

Patriarchs' Journal™

Dedicated to the restoration, support and encouragement of biblical family structure.

Volume 2
Issue 14

Response to Michael Anderson's “Fisher Principle” Gender Ratio Essay

by — Keith Martin

Preface:

Significantly impressed by his application of Austrian-school free market economic principles to the issue of polygamy in *Economics of Plural Marriage*, I was honored when author Michael Anderson offered me the opportunity to review his subsequent essay, *Gender Ratio and the “Fisher Principle.”* Anderson’s keen mind is evident once again as he applies the Fisher Principle of genetics to the particular dynamic of an ongoing imbalance between unmarried women and unmarried men and its impact on polygamy. Despite my impression that this more recent analysis was not as on-the-mark as *Economics of Plural Marriage*, I nonetheless proposed to both Mr. Anderson and the publisher of *Patriarchs’ Journal* that it publish the entire *Gender Ratio and the “Fisher Principle,”* followed by my initial assessment of it. Mr. Anderson has also been given the opportunity to respond to my review; a follow-up back-and-forth with Mr. Anderson will be published in a subsequent issue. I want to thank Michael Anderson for his participation in this debate. It is such willingness to engage in serious inquiry that provides meaningful opportunity to challenge our own assumptions and biases. Mr. Anderson’s writing inspired me to move beyond just having an emotional reaction. I thank him for that as well as for his intellectual curiosity and courage. — Keith Martin

Gender Ratio and the “Fisher Principle”

by — Michael Anderson

A lot has been said among advocates of polygamy about an “excess of females” in our current society. Apparently

this excess of females can best be handled by allowing some men to have two or more wives. If monogamy is strictly enforced in such a society, the extra women will lower their price to that of less than a demand for lifelong security, thus leading to increased promiscuity in both sexes. The logic here is generally sound. However, what of the foundational assumption? Are there actually more females than males in our modern culture? As one who was sympathetic with biblical polygamy, I was always intrigued by this supposed “excess of women” and this apparent *need* for “plural marriage.” One day, I decided to take a look at the U.S. census statistics myself, expecting to have my beliefs confirmed. Instead, I came away somewhat perplexed. The data did not show what I expected.

This is what the United States census generally shows: at birth, there are roughly 105 males for every 100 females. Males die off faster in childhood, and there are about 102 males for every 100 females at about the age of 20. On average, in the 20-45 year bracket, there is a 1/1 ratio of males to females. After that, the male/female ratio drops below 1/1. In the 45-65 year bracket there is, on average, about 94 males for every 100 females. After 65, it drops significantly. By age 70, it’s about 82/100. By age 80, it’s about 65, and over age 85, it’s about 40.

We can see that, in the reproductive years (age 20-45), there is no excess of females at all. However, this does not mean that there is no excess of *marriageable* women over *marriageable* men. One way or another (war, disease, accidents), men tend to eliminate themselves from the mating market at a higher rate than women. This has happened numerous times throughout history, and census records have shown this in the past. One example I can think of is Russia after World War II. At

that time, there were around 65 marriageable men for every 100 marriageable women due to the massive loss of life in some of the largest scale battles in human history. The typical economic analysis used by advocates of polygamy proved perfectly correct. This unequal gender ratio resulted in a dramatic increase in promiscuity, unwanted children and abortion; but for us in North America in the current generation, disease, accidents and especially war are not huge killers like they used to be. Other things have taken their place. There are 15 times more males in the prison system than females. There also seems to be more homosexuals and pornography addicts among males than among females. So, in our day, males have found *other* ways of eliminating themselves from the mating market. I think it's fairly safe to say that, in our culture today, as a result of prison, homosexuality and porn addiction, there are not more than 90 marriageable males for every 100 females.

This observation still requires, at best, that polygyny (one man with more than one wife) should be a relatively rare phenomenon. On average, one man in nine

can have an extra wife, in order to avoid the pitfalls of strictly enforced monogamy in a world where there is a slightly low male/female ratio. So, "husband sharing" among women in their fertile years *could* be useful in *this* generation, but it loses its usefulness in the following generations. Here is why: in a world where there is greater toleration for polygamy, highly attractive and responsible men will attract more women on average, and highly unattractive and irresponsible men will attract fewer women on average. Men of higher quality will tend to reproduce more, and men of lower quality will reproduce less. Therefore, the manly qualities of responsibility, integrity and self-control, those qualities which tend to steer men away from porn addiction, prison and other manifestations of immaturity, will tend to spread, and there will, over time, tend to be less of this type of behavior. Probably within a few years, assuming there are no wars, the ratio of marriageable men to marriageable women will once again approach one-to-one, with no reason for polygamy at all (at least not for women in their fertile years).

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Patriarchs' Journal is a periodical dedicated to the definition, defense, support and encouragement of the God-ordained family as an autonomous, sovereign entity that existed before civil governments and religious organizations, and is independent of their approval and direction.

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We seek to bring as many voices from as many backgrounds as possible to this periodical. Many are scripturally based; others find their context in the social, legal, historical and scientific arenas. Because of the diversity, you will likely not agree with everything you read. Frankly, we do not ask that of you. In fact, at times our editorial staff does not agree with everything placed within these columns. We are simply presenting things that, we trust, will be supportive and edifying in their overall scope.

