CO-WIVES, HUSBAND, AND THE MORMON POLYGYNOUS FAMILY[1]

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Mormons in polygynous communities glorify plural or celestial marriage, disapproving of romantic intimacy between a man and any "favorite" wife. Most men prefer, but do not readily acknowledge, forming a close bond with a particular wife. Many husbands experience guilt over their inability to uphold the community's ideal of harmonious or plural love. Romantic passions unite and divide the polygynous family. The interplay between romantic passion, the desire for dyadic intimacy, combined with a deep-seated commitment to religious principles create stress and anxiety. (Polygynous Mormons, fundamentalism, family, pair bond)

The impulse to form a pair bond is ubiquitous. It is present in varying degrees in all societies, even in those that discourage its formation, such as those organized around the institution of arranged marriage or the creation of a polygynous family. The pair bond is an attachment based on shared sexual intimacy and, at times, a deep sense of mutual involvement and belonging. It is seldom a casual undertaking, nor is it necessarily lifelong in duration. Participants in a pair bond assume that sexual and emotional exclusivity is critical for both partners. Given the pair bond's importance, individuals tend to intensely monitor their partner's behavior for signs of extra-marital interests (Jankowiak et al. 2001). Because an individual's desire for offspring is often intertwined with mating interests (Barrett et al. 2002), it is difficult for the investigator to determine whether an individual is successful in separating desire for emotional exclusivity from concerns with parenting. In societies where polygynous or plural love is a fundamental principle of social organization, any form of dyadic love bond, however tacitly expressed, induces a strong emotional response (see, e.g., Tiwari 2008 on fraternal brothers in a polyandrous community). Desiring or forming a pair bond in such communities often generates intense feelings of shame or guilt. In the Fundamentalist Mormon polygynous communities in the western United States, shame and guilt are often a source of an individual's anger, resentment and, at times, rage that periodically erupt in the plural family. This anger arises from feeling disrespected within the family, and signifies one's inability to achieve the ideal of a harmonious plural family. Another source of an individual's resentment stems from such tangible factors as not having one's personal, often pragmatic, needs met.

These are clearly seen in the relationship between fundamentalist Mormon theological notions of salvation, agency, and the pursuit of life-satisfaction in a polygynous community. The ideals are part of a culture that contributes to the

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formation of polygynous families and largely accounts for the behavioral variations found within them. The desire for emotional exclusivity in love affects how polygynous Mormon women and men relate to one another, and how individuals respond to and rationalize their satisfactions and dissatisfactions in a polygynous family.

THE MORMON POLYGYNOUS COMMUNITY[2]

The fundamentalist Mormons' lifestyle has been the target of governmental prosecution. For most of its 70-year existence, the community has repeatedly encountered harassment and political persecution. Since 1882, federal and state governments sought to disenfranchise the Mormons who practice polygyny. As a result, many polygynists went into hiding, and fled into remote areas of Utah, Idaho, Arizona, and into Mexico. By 1897, almost 200 Mormons were sent to prison for practicing polygyny (Bohannan 1985:81). However, despite the arrests and opposition, several church leaders, including some of the founders of the Colorado City community, believed that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) had abandoned core religious principles when it outlawed polygyny in 1890 (Bradley 1993). The disagreement over the importance of polygyny continues to this day. In this respect, Mormons practicing polygyny can be termed, and are for the purpose of this discussion, fundamentalist.

From the 1930s until the 1950s, Colorado City (then known as Short Creek) was the site of numerous government raids. The last and largest took place in 1953, when 39 men and 86 women were arrested, and their 263 children were placed in foster homes for up to two years (Bradley 1993:110; Von Wagner 1986). An unintended consequence of the raids was to "strengthen everyone's conviction and dedication to maintain their lifestyle" (Bradley 1993:110). In effect, outside pressure resulted in strengthening the community's values and beliefs. Today, Colorado City, its twin city, Hildale, and the nearby township of Centennial Park persist as enclave cultures.

Since the late 1960s, a greater, albeit reluctant, tolerance has emerged toward the polygynous community. Although the western states remain adamant in their insistence that polygyny is illegal, they had, until the events involving the Fundamentalist community in Eldorado, Texas, adopted a tolerant posture toward the more than 40,000 polygynous people living in western North America. At a public hearing held May 24, 2008 in St. George, Arizona and Utah state officials publicly declared they have no intention of raiding Mormon communities as long as there is no sexual abuse or under legal-age marriages being performed. Given increasing American tolerance toward alternative family forms and child rearing practices, Mormon polygyny has become a public secret. At the start of the twenty-first century, the de facto policy of tolerance gave way to more active state monitoring of Colorado City/Centennial Park's affairs. Unlike in earlier eras when men and women in a polygynous marriage were the targets of prosecution, today the primary concern and focus of law enforcement is with incestuous relationships and incidences of statutory

rape (i.e., an adult having consensual sexual intercourse with an unmarried female under 16 years of age).[3] Anyone over the age of 18 who wants to be in a plural family is left alone.

