



# Polygamy, Polygyny, and Polyamory

## ETHICAL AND LEGAL PERSPECTIVES ON PLURAL MARRIAGE

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7 - MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2010 | BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY | WALTHAM, MA

The practice of plural marriage poses ethical and legal challenges for the liberal state. Internal minorities demand the toleration of polygamous practices. Migrant groups demand recognition of polygynous marriages contracted legitimately under foreign legal regimes. Critics of monogamy ask why the state should limit recognition to dyadic relationships. Critics of marriage ask why the state should impose the terms of intimate relationships rather than allowing the parties to set these themselves. This international conference, hosted by the **HBI Project on Gender, Culture, Religion, and the Law (GCRL)**, will explore a range of issues related to polygamy, polygyny and polyamory in the United States and around the world.

### KEYNOTE

*Polygamy and Gender  
Justice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:  
Reflections on Basic Principles*



Dr. Abdullahi An-Na'im  
EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2010 | 7 PM

Directions, parking information, and additional details are available on our website: [www.brandeis.edu/hbi](http://www.brandeis.edu/hbi)  
Parking is available in Tower Lot for Sunday's program. If attending Monday's program, please park in the Charles River (J) Lot. A Shuttle will be provided.  
Questions: [hbi@brandeis.edu](mailto:hbi@brandeis.edu) or 781-736-2064

The Project on Gender, Culture, Religion, and the Law was initiated by a grant from Sylvia Neil and Dan Fischel. The mission of the Project is to support research and activism which explores conflicts between women's claims to gender equality and legal norms justified in terms of religious and cultural traditions.



This conference is generously funded by a gift from the Dan Fischel and Sylvia Neil Philanthropic Fund.

#### Conference sponsored by:

- Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life at Brandeis University
- Feminist Sexual Ethics Project at Brandeis University, which is funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation
- Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Department at Brandeis University
- West African Research Association



# Program: Polygamy, Polygyny, and Polyamory

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2010 | BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY  
RAPAPORTE TREASURE HALL, GOLDFARB LIBRARY

7:00pm Reception

7:30pm Markowicz Memorial Lecture on Gender and Human Rights

**Keynote: *Polygamy and Gender Justice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Reflections on Basic Principles***

Dr. Abdullahi An-Na'im, EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

*Space is limited. Please RSVP to [hbi@brandeis.edu](mailto:hbi@brandeis.edu).*

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2010 | BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY  
HASSENFELD CONFERENCE CENTER, LURIA ROOMS

8:00 Coffee and Registration

8:30 Welcome

9:00 to 9:30 **Reading from *Blood Stains: A Child of Africa Reclaims Her Human Rights* by Khady Khoita** (UNCUT/VOICES PRESS, 2010)

Moderator: Shulamit Reinharz, BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Translator: Tobe Levin, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

9:30 -11:15 **Panel I: Is Polygamy Bad for Women?**

Chair: Dr. Abdullahi An-Na'im, EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

1. Janet Bennion, LYDON STATE COLLEGE  
**The Many Faces of Polygamy: An Analysis of Mormon Fundamentalism**
2. Debra Majeed, BELOIT COLLEGE  
**The Ethics of Sisterhood: African American Muslim Women and Polygyny**
3. Abdoul Aziz Kebe, UNIVERSITÉ CHEIKH ANTA DIOP DE DAKAR  
**Cultural, Islamic and Legal Aspects of Polygamy in Senegal**
4. Sarah Whedon, SIMMONS COLLEGE  
**Media Representations of Polygamous Fundamentalist Mormon Women**

11:15 – 11:30 Break

11:30 – 1:15 **Panel II: Polygamy and Freedom**

Chair: Lisa Fishbayn Joffe, BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

1. Martha Bailey, QUEENS UNIVERSITY  
**Should Polygamy Be a Crime?**
2. Sarah Song, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY  
**Should the US Decriminalize Polygamy? Considerations from the Mormon Case**
3. Maura Strassberg, DRAKE LAW SCHOOL  
**Why the U.S. Should Not Decriminalize Polygamy, but Should Not Criminalize Polyamory**
4. Judith Stacey, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY  
**Why the U.S. Should Decriminalize Polygamy: Lessons from South Africa**

1:15—2:00 Lunch

2:00 – 3:30 **Panel III: Polygamy in Israel: Jewish and Palestinian Perspectives**

Chair: Sylvia Barack Fishman, BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

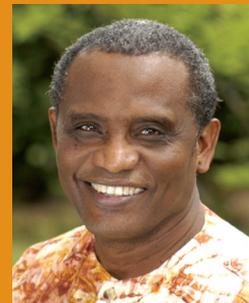
1. Elimelech Westreich, TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY  
**Jewish Legal Responses to Polygamy from Medieval Times to the Modern Day**
2. Zvi Zohar, BAR ILAN UNIVERSITY  
**Pilegish: A Classical Halakhic Intimate Relationship and Its Contemporary Potential(s)**
3. Alean Al-Krenawi, MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY  
**A Study of Psychological Family Function, Marital and Life Satisfactions of Polygamous and Monogamous Women: The Palestinian Case**

3:30 – 4:00 Closing Remarks

Bernadette Brooten, BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Shahla Haeri, BOSTON UNIVERSITY

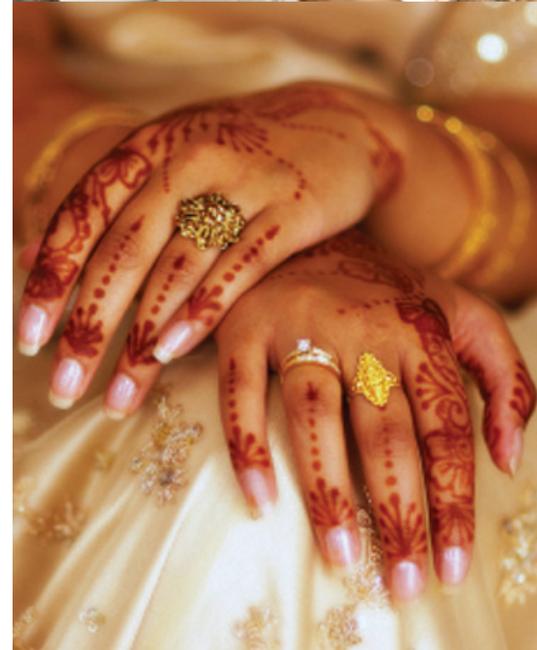
Linda McClain, BOSTON UNIVERSITY



**Dr. Abdullahi An-Na'im**

Approaching polygamy with a radically open mind, Dr. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im will examine how polygamy compares to monogamy in social and personal terms and discuss the implications for the theory and practice of human rights.

Dr. An-Na'im is the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Law and Director of the Center for International and Comparative Law at Emory University School of Law. Dr. An-Na'im is an internationally recognized scholar of Islam and human rights and human rights in cross-cultural perspective. He is the author of *Islam and the Secular State* (2008); *African Constitutionalism and the Role of Islam* (2006); and *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights and International Law* (1990).



LISA FISHBAYN JOFFE, *Director, GCRL*

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THE PROJECT ON GENDER, CULTURE, RELIGION, AND THE LAW  
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