We will attempt to take an honest, fresh look at the subject of the family from a Biblical perspective, and to recover truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13). Readers are encouraged to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21). This publication is not intended to provide personal or legal advice.

Minor changes to punctuation and grammar may have been made to articles for better reading.

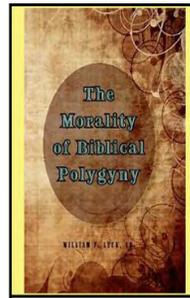
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In my book *The Economics of Sex and Marriage*, I talk about how a widespread acceptance of polygamy would not necessarily lead to problems since the increased demand for women would simply lead to the development of a bride price. I suggested that this would then lead to an increased production of girl babies (just as an increased demand for any other good will result in an increased production of that good), thus allowing all men to have at least one wife, while allowing some men to have more than one. However, unbeknownst to me at the time, this simply will not work in the long run, and there is good reason why no society that lasts will ever adopt such a system. This is due to a phenomenon known as the “Fisher Principle,” which was named after Sir Ronald Fisher (1890-1962), the man who first popularized it. The Fisher Principle explains why there always tends to be an equal number of males and females born in every species of life where there are such things as males and females. This fact rests on two universally-recognized assumptions and the logical implications which flow from them. First, it is a fact that some families tend to produce more male offspring and some families tend to produce more female offspring. Second, the tendency of a couple to produce more of one gender than the other is determined, at least partially, by genetic factors. Here are the implications of these two assumptions: If, for whatever reason, more girl babies are born than boy babies, the boys will have greater reproductive opportunities than the girls. The same goes for the reverse case (more boys than girls). Whichever is the rarer sex will tend to reproduce more on average. Whether polygamy is allowed or not makes no difference. If it *isn't* allowed, then some of the girls will be left out and won't reproduce. If it *is* allowed, then all of the girls will reproduce, but the men will reproduce even more. Therefore, families which have a tendency to produce more of the rarer sex will have the most offspring, and families which produce more of the more common sex will have less offspring on average. In this way, the genetic predisposition to have the rarer sex will spread until gender ratio equality is again reached.

But one thing I could not figure out was why the gender ratio at birth is not exactly 1/1 but tends to be consistently 105/100. If the Fisher principle is true, why are there more baby boys than baby girls? After all, wouldn't families that tend to produce more girls, which is the rarer sex at birth, tend to have more offspring and thereby spread girl-bearing tendencies until equality is reached? Well, first of all, 105 is not too far away from 100, and it *is* the mechanism of the Fisher principle which keeps the male/female ratio at birth as *low* as 105/100. If it went higher,

families with more girls would be at an advantage and would spread the tendency to produce girls until the ratio was back at 105/100; but for some reason, the advantage stops there. If it went the other way (100/100), for some reason, families which tend to produce boys would actually be at an advantage and increase the number of boys until it was back to 105/100. So why is this?

First of all, “birth” is a rather arbitrary stage of life, at least as far as we're concerned here. You could just as well consider gender ratio at conception, at six months gestation, or gender ratio at age 18 or any age in between. The Fisher principle does not ensure that there will be a one-to-one gender ratio at birth any more than it will ensure a one-to-one gender ratio at conception. Say, for example, that there are twice as many girls conceived as boys, and girls die in miscarriages roughly twice as often as boys. The Fisher principle would not equalize the gender ratio at conception, because the parents simply



The Morality of Biblical Polygyny

by — William F. Luck, Sr.

28 pages, PB. \$5

This is an amazing, courageous, contemporary work. William Luck is the son of Moody Bible Institute's Dr. G. Coleman Luck, Sr, Chairman of the Department of Theology, and a capable biblical scholar in his own right.

“God didn't ask me my opinion about the issue. He expected me to represent His. I've tried. If you can prove I'm mistaken, I'll be the first to thank you. But I'm not holding my breath in the meanwhile.” – the Author, from the Introduction

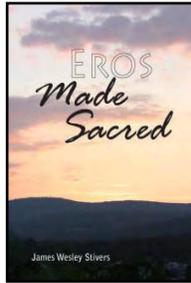
“To date [over twenty years after its original publication], I find the arguments ‘pro’ quite superior to those ‘con.’” – the Author, from the Conclusion

- The Background
- Laws That Imply the Moral Propriety of Polygyny
- Passages That Appear To Prohibit Polygyny
- The Association of Polygyny with Other Evils
- Alleged Prohibitions of Polygyny
- The Implications of “Adultery” in the “Vice Lists”
- Questions Concerning the Possibility of Moral Polygyny

(see order form on back page)

replaced them, and as far as this analysis is concerned, it's as if those miscarried babies never existed. Similarly, if, in every generation, half of the 19-year-old men die in battle, this will not cause a doubling of the male birth rate due to the Fisher principle, since their parents are mostly too old to replace them. Every female-dominant family, on average, will have exactly the same reduction in offspring as every male-dominant family by such a war. So there is no tendency to spread female-dominant families. There is no advantage for the rarer sex. The Fisher principle only insures that there will be a roughly one-to-one gender ratio at the point which, on average, couples are no longer willing or able to replace their deceased offspring (perhaps sometime in the teen years).