Colorado City/Centennial Park is one of seven polygynous communities found in western North America and northern Mexico. Each community is separately governed and maintains only nominal, if any, contact with the others. The population of Colorado City/Centennial Park is approximately 6,500, with over half under 12 years of age. Unlike nineteenth-century Mormonism, where an estimated 10 to 20 percent of the families were polygynous (Foster 1992), in 1996 more than 45 percent (158 out of 350 Colorado City/Centennial Park families) formed a polygynous household. Because people practice "Big House" polygyny where everyone lives together, the houses range in size from three bedroom mobile trailers to 35,000-square-foot mansions that are in various stages of completion or renovation.

In 1986 the community divided, primarily along family lines, into two separate religious wards. The First Ward was more conservative and hierarchical in orientation; obedience became a high virtue. The Second Ward, composed of more college educated and professional businessmen, tended to emphasize individual choice and responsibility. In the past, both values were important for living a religious life. In the aftermath of the split, both communities gradually redefined themselves as each other's alter ego. The First Ward embraced blind obedience and the importance of following one leader, or prophet (currently Warren Jeffs). The Second Ward organized itself around a political system of seven elected, or "called," leaders. Significantly, the leaders were considered to have readier access to God's intentions, but this connection could be open to every mature male (i.e., anyone over the age of 14) in the congregation. The result is that the Second Ward leadership makes suggestions, whereas the First Ward makes non-negotiable policy statements that are expected to be followed by everyone. The First Ward was well managed under the leadership of Rulon Jeffs, but when he passed away and his son Warren was appointed as the prophet, policies seldom seen before in Colorado City were instituted (e.g., taking away a man's wives and giving them to others, first cousin marriages, and the marriages of teenage girls to middle-aged men). None of these policies were implemented in the Second Ward.

Contemporary Mormon fundamentalists are unlike those religious sects that disapprove of and withdraw from mainstream American culture. For most Centennial Park residents, life is to be enjoyed, and they do not hesitate to partake of some of life's delights (e.g., they drink coffee and alcohol, visit the national parks, and shop at a nearby mall). Common dinner topics range from religious issues, current events, the entertainment value of "The Lord of the Rings," and the benefits of flaxseed oil for preventing illness.

Colorado City/Centennial Park lacks a well developed economy, which necessitates most residents seeking employment outside the community. Most men work in the regional construction and interstate trucking industries, while women and other

men are accountants, architects, janitors, masseuses, caretakers, nurses, mechanics and, until the First Ward's recent rejection of public school education, principals and teachers. The $14,500 average income is nearly double Appalachia's $8,595, but is one of the lowest in the western United States (Zoellner 1998).

MORMON THEOLOGY

There are several firm tenets in the fundamentalist Mormon theology. God is a polygynist who loves all his children but confers on men an elevated status which insures that men who live righteously will obtain a higher spiritual standing in the next life. Men occupy leadership positions in their families and on the church council, and in the next life can become god-heads with dominion over all their descendants.

A woman's standing is determined by her performance in the highly valued roles of mother and wife. Like Southern Baptists, Mormon fundamentalists interpret the scripture literally and believe that a woman should ideally submit to her husband's wishes and that the husband's duty is to provide for, protect, and guide his family in all things righteousness. In fundamentalism, women achieve salvation through obedience, first to their fathers and then to their husbands by becoming "sister-wives" (i.e., co-wives) in a "celestial," or plural, family. The marital contract "seals" a man and woman together "for time and eternity" in the Heavenly Kingdom (Musser 1944). Because this bond extends beyond the grave into an eternal world, it is in a woman's "best interest to advance her husband's interests" (i.e., she should bear many children [Bohannan 1985:81]), while at the same time strive to uphold her husband's authority, especially in front of his children.

Another religious tenet holds that the father-son relationship is the axis for the transmission of cultural and spiritual essence. First articulated by Joseph Smith in 1832, this tenet is a "theme that predominates throughout the Book of Mormon" (Clark and Clark 1991:286). It is based on the belief of a Melchizedek priesthood whose line began when the great priest Melchizedek ordained Abraham, who handed down the keys of the kingdom to his son Isaac, who passed them to his sons, and so forth. All literal descendants of Abraham are eligible to receive the priest-hood, which will unlock the "keys of the mysteries of [God's] kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God" (Palmer 1964:19). This belief is the basis of Colorado City/Centennial Park's insistence that the only acceptable form of religious expression is that of the Melchizedek priesthood.

The polygynous family's behavioral expectations are derived from these theological axioms which uphold men as the religious center and authority in the family. From an organizational perspective, serious and consistent familial attention should be on the father/husband as the ultimate adjudicator of family affairs and the representative of spiritual authority. In effect, this becomes a patriarchal family system (Altman and Ginat 1996).

