

2017

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Laura A. Benedict

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, benedl1@unlv.nevada.edu

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Repository Citation

Benedict, L. A. (2017). Polyandry around the World.

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ANTH 471

April, 2017

Abstract

Polyandry is the umbrella term for one woman maintaining sexual access to more than one man. This work is a comparison of forty-three societies as examples of the six types of polyandry practiced around the world. In some types, the sexual acts are part of a marriage contract involving three or more people. In some types, the marriage involves only two people, but the sexual access of the wife extends beyond the marriage. In one type, the extra-marital sexual activity is expected, and not entirely voluntary by all parties. This survey is the first to describe all six types with examples of each.

Keywords: associated polyandry, familial polyandry, fraternal polyandry, polykoity, secondary polyandry, walking marriage

Polyandry around the World

Humans engage in many styles of sexual practices. Focusing solely on consensual practices, some romances last only as long as it takes to achieve orgasm, while others last several decades. Some relationships are limited to two people, while others include a large group. Over time and around the globe, modern humans have arguably preferred heterosexual monogamy as the most commonly practiced sexual experience, with slight polygyny as a close second (Gray and Garcia 2013, 24). Nevertheless, being the creative creature humans are, other styles have always existed. One alternative style of sexual practices is polyandry. Polyandry is the umbrella term for the phenomenon of one woman having sexual access to two or more men. This does not inherently imply marriage or the fully voluntary nature of the practice.

Less common around the world today, polyandry was previously more common in certain cultures. Tiwari (2008, 123) described polyandry as an uncommon practice that enjoyed a larger following prior to “the European colonial expansion”. While many cultural anthropologists find the practice interesting (as is evidenced by the number of ethnographic studies), polyandry remains sufficiently rare as to be little known and poorly understood. Goldstein (1976, 223) called polyandry “the least well understood” form of marital practice. The forty-three societies (Appendix A, table 2) described herein provide sufficient information for this brief survey, but insufficient information for a full understanding of the practice. This work is the most detailed description of polyandry to date because it describes, compares, and contrasts the six types. Most previous studies focused on one community tolerant of polyandrous behavior, but did not always define which type that behavior constituted. Notably, Starkweather and Hames (2012, 150) described fifty-three societies, but they classified those societies as “classical” and “non-classical” rather than any of these six types.

Korn (2000, 370) explained that polyandry is more than merely a prevention of overpopulation, but also presents a way for males of lesser quality to procreate. This description holds true as both Levine (1980) and Peters (1982) offer a description of the practice in the form of labeling types. The first type of polyandry is fraternal. Fraternal polyandry is when one woman is married to two or more brothers who hold equal rights within the household. The marriage of all of the brothers is usually performed in one ceremony or agreement, and the entire family is seen by the community as a single family unit (Levine 1980, 283; Peters 1982, 90). This work describes eleven communities tolerant of fraternal polyandry (Appendix A, table 1), including the Tigara of Alaska (Rainey 1947) and the Paviotso of Nevada (Park 1937).

The second type of polyandry is associated. Associated polyandry is when a woman marries two or more men separately. These marriage ceremonies or agreements are separate events, and the relationships are regarded as separate marriages. The men hold a definite hierarchy within the household, with the second husband as the junior. The second husband is acquired as an assistant to the first husband, or because the first husband is ill and unable to sexually satisfy the wife (Levine 1980, 283; Peters 1982, 90). This work describes seven communities tolerant of associated polyandry (Appendix A, table 1), including the Marquesas Islanders (Frayser 1985; Handy 1923) and the Cubeo of Colombia (Goldman 1963).

The third type of polyandry is polykoity, as described by Levine (Levine 1980, 283). Polykoity is when one woman is married to one man, but has sex with other men in addition to her husband. Polykoity is seen in the practice of partible paternity, the belief that more than one man is the genetic father of any child (Walker, Flinn, and Hill 2010, 19195). This work describes seventeen communities tolerant of polykoity (Appendix A, table 1), including the Yanomami of Brazil (Alès 2002) and the Ache of Paraguay (Ellsworth 2014).

The fourth type of polyandry is secondary, as described by Peters (1982, 90). Secondary polyandry is when the original married couple part ways and each acquires new mates, but they continue to have sexual relations with each other whenever they feel like it. Using modern terminology, this practice could be described as divorce-with-benefits. These communities seem to have little or no jealousy over extra-marital sexuality because this behavior is accepted and generally expected (Peters 1982, 90). This work describes three communities tolerant of secondary polyandry (Appendix A, table 1), including the G/wi bush people of the Kalahari Desert (Silberbauer 1972) and the Irigwe of Nigeria (Sangree 1980).