So what's wrong with artificially tampering with the gender ratio at birth so as to provide more wives for men? The Fisher principle does not care what actually causes the gender ratio to be tipped too far one way or the other. It will seek to equalize it no matter what. If polygamy became commonly accepted, which, of course, is the dream of anyone who advocates it, more men would actively pursue multiple women. This follows necessarily. If you lower the cost (social ostracism) that one must pay in order to engage in an activity, the demand for such activity will rise in accordance with economic law. As I mentioned in my book, such an increase in demand for women would lower the age at which women will get married to the point where the



Eros Made Sacred: or

The Biblical Case Made for Polygamy

by — James Wesley Stivers
(originally published in 1991)
74 pages, PB. \$13

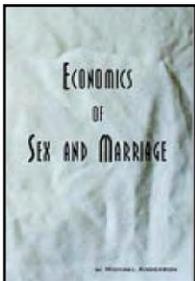
This book presents a clear biblical justification for polygamous marriage as sanctioned by the Holy Scriptures. The issue of polygamy is used to contrast current moral biases with those found in the Bible. First published more than 15 years ago, this thoughtful work has gone unrefuted. Provocative, instructional, challenging, edifying. The book chapters are:

- Polygamy: A Biblical Custom
- Objections Answered; In Favor of Polygamy
- The Ministry of the Patriarch
- Polygamy as a Tool of Christian Dominion
- Feminism, Monogamy and Witchcraft

(see order form on back page)

men are practically always dealing with the girl's parents. This would necessarily lead to the development of a bride price system. (This is, of course, a best case scenario. This assumes that no one resorts to violence.) The appearance of rising bride prices would necessarily motivate people to use artificial means to produce more girls than boys. At first, there would be more females than males, thus temporarily satisfying the increased demand for women. But, in accordance with the Fisher principle, families which produce more males (the rarer sex) would tend to have more offspring, and thus, the tendency to have males would spread, pushing the gender ratio closer to one-to-one again. Remember, in such a world, families who produce mostly males do so in spite of the presence of a large financial incentive to produce girls. So, either they are families that instinctively value males so much more than females that they are willing to forgo the huge reward associated with producing a female, or, they are families who tried to have girls but their tendency to have males was so strong that they couldn't. *These* are the instincts and tendencies which will tend to proliferate in such a world.

If such a population persists in its desire to practice polygamy, the bride price must rise further and further in order to combat the inexorable work of the Fisher principle in equalizing the gender ratio. Remember, even



Economics of Sex and Marriage

by — Michael Anderson
86 pages, PB

We can look all around us and observe many things about human behavior regarding sexuality and marriage.

Using the logical deductive approach of the Austrian economists, this book attempts to provide a unified theory explaining some of the major phenomena of human mating relationships. The seemingly "pro-polygamy" conclusions presented here are bound to make this work controversial, but this was certainly not the author's intent.

These conclusions inescapably follow when the basic principles of economics are applied to human sexual behavior.

(discontinued)

men who marry only one wife must pay this ever-rising bride price. After several generations, an extremely large number of boys are the progeny of polygamous men, that is, men who had an extremely high desire for women and the qualities to attract those women. The sons of such men, will, by and large, inherit these characteristics. Such male offspring will never idly sit by and let other men have two or more wives while they have none. Eventually, the bride price will rise so high that the men will be forced to compete using the only alternative to a peaceful method – violence. In the meantime, as the Fisher Principle continues to raise the male/female ratio, the female birth rate is maintained by ever more desperate and artificial measures. If somehow, the bride price disappeared, and the incentive to have girl babies drastically decreased, practically everyone would have male offspring and almost no one would have female offspring. Everyone would instinctively value boy babies far more than girl babies. (In fact, this might explain why, in many cultures around the world, boy babies *are* valued so much more than girls. Perhaps these cultures had a fair amount of polygamy in their past.) A society where polygamy was commonly accepted and practiced widely for several generations would necessarily become more violent, either externally, like ancient Israel in the conquest of Canaan or the Muslims in the first few centuries after Mohammed, or internally, which results in weakness and vulnerability to being conquered by others. Only cultures whose members seem to have a somewhat instinctual aversion to polygamy can possibly survive and thrive in the long run, without the constant need to expand rapidly at the expense of others. Such cultures would tend gradually to out-compete and dominate the necessarily weaker and more internally-violent cultures which have no qualms about accepting polygamy. Examples of such robust and powerful monogamous civilizations are ancient Babylon (where polygamy was restricted for the common man to cases of infertility), and outwardly monogamous ancient Greece, Rome and their cultural descendants, Europe and America.

