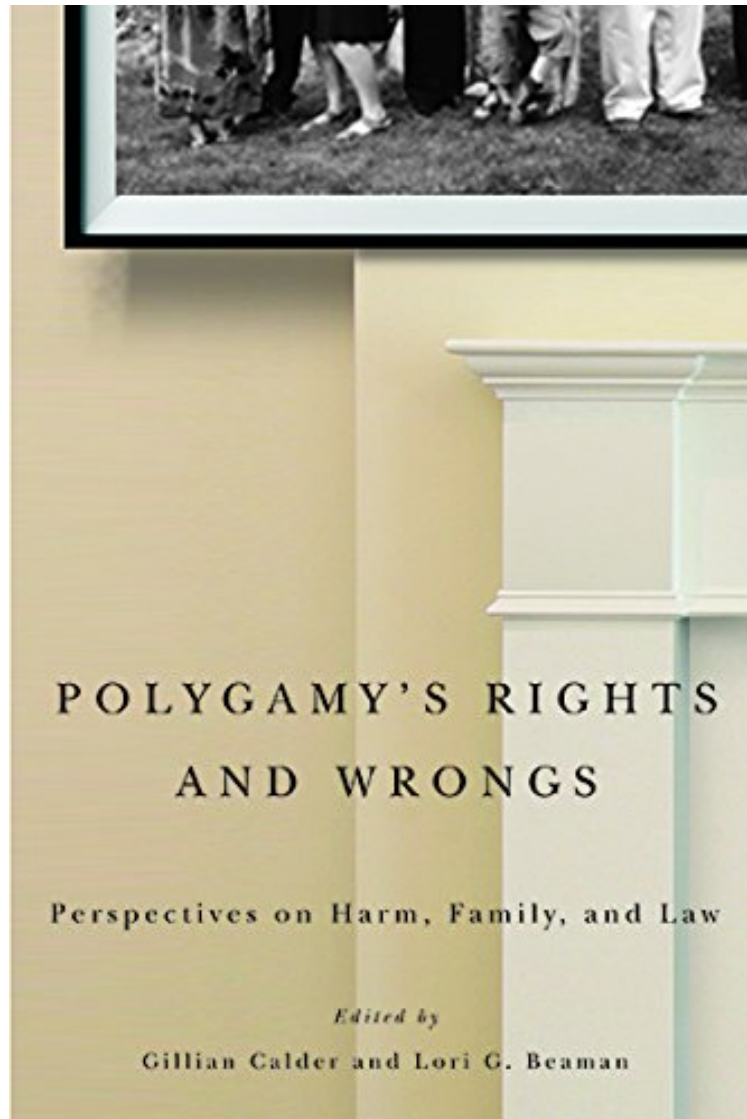


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Polygamy's Rights and Wrongs: Perspectives on Harm, Family, and Law

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Assumptions about the harmful nature of polygamy have left little room for debate, with monogamy coming to represent a hallmark of advanced societies, and polygamy the immoral alternative. Yet in this volume, eleven scholars ask whether this condemnation is justified by examining, among other perspectives, the lived experiences of polygamous families. In essays that fearlessly face difficult questions of choice, dignity, and love, the authors seek to complicate a conversation that is more often simplified. Thoughtful and persuasive, *Polygamy's Rights and Wrongs* is both a close consideration of polygamy and a challenging reflection on the ways in which we value family and intimacy.

Assumptions about the harmful nature of polygamy have left little room for debate, with monogamy coming to represent a hallmark of civil society, and polygamy the immoral alternative. Opponents have argued that polygamy is harmful to women, children, personal freedom, and even national values, and press for prosecution. Yet in this volume, a diverse group of eleven scholars asks whether this response is justified by examining, among other perspectives, the lived experiences of polygamous families. These historians, legal scholars, political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, and religious studies scholars, some of whom are personally connected to polygamous families, seek to complicate a conversation that is more often simplified. In essays that fearlessly face difficult questions of love, choice, and dignity, the authors point to the less well-known stories of polygamous family life -- the women living radically non-patriarchal lives in polygamous families, the powerful sense of pride and belonging within polygamous communities, and research that interrogates the real differences between monogamous and polygamous families. Thoughtful and persuasive, *Polygamys Rights and Wrongs* is both a close consideration of polygamy -- its historical place and its presence in contemporary society -- and a challenging reflection on the ways in which we value family and intimacy. The contributors to this volume skilfully expose the underlying ideological and cultural motives for condemning polygamy in Western societies awash in nontraditional marriage and family forms. The book makes an invaluable contribution to our understanding of how legal fictions are constructed to preserve the status quo. (Stuart A. Wright, Professor, Department of Sociology, Lamar University, and co-author of *Saints under Siege: The Texas State Raid on the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints*) Original and important. Since polygamy has long been hidden from scholarly and popular view, the broad range of interdisciplinary contributors provides an extensive and challenging exploration of this highly controversial issue. (Beverley Baines, Professor, Faculty of Law, Queen's University, and co-editor of *Feminist Constitutionalism*) About the Author Gillian Calder is associate professor in the University of Victoria's Faculty of Law. Lori G. Beaman is the Canada Research Chair in the Contextualization of Religion in a Diverse Canada and professor of classics and religious studies at the University of Ottawa.