The fifth type of polyandry is walking marriage, described by Peters as “Nayar polyandry” after a prominent group that practiced it (1982, 90). Walking marriage is when the woman is not married, or is ritually married to the clan, and chooses which man with whom to have sex each evening, and if she has sex. The clan sets limits concerning which males have access to her, but the choice is hers within those limits. She is not economically dependent upon any man with whom she has sex, and the relationship can begin or stop without ceremony (Peters 1982, 90). This work describes three communities tolerant of walking marriage (Appendix A, table 1), including the Lele of the Congo (Tew 1951), and the Mosuo of China (Walsh 2005).

The sixth and last type of polyandry, familial polyandry, is not described by either Levine or Peters, but is common enough to warrant its own type. Familial polyandry is when the woman is married to one man, and there is an expectation that she will be sexually available to others outside the marriage, especially family members. She does not necessarily have a choice concerning with whom she has sex, such as is seen in Point Hope, Alaska (Vanstone 1962). In some cases, it is her choice, such as is seen from the Cherokee of New York (Reid 1970). This work describes ten communities tolerant of familial polyandry (Appendix A, table 1).

Fraternal Polyandry

Fraternal polyandry is when a woman marries two or more brothers in a single ceremony. Fraternal polyandry was practiced in different communities out of poverty, love of family, or the need to maintain a finite amount of land. In Alaska, fraternal polyandry was practiced mostly out of poverty. Rainey (1947, 243) described a few Tigara families on the Aleutian chain of Alaska composed of one wife married to two poor brothers. Another Alaskan community that accepted polyandry because of a lack of wealth was the Aleuts, as described by Liapunova (1996, 145). Elsewhere in the United States, polyandry was acceptable as a natural extension of marital options, in addition to monogamy, serial monogamy, and polygyny. On the islands of Hawaii, Linnekin (1990, 122) discussed fraternal polyandry in close families. A pair of brothers did not wish to part ways from each other, and chose to marry one woman between them. Park (1937, 366) and Steward (1936, 563-564) discussed the Shoshoni of central and eastern Nevada, and southern Idaho. Fraternal polyandry was also found in Colorado and Utah (Smith 1974, 131), but less commonly than was found in Hawaii, Nevada, and Idaho.

Tiwari (2008, 123) wrote that fraternal polyandry “minimizes financial risk,” by “pooling resources,” and “maximizing inclusive fitness,” thus creating more wealth and a “higher socioeconomic status” for the family. In contrast, Goldstein (1971, 66) argued that the purpose of polyandry was not to create wealth, but to preserve it. Goldstein wrote that the Tibetan families that practiced fraternal polyandry were almost exclusively of a specific class allotted a plot of land that could not be divided among several offspring per generation (Goldstein 1971, 66). Rather than passing the land to the oldest offspring in a generation, the Tibetans preferred to minimize the number of offspring in each generation. Fraternal polyandry fulfills that requirement.

In the Himalayan Mountain Region lived several fraternally polyandrous communities, such as the Tibetans described by Tiwari and Goldstein. These communities lived in high altitudes with small plots of land on which to farm and/ or graze animals (Beall and Goldstein 1981, 7). These plots of land were not highly fruitful, nor were they ideal for grazing. The Pahari of Jaunsar Bawar practiced fraternal polyandry at least occasionally (Berreman 1962, 62), the actual rate of this practice was questioned by Goldstein (1978, 332). Goldstein (1978, 326) was more confident in the prevalence of fraternal polyandry in Tibet, in agreement with Jiao (2001, 192) who stressed the inherent class and land holding status of fraternally polyandrous families. In describing fraternal polyandry in Kinnaur, Nepal, Tiwari (2008, 144) explained that co-husbands pooled together their assets to better the whole family instead of fighting for resources.

Goldstein (1976, 230) explained that fraternal polyandry restricted the reproductive capacity of “thirty-one percent” of local females. In the Himalayas, the family planning goal for fraternally polyandrous families was to minimize the number of children born to each generation. By allowing only one wife per generation, each male had sexual access, but minimal legitimate procreative capabilities. Levine (1997, 376) agreed that this concept was contradictory to evolutionary theories of procreation, but served a vital purpose, given the conditions in which these communities lived. Goldstein (1971, 68) explained the justification of fraternal polyandry in this region with the desire to maintain the family land in one holding. As an example, if a family with two sons started out with ten acres of land and could divide the land for inheritance, the next generation would have had two plots of land of five acres each. If each of them had two sons, they then would have had four plots of land of only two and one-half acres each. It only takes a few generations to reduce the land to a plot too small to support a family. It is this very situation those in the Himalayan Mountains wished to avoid.