The process I described above, of permanently rising bride prices facing the constant pressure of the Fisher Principle, can be reversed only by an almost total abandonment of polygamy. If such a society declared that men, typically, should have only one wife (specifically, only one *fertile* wife), the demand for women would drop, bride prices would drop, fewer parents would intentionally have girl babies, girls would become a little rarer than boys, which would tend to cause a natural increase in girl-bearing tendencies. Then, since men



Bible Polygamy

Biblepolygamy.com features the straightforward teaching ministry of Brian Kelson. Here is a sampling of many topics found:

- Why teach the truth of Polygamy?
- Why is truth suppressed?
- Polygamist men and women in the Bible
- Early church and Martin Luther
- By the power vested in me?
- Fear & Hypocrisy

When the apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians he had been painted in a negative light by those opposing him. His apostleship had been put in question, his gospel had been ridiculed and his person had been defamed.

Paul's vigorous appeal to his friends was ultimately ignored and in his last letter to Timothy we read that "all in Asia had turned away from him." ... This very Paul warned that in the last days, sound doctrine would not be endured and Christians would ever learn but never acknowledge the truth.

Many attempts will be made to discolor the truth of polygamy, but this site appeals to all readers to examine the Word of God against popular theology.

in every generation somehow seem to eliminate themselves from the mating market at a slightly higher rate than females, over time the bride price would be bid down, which would gradually decrease reliance on artificial means to produce girl babies and increase the frequency of natural conceptions of female babies. Eventually, a roughly one-to-one ratio could be restored.

Keeping the Fisher Principle in mind, and applying a little deductive reasoning, it's easy to see why the average person (whether male or female) in modern Western Civilization reacts with such disgust, revulsion and unthinking emotionality to the idea of a man having more than one wife. We are literally genetically predisposed to be that way. Natural selection has made it this way. Our civilization is a dominant one, and civilizations which dominate in the long run must have this characteristic.

To avoid the pitfalls of widespread acceptance of polygamy as well as the pitfalls of strictly-enforced monogamy in the real world of wars, disease, prison, homosexuality and pornography, my personal opinion is that monogamy should be the general norm for the vast majority of people, with polygamy being acceptable only under certain rare circumstances. This would ensure a secure home for all of the "extra" women (most of whom are above age 45, anyway), as well as avoiding the development of a bride price high enough to induce an artificial increase in the female birth rate (and all of the aforementioned difficulties associated with that). Of course, this would lead to an increase in the value of women, a decrease in the level of promiscuity (assuming the welfare state is also abolished), and a massive decrease in the production of unwanted babies (as well as abortions). As more and more children are born into high-quality and stable families, more and more of the adult population (particularly the adult *male* population) will be responsible, moral and mature. This fact would cause a reduction in the rates of crime, pornography and other behaviors associated with irresponsibility and immaturity. More of the men will be "husband material." And this would totally eliminate the need for polygyny, except, perhaps among older people (45 and above).

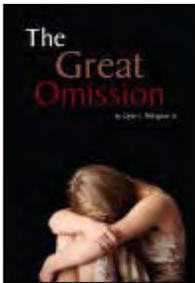
Response:

Gender Ratio and the Fishers of Women

by — Keith Martin

Let me be clear from the start: I do not dispute the Fisher Principle itself; it is a reasonable mathematical explanation for the tendency of genetic deviations to regress back to the norm, a statistical principle that can be applied to everything from intelligence to male-pattern baldness. Therefore, we can stipulate that the Fisher Principle explains why the gender ratio – or *any* genetic distinction – will likely never become entirely imbalanced. I also agree with Mr. Anderson that the Fisher Principle predominantly matters only during the peak child-bearing years, so we can stipulate that as well.

My assertion is that Mr. Anderson exaggerates the Fisher Principle's relevance to the distinction between monogamy-only cultures and those that permit polygamy, because the "why" he proposes for explaining its relevance

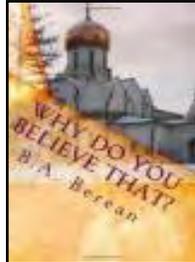


The Great Omission:
Christendom's Abandonment of the Biblical Family
by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
204 pages, PB. \$15

This book presents twenty years of study, taking a candid look at the issue of multiple wives in Scripture and society. The book chapters are:

- The Problem: The Sad, Ignored Epidemic
- The Divine Provision
- The Marital Gift
- The Old Testament Scriptural Precedent
- The New Testament Scriptural Precedent
- The Religious System's Destruction of the Biblical Family
- The History of Its Practice
- The Cultural Issue
- The Benefits of Plural Marriage
- Who Is Immoral?