The fundamentalists' conviction is that they are God's chosen people born to live "the fullness of the Gospel," and thus to create what the prophet Joseph Smith declared was God's ideal, the Celestial Kingdom on Earth (Baur 1988). The fundamentalists believe that God expects them to create His family ideal while living on Earth. Some fundamentalists point out that they will be granted special abilities to live in harmony and in a plural family in the afterlife. The best they can do at present is to learn from their character building experiences that prepare them to live in the next life. Unlike Islamic societies that permit polygyny, fundamentalist Mormons have made polygynous marriage the key to salvation. The religious leaders continually lecture their congregations about the importance of plural marriage, and men with three or more wives are regarded as spiritually purer than those with two or one.

The plural family lies at the heart of the fundamentalists' communitarian impulses to create a spiritually unified and harmonious society. The maintenance of harmony, unity, and regularity depends on the strength not only of father-son relationships and mother-children relationships, but also the relationships between co-wives. The plural family is held together as much by a collective will and effort to maintain an image of a harmonious family as it is by individual actions.

MALE AND FEMALE PERSPECTIVES ON ROMANTIC LOVE

Mormon theology includes three zones: the pre-existence before souls received their bodies; the Earthly existence; and a future existence in Heaven where a man is a god over his own planet and his wives serve as his spiritual advisors. Members of the LDS believe that before birth everyone lives with God as a spirit. Individuals may meet someone who in their previous existence had been promised to wed, but are much more likely to meet family members rather than a spouse. The fundamentalists believe that spouses were promised to one another, for time and eternity, in the pre-existence state. Individuals must, therefore, strive to find their "true love" and, in a sense, remarry. Failure to strive in such a way can lead to an awkward situation whereby one's Earthly spouse will differ from one's Heavenly spouse. To ensure that death will not result in the separation of the spouses, it is imperative that the couple follow God's will. To this end, the priesthood's council members, as God's representatives, are eagerly sought in matters of the heart. One of the council's most important functions is to help community members find their celestial mates. The priesthood council is continually involved within itself and the community in its effort to sort out individual matters of the heart and ultimately marital placement.

Fundamentalists have two models of love. Both are official and often contentious as the logic of one model often undermines that of the other. The more accepted model is a notion of romantic or predestined love. The other emphasizes individual choice or agency and stands in opposition to priesthood authority. It asserts that people are predestined to marry the spouse(s) they had in their pre-Earthly spirit state. Because they believe that pre-existence lovers will be united at the end of the

world, many individuals feel there is danger in following personal inclinations. It could result in selecting the wrong person or one who had been promised to someone else. To avoid this, it is best to ask a member of the priesthood council or one's father to pray for insight as to whom you "belong to" in order to marry the right person.

So strong is this conviction that youth are admonished to not "get involved in 'puppy love' or other kinds of opposite sex stuff." In spite of this, after 10 p.m., a large number of teenagers often slip out of their homes to stroll, often in deep conversation with one another. For the more adventurous, there are regular bonfire parties held some distance from the settlement. The parties are known for heavy beer drinking, flirting, heavy kissing, and an occasional tryst. These meetings, which can develop into love bonds, are held in check by the perception of the priesthood elders' "vision" and authority to know to whom a person has been promised (in the previous life and future life). Given the different times involved in living with a mate, it is imperative that the proper individuals are placed together to avoid an awkwardness in the future where a man or woman cannot stay with the Earthly spouse, but must return to be with a past spouse. With fundamentalist Mormons, the priesthood is thought to have the insight to guide an individual in selecting his or her "mate for all eternity." The community youth are aware of this, as illustrated by a ninth-grade boy's explanation of how a person can find his true love:

> It is important to pray to God and ask for a sign [for whom you are promised]. I recently did this and a feeling came over me and I know I am in love. She is older than I am. She is 18 . . . . But we must wait as I am too young. I will go to the head of the priesthood council and see if he thinks my feeling is an authentic one. If it is, he will be able to tell her to wait for me. If not, then she was not the one for me.

He was told that he was not the one as she had been promised as a second wife to another man. The ninth grader accepted, with regret, the leadership's decision.

There are differences in how men's and women's values are expressed in ordinary conversation. Women prefer to talk about the joys and concerns of raising many children and in finding and sustaining an enduring love. In contrast, men often talk about the number of children they have, the difficulty in finding wives, and the burden and responsibilities involved in caring for a large family. One aspect of the male perspective is aptly captured in a folk expression that holds, "Women should be nine months pregnant, nine months nursing, nine months resting, and then nine months pregnant." For a few women, the expression is evidence that some husbands think of their wives primarily as reproductive agents. Yet, I found that if a woman wanted to have greater birth spacing, her husband invariably agreed. Further, most women are proud of having many children and thus have a positive identification with the folk adage.