Associated Polyandry

Associated polyandry is when a woman marries a second man who is not necessarily the brother of the first. These two marriages occurred in separate ceremonies, and fostered a clear hierarchy between the husbands, with the second husband as the junior to the first. Jones (1976) described the Aleuts in Alaska who allowed a woman to have a second husband because he would be an assistant to her first husband. Lantis (1970, 212) described the same community, claiming that the woman was “praised...as being skillful” for acquiring a second husband to help the first. Her acquisition was a form of wealth in that she could provide food, clothing, and shelter for both husbands. In contrast, Damas (1975, 412-413) and Balikci (1970, 156-157) described a few Netsilik families in Alaska as practicing associated polyandry, but the men did not assist each other. Balikci stressed the importance of the wife maintaining equality between the men with regards to sexual access for fear of one murdering the other. For the Netsilik, polyandry was a function of the scarcity of available women.

Also in Alaska, the Tlingit people allowed associated polyandry if a “brother or close relative” could seduce the wife (Krause 1956, 154). If the second husband avoided murder by the first husband, the second brought gifts for the first, assisted the first husband in providing for the household, and assumed the position of junior husband. The Yokuts of California reportedly allowed one case of polyandry: Gayton (1948, 105) described that one woman had two husbands, “and they all slept together.” Gayton did not specify whether his phrase meant the three slept in the same bed, all sexually active with each other, or just in the same house. Gayton referred to “the Entimbich” who were also polyandrous without disgrace, but provided no other details about the polyandry of either group (Gayton 1948, 105). Gayton alluded that the wider Yokut community disapproved of polyandry, but tolerated it nonetheless.

On the Marquesas Islands, polyandry was exclusive to powerful and influential families, such as that of the chief. Frayser (1985, 256) stated that the second husband enriched the household by providing assistance to the first husband. Handy (1923, 101) added that the second husband protected the household and had sexual access to the wife when the first husband was away from home. Handy also claimed that polyandry in the Marquesas Islands was more common than Frayser stated, "For one woman to have two husbands is a universal habit," mainly because "men greatly outnumbered women," (Handy 1923, 101).

Goldman (1963, 147) described a similar case in a Cubeo community in the Northwest Amazon basin. A woman had an affair with the younger brother of her husband. This younger brother had been unable to find a wife because of the seclusion of their community and the scarcity of women. The older brother avoided divorce by allowing his brother into the family. Goldman reported that the wife "fed both men and was a sexual partner of the junior husband only when her first husband was away," (1963, 147).

The Paliyans of India accepted associated polyandry when the first husband was ill and unable to sexually satisfy his wife (Gardner 1972, 421; Gardner 2009, 50). The first husband resented the second, but chose to maintain the relationship rather than lose his wife. Gardner (2009, 50) also described a case of group marriage involving two couples who lived next to each other. The older man acquired an illness that prevented sexual activity. He had a child before the injury, but then the wife seduced the neighbor and had two more children. The second husband did not contribute to the household of the first husband, but the community accepted both men as the husband of the wife (Gardner 2009, 50). Gardner (2009, 50) specified that both of these cases of polyandry occurred because the first husband was unable to satisfy his wife sexually, and that the first husband resented the presence of the second husband.

Polykoity

Polykoity is when a woman is married to one man, but has sex with other men to whom she is not married. This is different from cheating in that the husband is aware of the sexual activity, and usually supports it. The author interviewed a practitioner of polykoity who asked to be called “Asia.” Asia was legally married to one man and engaged in regular sex with a friend of the husband, who lived in the home with the couple. The husband was aware of the extra-marital relationship, and was integral to the pair remaining sexually active. The husband did not resent the second sexual relationship; rather, he encouraged their sexual relations (personal communication). This is similar to the Cherokee in New York, for whom sex was not exclusive to marriage, and married women had sex with whomever they decided, including travelers (Reid 1970, 115).