This book also has 14 appendices.
(see order form on back page)



Why Do You Believe That?
by — B.A. Berean.
148 pages, Paperback

This well written, easy to read book is designed to provoke the reader lovingly to examine why they believe what they believe, while at the same time encouraging and equipping readers to study the Scriptures for themselves. Hold on tight, as aim is taken at a couple of the most sacred cows in the church today: traditional marriage and monogamy. It is done in an effort to help you see that what you've been told the Bible "says" may not actually be what the Bible teaches. Hailed by some advocates of polygamy, plural marriage, polygyny, etc. as the best "under the radar" educational tool available to introduce the masses to Biblical marriage and the options it provides beyond those presented in religious tradition. If you are pro-polygamy, part of the biblical families movement, or simply a truth seeker, you will enjoy reading this insightful book. The Bible study helps presented within these pages are well worth the price of admission. You will want to read it again and again and share it with others.
(discontinued)



is a dynamic that is certainly just as true in monogamy-only cultures as it is in polygamous ones. To the extent that Mr. Anderson's arguments can be applied just as accurately to monogamy-only cultures, his essay becomes a distinction without a difference. Unless his argument is intended to be limited to a culture that exists in a vacuum, one in which monogamy could be *effectively* enforced, we are forced to apply our arguments in the real world, where state-regulated systems that refuse to formally recognize anything but monogamy are consistently characterized by significant levels of infidelity. If anything, average lifetime sexual partner numbers are higher in supposed monogamy-only cultures than they are in those that permit polygamy, especially in those polygamy-friendly cultures that reward fidelity over the *appearance* of fidelity. And – even assuming a reasonable level of infidelity within a monogamy-only culture – highly attractive, responsible and financially-secure men will attract more women on average than will highly unattractive, irresponsible, poor men. In general, no matter what the culture, the preponderance of women who seek out marriage with attractive providers is going to outstrip the availability, which still leaves us with a disparity between (a) the number of unmarried but *MARRIAGEABLE men* who *WANT* to be married, and (b) the number of unmarried but *MARRIAGEABLE women* who *want* to be married. How do we address the gap? The choice is primarily between:

- *Pretending* that requiring monogamy will result in predominantly intact homes with an absence of infidelity and prostitution – but with a sadly unfortunate dynamic of a certain significant number of women being relegated to undesired

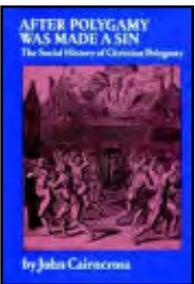
lifelong unmarried loneliness; or

- Legitimizing a biblical system in which men so predisposed are encouraged to take responsibility for more than one wife and family.

It is naïve to assume that, in either system, large numbers will remain celibate simply because they haven't been able to find a marriage partner – which begs the question: in which system will women who desire husbands but don't have their own be more likely to *poach* them? This begs a further question: which societal structure is less desirable: allowing women the option of being married to polygamous men, or limiting large numbers of women to the option of stealing their men from other women?

If, however, Mr. Anderson is implying that a *need* to correct disparity in numbers between unmarried marriageable men and unmarried marriageable women is the primary concern for those who promote Biblical polygamy, that is a straw man argument. Correcting that disparity is one among *many* motivations mentioned by advocates, but, in my experience, the existence of excessive numbers of women is never presented as the paramount argument. My informal review of the first volume of *Patriarchs' Journal*¹ indicates the top four reasons generally cited to assert the appropriateness of chosen polygyny are: (1) Scriptural support for voluntary polygyny; (2) the illegitimacy of prohibiting marital contracts between consenting adults; (3) clear

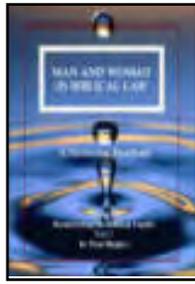
1. Patriarch Publishing House™, 2014



After Polygamy Was Made a Sin
The Social History of Christian Polygamy
by — John Cairncross
260 pp., PB. \$30

Cairncross contends in this fascinating historical analysis that it was when the Church became centered in Rome that “polygamy” became a “sin.” Based on rigorous research he demonstrates however that there is a strong underground polygamous Christian tradition, including support from such prominent figures as Milton, Newton, Spinoza and others.

(see order form on back page)



Man and Woman in Biblical Law
by — Tom Shipley
268 pages, PB. \$30

The goal of this book is to lay the foundation for the establishment of a truly biblical social order, especially within the community of Bible-believing, Christ-honoring families. The subject matter is patriarchy. The biblical exposition contained herein is devoted to establishing the proposition that it is patriarchy which was and is mandated by God ever since the original creation of man and woman. The scriptural discussion on polygamy here serves as a supporting role to the fundamental proposition of God-ordained and mandated patriarchy.

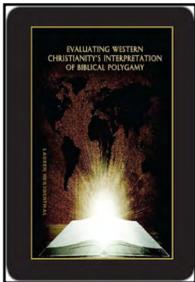
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differences between men and women; and (4) effective provision of husbands for unmarried women who want legal fathers for their children; this fourth reason does directly relate to any culture's excess of women, but not as a matter of *need*; women shut out of the marriage market in societies in which monogamy is strictly enforced do not *need* to have husbands or even to have children – but they do *desire* to have them, and such desires are entirely legitimate, especially given that God designed them to have those desires. The distinction between need and desire, though, is crucial.