Although more than 40 percent of the women in Colorado City/Centennial Park will divorce during their lives, it is not preferred. Women are aware that men are

eager to "expand their kingdom" through obtaining as many wives as possible, even if they are divorced women.[4] In Colorado City/Centennial Park, a woman who wants to remarry will always find a spouse. Still, women consider it better to choose wisely and form a good marriage, and thus "add to the Lord's flock." To this end, prayer, visionary dreams, and one's inner prompting are evaluated in an attempt to understand God's will.

Because marriage confronts women at an earlier age than men, young women are more preoccupied with finding their "true love." For young men, marriage is an abstraction that will not involve them until later. As the time for marriage approaches, many young women (aged 16 or 17) decide they do not want to have a plural marriage and they leave the community, and thus their religion. The women who remain must confront the dual demands of personal preference and religious authority

While some placement marriages are straightforward and the individuals readily accept their own or a priesthood council elder's vision, there are cases where personal convictions result in the rejection of an elder's vision. A 20-year age difference between spouses does not trouble most fundamentalist women, but they are concerned when the age difference exceeds 20 years. For example, a 22-year-old woman was deeply troubled about the possibility of being placed with a man more than 20 years her senior. She said:

> I thought about this, prayed on it, and realized that nothing was coming from my prayers. So I just picked a young man. I did not want to be placed with an old man. I know so many girls who cry for years after the wedding 'cause they were placed with an old man and not a younger man whom they preferred [i.e., had a "love crush" on]. I got a young man who is nice and I am happy.

In one case, a 22-year-old woman who had run away from the community returned and asked to be placed in a plural family. At first she thought that she would be placed with a 70-year-old man. If that had happened, she would have rejected the placement.

> I did not want to be married to that old man [a man 40 years older]. I was set to refuse. However, when it turned out to be Ron [who was 20 years her senior and married], I agreed to marry him. In fact, I felt relieved and sank back into the couch in a state of calmness. I knew it would be okay.

From such accounts it should not be assumed that most placement marriages involve huge age differences or result in unhappiness and misery. Some do; others do not. In most placement marriages individuals, particularly teenage women, follow the recommendations of their parents and the priesthood council. Usually not deeply involved with a spouse, the individual enters marriage expecting that in time "love will come." A 27-year-old-woman admitted, on the eve of her tenth wedding anniversary, "During the first three years of my marriage I did not even like my husband, but now I can say I truly love him." She is not atypical. Several couples acknowledged that they fell in love after they were placed.

As the community values both obedience and free choice (or "agency," an expression taken from nineteenth-century transcendentalist philosophy), youth are taught to follow the priesthood's recommendations as well as listen to their inner prompting. This often results in dissonance, as youth are told what they should do, while disagreeing with the "recommendation." This can result in their going against their father and the priesthood council. When this occurs, individuals must reconcile the authenticity of their romantic feelings with their religious convictions. Because Mormon theology holds that God's will can be known through acts of introspection and personal revelation, it respects an individual's right to personal convictions, and therefore to disagree with any recommended marriage proposal. This religious tenet gives romantically entangled couples ground on which to argue that the council might be mistaken in its judgment.

Although an individual's testimony of being divinely inspired is never directly challenged, the usual response of the council is to wonder whether God or the Devil is the real source of the inspiration. Still, the notion of agency is an effective counterpoint to the community's stresses on obedience to male elders. For example, a 19-year-old woman who planned to marry her high-school sweetheart attracted the attention of a man who saw her in church and thought she belonged in his family. She rejected his request for marriage. Not to be denied, he went to the Second Ward leader, who asked the girl and her father to consider the proposal. The girl's father, a successful businessman, rejected it and supported his daughter. Given the level of support against the marriage, the man withdrew his request and the girl married her high school sweetheart.

This case reveals that the Second Ward religious leadership can suggest but not command. It further reveals the power of the notion of agency that includes the freedom to choose a spouse. Second Warders believe that no one has the right to order anyone to marry someone they do not approve of. Further, the case illustrates the value and importance placed on prior Heavenly involvement. Because the man argued that he thought the girl had been promised to him in her prior life, the young woman had to entertain the plausibility of his request. In the end, with the support of her parents, she decided to follow her own feelings for the young man she felt in love with while in high school. In effect, the youth's personal convictions of proper fit trumped the church elder's claim of celestial insight.

An example of inter-generational antagonism is the tale of a young woman who at age 15 defied her parents and the priesthood council's insistence that she marry a 62-year-old man. She said, "He was so sure that I would agree that he immediately began to build a new house for me, while keeping his first wife in an old trailer. After six years of waiting and pleading, he finally accepted the fact that I never would marry him. I wanted to marry someone whom I love, and I did." In sum, marriages in Colorado City/Centennial Park can be quasi-arranged or free-choice.

ARRANGED MARRIAGES

Pragmatic realities can affect marital decisions. Perhaps the most important is the "will of the father." Because the father holds religious authority over his family, he can influence whom his children marry, especially those under age 17. If a man believes he was promised to a particular girl, he will ideally first seek permission of the girl's father to marry her. If the father approves and the daughter agrees, then the couple will go to the priesthood council and ask for its approval and blessings. If there are no complications, such as someone else wanting to marry the young woman, the request is granted.

