Olson (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 391–92.
71. Quoted in Patricia Rasmussen Eaton-Gadsby and Judith Rasmussen Dushku, "Emmeline Blanche Woodward Wells: 'I Have Risen Triumphant,'" in *Sister Saints*, 467.
72. Julia Winter Smith, interviewed by James Hulett, 1936, 4, Young Collection.
73. Meda Lucille Jenkins Parker, Oral History, interviewed by Jessie L. Embry, 1980, Polygamy Oral History Project, 5.
74. Archie L. Jenkins, Oral History, interviewed by Leonard Grover, 1980, 5, Polygamy Oral History Project.
75. Sabra Naegle Foremaster, Oral History, interviewed by Jessie L. Embry, 1982, 18–19, Polygamy Oral History Project.
76. Ida Stewart Pacey, interviewed by James Hulett, 1937, 2, Young Collection.
77. Franklin Lyman Stout, Oral History, interviewed by Stevan Martin Hales, 1982, 2, Polygamy Oral History Project.
78. Wasel Black Washburn, Oral History, interviewed by Amy Bentley, 1983, Polygamy Oral History Project, 4; Edna Cowley Austin, Oral History, interviewed by Leonard Grover, 1980, Polygamy Oral History Project, 11; Alma Elizabeth Mineer Felt, interviewed by James Hulett, 1935, 5–6, Young Collection.
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80. Charles Smith Merrill, Oral History, interviewed by Amy Bentley, 1984, 10, 14, Polygamy Oral History Project.
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83. Mary Jane Rigby Roskelley, interviewed by James Hulett, 1937, 2, Young Collection.
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85. Ibid.; Rebecca Roskelley Lewis, Oral History, interviewed by Leonard Grover, 1980, 3, Polygamy Oral History Project; Lula Roskelley Mortensen, Oral History, Appendix, 8, Polygamy Oral History Project.
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87. Isabel McFarland Bingham, interviewed by James Hulett, 1937, 2, Young Collection.
88. Elizabeth (Lizzie) Adams McFarland, interviewed by James Hulett, 1936, 2–3, Young Collection.
89. Ruth May Fox, interviewed by James Hulett, 1935, 4, Young Collection.
90. Mortensen, Oral History, Appendix, 8; Roxey Roskelley Rogers, Oral History, interviewed by Jessie L. Embry, 1976, 10, Polygamy Oral History Project; Lewis, Oral History, 5.

91. Mary Elizabeth Woolley Chamberlain, *Autobiography*, 106, typescript, 1936–39, Perry Special Collections, Lee Library.
92. Felt, interviewed by James Fulett, 7.
93. Young, *Isn't One Wife Enough?* 56–57; R. Collin Mangrum, “Further the Cause of Zion: An Overview of the Mormon Ecclesiastical Court System in Early Utah,” *Journal of Mormon History* 10 (1983): 79–90; Eugene E. Campbell and Bruce L. Campbell, “Divorce among Mormon Polygamists: Extent and Explanations,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 46 (Winter 1978): 4–23. See also chap. 2.
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95. John Mack Faragher, *Men and Women on the Overland Trail* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1979), 138, 140.
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100. D. H. J. Morgan, *Social Theory and the Family* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), 141.
101. David Cannon, Oral History, interviewed by Laurel Schmidt, 1981, 15, Polygamy Oral History Project.
102. For information see Anne Firor Scott, “Mormon Women, Other Women: Paradoxes and Challenges,” *Journal of Mormon History* 13 (1986–87): 2–20; Marsha Wedell, *Elite Women and the Reform Impulse in Memphis, 1875–1915* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991).
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104. Lydia Hall Turner, typescript, 2, Utah Historical Survey, Bancroft Library.
105. Hayes and Clark, interviewed by Ollerton, 4.
106. Charles M. Shumway and Sarah Jardine Shumway, interviewed by James Hulett, 1937, 1, Young Collection.
107. Mary Ann Mansfield Bentley, *Life Sketch* (Provo, Utah: BYU Library, 1938), 9, 11, 12, quotation from p. 12.
108. Joseph Hodges, interviewed by James Hulett, 1937, 1, Young Collection; Morris Hodges, oral history, interviewed by Jessie L. Embry, 1979, 3, Polygamy Oral History Project.
109. For another view of missionary wives, see Linda Thatcher, “Women Alone: The Economic and Emotional Plight of Early LDS Women,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Winter 1992): 45–57.
110. Hansen, “Autobiography,” 71.
111. Mercy Weston Gibbons, interviewed by James Hulett, 1938, 2, Young Collection.

112. Arthur O. Chapman, interviewed by Martha C. Martin, 1983, 11, LDS Family Life Oral History Project, Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, Manuscript Division, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter Family Life Project).
113. Hayes and Clark, interviewed by Ollerton, 5.
114. Elmer Stettler, Oral History, interviewed by Jessie L. Embry, 1987, 2, LDS German-Speaking Immigrants Oral History Project, Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, Manuscript Division, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
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117. Jessie L. Embry, “Charles Edmund Richardson Families: A Case Study of Mormon Polygamy,” *Richardson Family History* (Provo, Utah: Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, 1982), 16–17.
118. McFarland, interviewed by Hulett, 9.
119. Chamberlain, *Autobiography*, 227–29.
120. Lula A. Larsen, Oral History, interviewed by Rochelle Fairbourn, 1982, 1, 6–8, Family Life Project.