Besides disagreeing with his premises, perhaps the largest reason why I object to Mr. Anderson's analysis is that he bases it on at least two underlying questionable assumptions: (1) Charles Darwin's theory of evolution; and (2) that a one-to-one gender ratio represents an imperative ideal. Our culture has given no indication that it is significantly troubled by a failure on its part to approximate gender ratio parity. More central to this discussion, though, is that building upon a theory is the same as building a house on a foundation of sand, and Mr. Anderson's thesis is built upon the sand of Evolution. Aspects of Mr. Darwin's theory are entirely rea-

sonable, some are even patently obvious (e.g. that those with desirable characteristics are more likely to attract mates, which necessarily leads to the production of more children with those desirable characteristics), and evidence may point in the *direction* of supporting Evolution as a theory to explain the existence of humankind but actual *evidence* has not been forthcoming. My point is not to distract with a debate between Evolution and Intelligent Design, but simply to note that one cannot safely make scientific assertions if those assertions are based on unproven theory. Therefore, using evolutionary theory as a supporting argument for the disparagement of polygamy is itself a distraction, but even within Darwin-sympathizer ranks there are disagreements about the efficacy of discouraging polygamy. One case in point is the field of sociobiology, which acknowledges a significant male characteristic that accounts for an increased disparity between marriageable males and marriageable females beyond Mr. Anderson's 90:100 ratio: men are simply built psychologically different from women.

The early feminist hypothesis that men and women are only significantly different due to life-long societal brainwashing has been discredited by research as well as by plain old common sense. Women are much more likely to be nurturing than are men. Designed to be in a vulnerable state for up to 9 months during each pregnancy, their reproductive systems provide them one egg per cycle, whereas men's systems provide them with billions of sperm daily. Needing significant male protection (whether from husbands or from civilian police) during child-bearing and child-rearing years, women are rewarded for seeking one individual mate who will stick around – whereas in the reproductive sense men are rewarded for having multiple sexual partners. In this respect, Anderson is correct when he



Evaluating Western Christianity's Interpretation of Biblical Polygamy

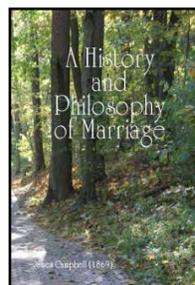
by — Lauren Heiligenthal

88 pages, PB. \$10

This book demonstrates that the popular Western worldview regarding marriage affects biblical interpretation. While most Western societies uphold monogamy as God's ideal form of marriage, a number of other cultures practice polygamy. Western Christianity often perceives polygamy as a threat to the monogamist ideal; therefore, this book evaluates whether the Bible clearly advocates that polygamous men should become monogamous through divorce.

After interpreting Scripture through the lens of the biblical audience, this book then applies the interpretations from the five biblical texts to a modern situation involving polygamy. Since there is no biblical text that explicitly prohibits polygamy or promotes monogamy, this book argues that the interpretation of the monogamist ideal tends to derive from one's worldview rather than the Bible.

(see order form on back page)



A History and Philosophy of Marriage:

Polygamy and Monogamy Compared

by — James Campbell
(originally published in 1869)

142 pages, PB. \$20

A reprint of Christian philanthropist James Campbell's classic work, originally published in 1869 in Boston, Massachusetts.

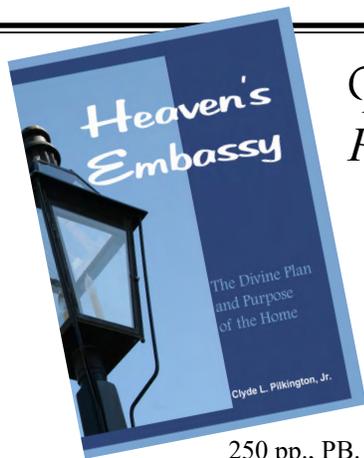
(see order form on back page)

asserts that polygamy will of necessity always be rare – although, parenthetically, 1 in 9 isn't particularly *rare* (e.g. imagine living in a neighborhood in which *only* 1 in 9 men were active sexual predators) – but he ignores the fact that the incidence of polygyny is less a matter of a disparity between raw numbers of available single men and single women than it is driven by the fact that males far outnumber females when it comes to those who avoid marriage like the plague. The sheer number of men who entirely remove themselves from the marriage market is one of the primary reasons why prohibiting polygamy most harms those women who desire a life-long partnership with a man who also *desires* that type of relationship.

Of course, some will assert that any woman who would choose to make a life-long commitment to a man who is already married doesn't know what is best for her. Articulating that sentiment may be primarily benign, but when we codify such a cliché, we go beyond being opinionated into the realm of behavior management. Mr. Anderson asserts that an "excess of females can best be handled by allowing some men to have two or more wives." Allowing? Handled? Apparently, bureaucratic control of our lives has become so ubiquitous that we generally fail even to question its legitimacy, but there is no *scriptural* law that assigns to either the democratic mob or a group of elites the setting of limits on our relationship choices. To suggest that a perceived cultural

imbalance would be best *handled* by the State begins with the assumption that whom one marries is a matter for which one should procure governmental permission.