In this setting, fathers often exchanged daughters in order to marry them. The daughter then entered the man's home as a plural wife. Since these exchanges were seldom immediate and individuals had to wait until the girl became a teenager, there was always anxiety that the promised daughter might be given to someone else, or that she might refuse the arranged marriage and elope. Consequently, men wanted to marry off their daughters before they could decide to select from within their age cohort. By the 1990s, Second Ward fathers began to negotiate marital exchanges not for themselves but for a favorite son, or in some cases for a grandson. In contrast, the First Ward modified the meaning of agency to make it subordinate to hierar-chical authority. Highlighting obedience as a core value enabled several fathers to legitimize and thus continue to contract daughter exchanges with each other. It is difficult to determine the extent of this practice.

Ascertaining marriage patterns in the First Ward with any degree of accuracy is almost impossible. Based on newspaper reports and conversations with friends associated with the First Ward people, marriage with girls under 18 occurs. How-ever, it is not at all clear whether these are polygynous or legal marriages (i.e., until the 1990s Utah's legal age of marriage was 14, with parental consent). There is evidence that many early-age marriages were intended to build an alliance between ordinary families and the religious leader, the prophet. This is a First Ward pattern not found in the Second Ward.

In the First Ward, a close association to the prophet is much sought after for his spiritual wisdom and access to valued resources (e.g., paying someone's rent, taxes, or utility bills, and other types of assistance). In the 1990s, the prophet was well into his 70s but still accepting young wives, although it was known that at his age, he never consummated his marriage(s). He told his younger wives that he preferred to wait until the next life, when his body would be replenished and he could once again produce children. The prophet's age does not restrict families from offering their daughters to him. As noted above, the reasons fathers give their daughters to the prophet (often with a wife's encouragement) are to gain prestige and to obtain material and spiritual benefits. However, unless the man is regarded as an elite member of the community, the prophet seldom reciprocates with a daughter in return. When the First Ward prophet died in 2000, he was reported to have nearly 100 wives, the youngest being 15.

INTIMACIES AND THE YEARNING FOR EMOTIONAL EXCLUSIVITY

The desire for romantic intimacy intensifies a woman's yeaning for emotional exclusivity, and results in her advancing her claim on her husband. In Colorado City/Centennial Park, it is customary to take a wife on a trip or outing such as a local rodeo, a river trip, or to dine at an upscale restaurant to celebrate her wedding anniversary and birthday. Everyone knows that this is an event that reaffirms their special relationship. Recently, the priesthood council suggested that this practice be modified, and that a husband bring all his wives. The council said that the arrival of a new wife is as much about her marrying into the entire family as it is about her taking a husband. The council reminded everyone that a wedding ceremony (a secretive and exclusive ritual) is based on the idea that marriage is less a dyadic than a plural institution. It requires all the husbands' wives to be present and, at the appropriate time, place their hands over the incoming bride's hands when she publicly agrees to marry their husband. In this, the priesthood council's recommendation was a familiar notion. After church service, a 27-year-old man, with one wife, seconded the council's recommendation. He stressed that their religion "teaches us to put our natural desires at bay and live a spirit life." To this comment, a middle-aged man, who had two wives, responded, "Okay, a good goal. But let's be realistic here. A woman needs to have time alone with her man. It is difficult or impossible to prevent this from happening. A woman wants to develop a special relationship with her husband." The younger man responded: "I agree, but I think we should strive for perfection." Significantly, the community continues to ignore the priesthood council's suggestion. The vast majority of fundamentalist men find it easier to honor each wife's request to be treated as special, if only for one day. Clearly, the dyadic orientation stands in contrast to the older religious ideal that marriage is primarily a procreative institution organized around an ethos of harmonious love for the plural family. For most, marriage is about procreation and emotional intimacy.

MARRIED AND UNMARRIED MEN'S RIVALRY AND CONCERNS

There is a shortage of eligible women to marry in every polygynous society, and this is a primary factor responsible for intergenerational conflict in Colorado City/Centennial Park. Senior males are always on the marriage market and thus compete with younger men for mates in a limited pool of eligible women. The tension between married and unmarried men influences perceptions of community teenagers. For example, in the 1960s a local policeman, without the approval of the religious leadership, would threaten to arrest unmarried males who did not leave the community. The tacit competition between age cohorts is manifested every Thanksgiving Day when the Second Ward plays a game of touch football. Sides are drawn so that unmarried men play against married men. One year the game was delayed to consider whether a man who had been married and divorced should play on the

unmarried or married side. The married/unmarried division is not absolute. The distinction is ignored if one side requires one or more players, who are selected from among onlookers without regard to marital status.