I do not share Mr. Anderson's confidence in government capability to accomplish stated objectives successfully, nor do I agree that we can assume no wars or violence when making predictive calculations related to regulating private personal behavior. For the sake of argument, though, let's stipulate that war *could* be eliminated and The Department of Gender Equity *could* successfully persuade previously unmotivated men to make marriage choices that would eliminate all gaps related to numbers of men and women and their relative desires to marry each other. Why stop there? What happens when the ratio approaches 100:100? Would the State utilize ever-changing regulations concerning polygamy? Even in the (hypothetical) long-term absence of war, what would stop *women* from wanting to compete for the richest, best-looking, highest-status men? One could reasonably assume that, even if every woman who wanted one had a husband, poaching would continue. If polygamy were temporarily enlisted to equalize the gender ratio and subsequently recriminalized, the most highly-sought-after men would resume availing themselves of mistresses, affairs and serial polygamy, while many among the least-sought-after males would stop exhibiting interest in being family men.



Heaven's Embassy – *The Divine Plan & Purpose of the Home*

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it (Psalm 127:1).

This book represents many years of work. The author believes that it is one of the most important books that he will ever be privileged to write, simply because it is about one of the most vital scriptural subjects that could ever be addressed.

The home is central to all of God's dealings with man throughout the course of time. It is His Divine "institution" and "organization" on the earth; and for the believer, it is the *Embassy of Heaven*. An embassy is "**the residence or office of an ambassador.**" Since the believer is an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 5:14-21), his home is thus the *Divine Embassy* of heavenly ministry.

Pauline ministry is centered in the homes of believers. This is even the true sphere of the Body of Christ; for this reason our apostle speaks of "*church in thy house.*" This book doesn't focus upon the *external* specifics of the ministry of *Heaven's Embassy* (such as *hospitality*); that will be saved for another volume. Instead, it looks at the inner-workings of the *Embassy* itself, focusing upon its very nature and *internal* purpose and function.

(see order form on back page)

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to come, and let you know how serious we are about having you visit us.

"If you need fellowship, or sound teaching, or counseling, or you just plain need a break from life and want to come to a place of palpable peace and lovely love for a day, or a weekend, or a week, come here. It's free. Just bring yourself, as you are. Go to the website and make a reservation. Find out when we're all going to be here, and come here and taste for yourself what God has produced in the middle of nowhere." – Martin Zender

Thus, eventually, we'd be back in a position of having to re-legalize polygamy, perpetuating a see-saw societal pattern alternating between demonizing polygamy and the promotion of it. Who profits overall from such a situation? Certainly, those inclined to be federal regulators would see an uptick in their ranks, but I fail to see how the average citizen would benefit.

Mr. Anderson should also be cautious not to over-emphasize either the degree to which the State could effectively control all variables related to adults making relationship choices or the degree to which the average man would be significantly more likely to engage in formal polygamy simply if social ostracism costs were lowered. Social stigma is far down the list of why the *average* modern man would likely never choose to be married to more than one woman at a time; the perceived additional workload of juggling another bonded relationship is the objection I most often hear, such as in, "I can't handle the wife I have *now* – how could I possibly handle *another* one?"

I also dispute Mr. Anderson's assertion that removing polygamy's current stigma would lead to the use of artificial means to produce more girls than boys. In the supply versus demand equation, supply drives the market more than does demand. The simple existence of a

desire does not mean that the fulfillment of that desire will be provided by an outside source; more often than not demand is created *after* a supply of something previously unknown is made available. George Gilder has accurately described this capitalism dynamic: the altruistic gift of risking capital and reputation flows from a belief that the gift will be *interpreted* as a contribution. Fulfilling desires, whether known or unknown, requires access to resources. Using artificial means to produce a greater supply of girls to supply hypothetical increased demand on the part of wishful polygamists is highly unlikely. The rich and famous among the male population already *have* access to unofficial harems, so I find it unbelievable that they would suddenly start being willing to pay high prices to formalize every one of their casual relationships – or devote their financial resources to "manufacturing" extra brides to satisfy the desires of those who would likely *never* be able to reimburse them for the costs involved. A whole host of taboos and other social conventions would further prevent "bride prices" from becoming significantly high enough to warrant devoting precious family resources to seeking out artificial means to assure an increase in unmarried women. This certainly hasn't happened in China, where a striking imbalance of men to women already exists.

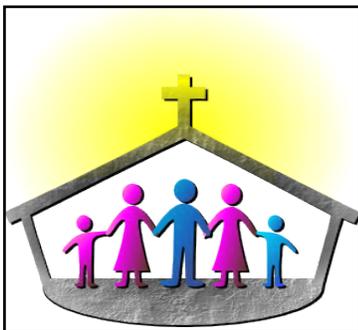
Mr. Anderson posits that cultures that value boy babies

more than girl babies might have had a fair amount of polygamy in their past, but this is a non sequitur – *every* culture has had a fair amount of polygamy in its past. Even the Greeks and Romans who established Western Civilization and institutionalized monogamy previously condoned polygamy; forced monogamy cannot be *introduced* if monogamy is already ubiquitous. In the absence of *evidence* that one variable causes another variable that follows, it is no more reasonable to conclude that past prevalence of polygamy led to the diminishing value of girl babies than it is to assert that past prevalence of hunting, public urination or breastfeeding must have produced a cultural preference for boy babies over girl babies. Antecedence is not correlation, much less causation.