The competition for mates is acute. Younger men realize that without the support and financial backing of their families (especially their fathers), they will not be able to compete with older males. Yet, with only their youth and unmarried status, they can offer a woman something a married man cannot: exclusive attention.

Young women are in high demand, and can easily stay or leave the community. Most stay. A woman's concern is whether she should marry a mature man with a wife or a young single male with no wives. Because most male-female relationships begin in high school, many young men and women are able to form close emotional bonds. By the time they are in the tenth grade (around age 15 or 16) many have developed a romantic relationship with a classmate. Although lacking financial means of support, some young men can convince a woman that she would be happier marrying him rather than a middle-aged man with several wives. These relationships stand apart from the religious expectation that youth should wait until they are placed. Young men know, however, that if they do not find a girlfriend before they graduate from high school, they probably never will have one. Without a girlfriend, they will leave the community to find a wife. Consequently, the high-school years are a time of trysts and earnest courtship. The Second Ward encourages men and women to delay marriage and complete their high school education, and this has resulted in a late-teens and early-twenties marriage pattern. I found no mar-ried women under the age of 18. In contrast, the First Ward no longer encourages educational development and encourages early marriage.

With a shortage of women, mature men are the community's primary promoters of polygyny. Many seek women who were raised outside the community and are willing to convert to the religion. To this end, they invoke religious scripture and secular ideals of harmonious, loving, family life. Many women find these courtships persuasive and, provided they also like the man, marry him and adopt his lifestyle. In these instances, it is not religious doctrine per se that is attractive (although it is invaluable in legitimizing a position) as much as it is the man himself and his alternative lifestyle. I found that most men who married a woman from the outside and lived with her in the community seldom took another wife. As one woman noted, "I believe in the principle of plural marriage but I do not think I can live it." For this type of woman, love is possible only in a dyadic union.

Men justify their interest in building a plural family entirely on the premise of religious tenets. They are reluctant to admit that they find erotic pleasure in sexual variety, but acknowledge it in moments of private humor and spontaneous (and sometimes drunken) asides. Older men may get a thrill out of courting a younger woman (see Young 1954:282), but men in Colorado City/Centennial Park insist that their primary motive for entering into a plural marriage is religious. This is not self-deception. It is why men and women strive to live "the principle" and, hence, create

God's model human family system. Also, a woman must belong to a plural family in order to achieve access to the highest level in Heaven. If they never form a plural family, they will go to a lower tier in Heaven. The power of this idea appears in the remarks of a 17-year-old girl who, upon over-hearing someone on a TV program say, "if a mother died in childbirth she would go immediately to Heaven," called out, "That is stupid. You can only go to Heaven if you are a plural wife." Commit-ment to plural marriage is the central value of fundamentalist Mormon culture.

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S ANXIETIES

In spite of religious doctrine, advanced most adamantly by men, that harmonious love is superior to romantic love, women regularly use the quality of their husband's affection as the base for assessing the quality of their marriage. In this way, the community residents resemble the nineteenth-century Mormon polygynists, whose love letters were filled with romantic yearnings (Young 1954). These yearnings for excited or passionate love resemble those reported in cultures around the world (Jankowiak 1995, 2008).

The power of passionate love appears, albeit by negative inference, in the habitual cynicism many mature women have toward plural marriage. They may privately counsel young women to not fall in love with their husband. One older woman told a prospective bride, "If you do fall in love, he will hurt you." Unspoken but known is the fact that if a woman can become the favorite wife, she will be able to manipulate her husband, and thereby receive a greater share of his affection and wealth for herself and her children. As one man who had several wives noted: "I do not know why I always give in to Jane (his favorite wife); it seems that my other wives do not have the same ability to get me to agree with them." His comment is characteristic of other men in Colorado City/Centennial Park. Research found that the while some husbands (usually the more educated) strove to be fair in their dealings with all their wives, in only three wealthy families were men able to meet all their material obligations and thus keep wives from competing over limited material resources. Most families have insufficient material or emotional resources to distribute to everyone's satisfaction. Inevitably, the favorite wife and her children's needs are met first. In most families, wives learn to accept, or at least tolerate, their husband's division of affection.

Although men maintain a stoic, if not cynical, posture toward romantic love, they also have fears of emotional vulnerability. Many men dismissed or down-played the value of conjugal love, saying that it is an illusion and not a good basis for a marriage. The strength and consistency in which this sentiment was expressed would give the impression that fundamentalist men seldom feel romantic passion for a spouse. But in-depth interviewing found that two-thirds of the men had been romantically rejected as young men in high school, an experience so distressing that they determined never to become emotionally involved. One man who said he was

not in love with any of his three wives indicated that when he was in high school he had fallen in love with two women who rejected his overtures. He admitted, "It hurt so much I decided never again to let myself experience that feeling." But 20 years later he found a deep, passionate love for one of his five wives.