What evidence would Mr. Anderson produce to back up his assertion that a society in which polygamy had been accepted and widely practiced for several generations would necessarily become more violent than a society in which polygamy is stigmatized and suppressed? Were the Israelites more violent than the Egyptians who had previously enslaved them? Has someone done a *longitudinal* study of Islam, comparing its changing practices of polygamy to the ebbs and flows of its history of seeking to dominate the known world? I appreciate that Mr. Anderson is careful to append the adject-

ive “outwardly” when describing ancient Greece and its cultural descendants of Europe and America as monogamous, because the monogamy of each of those examples is *hypocritically* superficial, but even despite the accuracy of that description, the choice of examples is flawed by a failure to properly analyze the interaction of variables if one asserts that (a) Greece and its Western Civilization descendants are more robustly competitive compared to polygamy-accepting cultures and simultaneously asserts that (b) polygamous cultures are more violent than their “monogamous” counterparts. Asserting that monogamy trumps violence and military might when it comes to long-term viability of empires is highly questionable. Who, for example, can possibly claim that America has less than its share of violence despite banning bigamy? We are definitely not polygamy-friendly and are yet known the world over not only for military prowess but also for high violent crime rates.

Mr. Anderson says that, keeping the Fisher Principle in mind and applying deductive reasoning, “it’s easy to see why the average person (whether male or female) in modern Western Civilization reacts with such disgust, revulsion and unthinking emotionality to the idea of a man having more than one wife.” Surely he doesn’t really believe that polygamy is taboo because we’re genetically predisposed to reject it, does he? If so, someone better inform the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy that they’ve wasted 1500+ years subjecting all of Western Civilization to unnecessary anti-sexual propaganda intended to manipulate us into labeling ourselves as revolting and disgusting! The typical unconscious emotional reaction that folks generally have to the notion of polygamy doesn’t have a whit to do with deductive reasoning or the Fisher Principle: it’s called *fear!* – fear of social ostracism; fear of unfair punishment for one’s children; fear of *losing* one’s children; fear of losing one’s



www.BiblicalFamilies.org

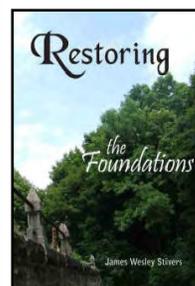
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Restoring the Foundations: Essays in Relational Theology

by — James Wesley Stivers
(originally published in 1995)

94 pages, PB. \$13

A companion book to *Eros Made Sacred*, this is a study of the Christian Man’s relation to God, woman, his children, his firstborn, social order, etc.

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job; fear of being cast out from one's church, one's social organizations, or one's positions of status: not to mention fear of Divine Retribution from a God we've been taught to believe doesn't so much love us but has set us up to fail no matter how hard we try to meet His standards. We are collectively afraid that we will end up standing alone in front of the equivalent of a firing squad if we challenge the monoga-maniacal status quo. That combination of a flight-or-fight reaction and feeling like we're going to puke our guts out comes from fearing that Church and State will destroy us for our verboten principles, not from any fear that polygamy itself has the potential to destroy Western Civilization.

Mr. Anderson's solution includes generalized monogamy "with polygamy being acceptable only under certain rare circumstances." He assures us that following this prescription would avoid astronomically-high bride prices, secure homes for all extra women, increase the value of women in our society and boost the maturity level of men, all while decreasing promiscuity, unwanted babies, crime, pornography and abortion. Unfortunately, though, the historical record is replete with failed governmental attempts to create Heaven on Earth. In fact, the more ambitious the State structure for controlling human behavior, the less successful. Who can guarantee that the type of people who would actually be put in charge of determining who would be granted permission to be polygamous would be qualified to determine which characteristics should be rewarded or punished, which women are extra, or which relationships should qualify or not qualify as being considered marriage?

Anthropological research has revealed that, in ancient times, the choice of lifetime mates was a matter of per-

sonal choice or family arrangements, with no State intervention. Until the Greeks invented the City-State and instituted the monogamy imperative, and until Big Religion declared marriage to be a sacrament, human beings were not in the habit of having to seek approval for marriage from priests or civil servants. One needed a license to be married no more than one needed a license to feed oneself or to change a baby's diaper. Intended to suppress any challenges to The Rules, State intervention is typically excused with conversation stoppers akin to, "You wouldn't want the world to spin irretrievably out of control, would you?" By wedding (pun intended) his disapproval of gender-balance unfairness to promotion of government intervention, Mr. Anderson has uncovered his personal discomfort with polygamy while failing to demonstrate that his proposed solution is targeted at an actual problem. Society at large has every right to concern itself with whether or not children are being neglected or abused, but as long as parents are taking full personal and financial responsibility for raising their children, the government has no business legislating with whom we live, with whom we sleep, or whom we love. It is ironic that acceptance of homosexual unions is sweeping the nation – and criticizing never-married women for having children with multiple absent baby daddies continues to be politically incorrect – but we decry those who choose to be lovingly, permanently and biblically committed to more than one fellow adult. **■**



Keith (1954-) has had careers as a radio DJ, dorm director, psychotherapist and small business owner, in addition to stints as a writer, landscaper, warehouse manager and public school teacher. He resides in Greenville, PA, enjoying the greatest roles of his life: husband & father.



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