Men's anxiety over the possibility of losing emotional intimacy through abandonment is revealed in the following account of a middle-aged woman. On her wedding night her husband said to her, "Have you ever wanted something your whole life and, when you finally have it, you feel that it is going to be taken away from you?" Then he told her he was very afraid of losing her because he loved her so much. That night she promised never to leave him, but 20 years later he was bedridden with old age and could no longer control his bowel movements. Whenever she grew weary of bathing, feeding, and cleaning him, she remembered her promise to never leave him. She concluded by saying, "I stayed with him because in the end I realized that I loved him. I know right now he is preparing a place for me on the other side, and when I die he will come and take me back with him, but only if I am worthy."

Mormon fundamentalist men's reaction to the loss of love, whether through death, divorce, or abandonment, resembles that of American males, who tend to recover slowly from emotional separation. An example of men's propensity to quietly endure emotional loss is found in the torment of a man whose second wife left him to join another polygynous community. The man did not want to discuss the incident for fear of emotionally retrieving it. However his son related, "My father was depressed for months. He lost the woman he loved." Another wife revealed that her husband was devastated when his third wife left the family, remarking, "When Sam's third wife left him for another man who had been secretly courting her, it affected his health. He cried for three straight weeks and deteriorated into an invalid. We buried him six months later."

These stories reveal that women are not powerless in a patriarchal ethos. That they are a formidable force in checking and channeling their husband's behavior is especially evident in the actions of a favorite wife who knows her husband cannot tolerate her withdrawing or distancing herself from interacting with him. Her ability to withhold emotional intimacy from her husband is a source of power, quite evident in a middle-aged woman's discussion of how she tried to guide her husband to do the right thing. She related, "he wants the Principle and talks a good philosophy. But he does not live the Ten Commandments and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Those doctrines are more important and difficult than living the Principle. I accept the Principle, so I am not jealous of the lack of attention, as long as he is fair in the time spent with all of his wives." However, in stressing her commitment to polygyny while simultaneously undermining her husband's efforts to sustain a united plural family, this woman was able to obtain more emotional and material support for herself and her children.

A woman in her 30s, also a favorite wife, wanted to make her husband's behavior "more proper," stating:

> We are not an important family, although Jeff has assumed an important position as director in the community. He acts like a boy. He has to learn to behave better. He drinks every day on the job. Also, he flirts with everyone. When we go out, he eyes the waitresses. I feel cheap. I do not want to be in his presence. . . . He is a good lover. I enjoy sleeping with him. However, I don't respect him. Things have to change. It is hard to give yourself to someone at night, no matter how good and satisfying [he is], if you cannot respect him during the day. I would like to give more but I cannot.

In an effort to maintain his favorite wife's emotional commitment, the man strove to alter some of his behavior, and when he could not change he tried to hide his actions from her. In many ways, his behavior is similar to husbands in a monoga-mous marriage who want to balance personal interests with family obligations. They differ in that a polygynous husband must meet the needs of several wives and pri-vately cower at the realities of polygynous family life while maintaining a public posture of male leadership .

Polygynist men and women, when discussing the benefits of placement mar-riage, often mention the avoidance of emotional entanglements as a benefit. But it is difficult to follow this conviction. Everyone knows that each man and woman will have to reconcile the desired, feared, and often deeply troubling emotional experience of passionate love.

HARMONIOUS OR PASSIONATE LOVE

The polygynous Mormon community is organized on religious standards that emphasize the pursuit of salvation through the avoidance of sin, selfishness, and arrogance. Within the family, the religious principles are centered on the notion of harmonious or familial love. Harmonious love is akin to communitas in its potential for forging, strengthening, and sustaining affectionate bonds. Because it encourages respect, empathy, helpfulness, and lasting affection, harmonious love often serves as the principal means to bind and unite the polygynous family. Its non-dyadic focus stands in sharp contrast to romantic love, a tolerated but seldom glorified emotional experience. Although harmonious love is the preferred ideal, it is vulnerable to sexual and romantic desires.

Social relations in the Mormon polygynous family, as with polygyny elsewhere, revolve around personal sentiment as much as duty. When conflicts arise, an individual's response is unpredictable and thus threatening to the social order: Will he or she uphold family harmony or seek to satisfy personal gratification? This is especially so of romantic love which can overwhelm a person's judgment and reorder his or her priorities.

The way Mormon men manage their plural marriage ranges from shared equality to outright favoritism. Conscious of the harmful effect of favoritism on family harmony, and as the symbolic center of the family, men must balance each wife's emotional and economic interests. Thus most husbands are diligent in spending quality time, if not equal time, with each wife. In this regard, women carefully assess their husband's actions that may suggest favoritism. A man who had two wives noted, "My wives are not upset over sex, but they are over the amount of time I spend with each wife. They seem to count the time and measure it. It is the source of many of our family disagreements."

For women, romantic love, more than role equity, is a measure of the quality of their conjugal relationship. It also accounts for the guilt and shame men and women may feel when attempting to live up to the principle of plural marriage. A polygynist husband knows that if he becomes too attached to a woman, it may disrupt family bonds and damage his reputation in the community as one unable to manage his family. Men know that if the family has the reputation of being disharmonious, it may be more difficult to attract a future wife. Worse yet, it can result in the loss of the love of his favorite wife.

GUILT AND HONOR: TO BE A GOOD PERSON

Polygynous Mormon men and women experience guilt and shame over their inability to live up to theological ideals that stress the value of noble or harmonious love for all in the family. Men desire emotional intimacy and acknowledge that they cannot love everyone equally, and thereby admit that harmonious love is more an

ideal than an actuality. I found the vast majority of polygynous men invoking harmonious love while dwelling in a monogamous love relationship with their favorite wife. Some men had adopted a less common but more psychologically crippling response to the proscription of dyadic love in favor of harmonious love: they came to love no one in particular and thereby condemned themselves to a life of loneliness. Their sadness and life dissatisfaction is apparent to their adult children. In the five homes where this was the case, all the men's children acknowledged the deep loneliness of their father. The children related how their father struggled to live a religious conviction he was unable to realize. Such men live with anger, regret, and loneliness. Some feel shame with public presentations of propriety. One young woman, who had recently taken a new sister wife, told us,

> Sometimes I want to always be with my husband, but I know that it is selfish so I encourage him to see his other wife. But then I feel abused for encouraging my husband to live the fullness of the Gospel [i.e., polygyny] . . . sometimes I dislike myself for not being able to uphold my religious convictions."

Another woman said that her sister had had such a hard time adjusting to life in a plural family that she tried to train herself to think differently by writing expressions on her bedroom mirror which she read every day. The notes on the mirror included: "I will be an obedient wife," "I will honor my husband," "I will love my sister-wives," "I will not be jealous," and "I will share everything with whoever asks." This woman would often cry herself to sleep at night over her inability to become a more noble and generous person capable of "living up to the teachings of the Lord."

A young woman experienced shame over her confusion, doubt, and distress, saying, "I did not think my husband's second marriage would bother me. I was ready to live the principle. But I stayed awake nights, unable to sleep. I felt so alone and abandoned." Five years after that marriage, she felt ashamed of her inability to overcome her resentment at sharing her husband, thinking her sister-wives were more generous than she. In time she drew some solace when she realized that everyone fails to fully live up to the community's religious standards.

Other co-wives cease believing in the spiritual nobility of harmonious love and focus entirely on getting their fair share of emotional and material resources. This attitude is exemplified in the following account of a new wife's surprise and eventual resignation that her co-wife did not believe in, nor did she want to work to create a "united polygynous" family. The new wife reported:

> Right before I married my husband, he, his first wife, and I went for a walk. My husband had his arms around both of us as we walked down the street. As we walked, I put my arm around my husband's waist, just below the first wife's arm who was already holding on to him. Later that evening the first wife told me, "When I felt your arm around our husband's waist it made my blood boil." I was shocked at her comment because I thought she wanted to live the principle and create a harmonious large family. This marriage has been a challenge from that day forward, because the first wife refuses to accept God's law.

To embrace the polygynous principle and its call for plurality, while simultaneously seeking to hold onto or rekindle the affectionate passion once felt for a particular spouse, is a dilemma for men and women. The tensions that result from this dilemma are a part of daily life at Colorado City/Centennial Park. The majority of polygynous families, like many monogamous families (Buss 2008), seldom achieve a genuine long-lasting harmony, but remain, at best, a cauldron of competing interests that periodically rupture the fragile unity of a man, his wives, and children in their religiously inspired culture. With persisting anxiety for most community residents, polygyny has become the embodiment of their religious convictions anchored in an ethos of self-sacrifice that sustains an effort to achieve a humble spirit. There is no greater sacrifice than denying a basic human need to merge with another in an exclusive emotional and physical bond.

NOTES

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2. Research using observation and in-depth interviews was conducted between 1992 and 2007 in Colorado City and Centennial Park, Arizona, and Hildale, Utah.

3. A divorced middle-aged woman with children will have a job and bring income into the family, and she might have unmarried daughters who are potential future wives. Until recently, when Utah and Texas changed their statutes, a young woman was allowed to marry as early as age 14.

During the Depression of the 1930s and into the 1940s, early marriage among fundamentalists was common, with 14 to16 being the age of first marriage among women and 16 to 18 among men. The priesthood council, displeased with this custom, during the 1960s and 1970s encouraged young women to complete high school before marrying. Hence the age at marriage changed to 18 or 19 for young women and 19 to 21 for men.

A bedrock principle of Centennial Park, and prior to Warren Jeff's anointment as prophet in Colorado City, is that each man's home is his kingdom. No one has the right to tell another man how to govern his family. This ideal contributes to a reluctance to intervene in families with spouse or child abuse. Brother-sister incest is rife in some Colorado City/Centennial Park families but entirely absent in others.

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