One common form of polykoity was seen in the practice of partible paternity, the concept that more than one man is the genetic father of a single child. For instance, the Ache of Paraguay practiced partible paternity (Ellsworth 2014, 6). By adding a father to her child, the woman gained resources; by accepting secondary paternity over a child, the man gained sexual access and increased alliances in the community (Ellsworth 2014, 6). This gendered explanation is common among practitioners of partible paternity. Partible paternity was found in many South American communities, such as the Cashinahua in Peru, who chose to acknowledge the partible only when it suited the family (Kensinger 2002, 14). This decision was made based on social aspects such as the moieties of the parents (Kensinger 2002, 19). The Ese Eja reckoned partible paternity by the sexual relations of the mother, but also the partible maternity by adoption (Peluso 2002, 137). An Ese Eja couple was expected to give their first child “to the wife’s parents” and their “second to the husband’s parents,” (Peluso 2002, 142).

In Brazil, the Matis were on the brink of extinction, resulting in their adoption of several survival tactics, including partible paternity as insurance against parental mortality (Erikson 2002, 123). Several communities, including the Yanomami (Alès 2002, 62), the Mëbengokre (Lea 2002, 105), and the Kulina (Pollock 2002, 52) believed that a child could not possibly be conceived with only one father. These societies believed the sperm built a ball inside the woman until it was large enough to create a fetus, and that the fetus blocked the passage of the menstrual blood (Pollock 2002, 52). They believed the woman was only a carrying vessel, and did not contribute to the creation of the fetus (Alès 2002, 64). Like the Cashinahua, Canela women chose which men to accept as partible fathers to the child based on social aspects and the expectation that the child would inherit certain traits (Crocker 2002, 86). The Tukanoan denied belief in the partible, yet several men would simultaneously observe the rituals required of a father upon the birth of his child (Chernela 2002, 171).

In Venezuela, Barí women chose secondary fathers as insurance against the high mortality rate (Beckerman, et al 2002, 31). The Curripaco allowed the brothers of the husband sexual access to the wife to create the partible (Valentine 2002, 178). This is essentially familial polyandry as described below, with the partible thrown in for good measure. The Piora believed the semen of the father created the fetus, but that the prayers of other men could nourish the fetus, creating the partible (Rodríguez and Monterrey 2002, 196). The Ye'kwana (Rodríguez and Monterrey 2002, 195) and the Warao (Heinen 2002, 214) believed that the extra semen provided food and nourishment to the growing fetus, and that the fetus would not be healthy without extra semen. In contrast, the Siona and Secoya of Ecuador believed all sex was dangerous, but automatically bestowed the partible to the brothers of the husband without those men having sex with the woman (Vickers 2002, 240).

Secondary Polyandry

Secondary Polyandry is when the original couple part ways and each acquires new mates, but they continue to have sexual relations with each other whenever they feel like it. Using modern terminology the practitioners would not have recognized, secondary polyandry might be termed divorce-with-benefits. For the G/wi, secondary polyandry was a compromise between one married couple and a friend of the husband. The wife divorced the husband and married the friend, but wanted to maintain sexual contact with the first husband (Silberbauer 1972, 307). This instance differs from the associated polyandry described above because the woman divorced the first husband, and he did not live with the new couple, nor did he contribute to their household as the junior husband of associated polyandry would do.

The Irigwe of Nigeria “did not recognize divorce,” but couples frequently moved on to other sexual partners and marriages anyway (Sangree 1980, 336). Husbands married new wives, and wives married new husbands. In such cases, the spouses moved on to another marriage, but maintained sexual contact with their previous spouses, whenever they both wanted. This was an accepted and expected practice in the society. In this community, co-husbands reported no jealousy, but avoided each other because of the belief that the one could cause harm or death to the other just by his presence (Sangree 1980, 342). Secondary polyandry differs from associated polyandry described above because the series of couples did not live together, nor did they contribute to each other’s households; they only enjoyed sexual relations when the mood arose. The Ache of Paraguay allowed the practice of secondary polyandry when one husband and wife couple each took another spouse (Hill and Hurtado 1996, 229). Hill and Hurtado did not specify how the four engaged in sexual relations, even though the “four adults slept together at the same fire,” (Hill and Hurtado 1996, 229).

Walking Marriage

Walking marriage is a situation in which the woman is not married, but chooses her sexual partners from a specific set of eligible men. The Lele of Kasai in the Congo practice walking marriage in the form of a “wife of the village,” (Tew 1951, 1). The wife of the village had rules for which men she had sex with depending on certain conditions: inside the house or in the forest, during the honeymoon period or after, and one of the contracted husbands or not (Tew 1951, 1-4). In general, she had much autonomy in her own sexuality. For the Nayar of India, women took pride that the number of lovers one had outnumbered others in the community (Gough 1952, 74). Before puberty, a Nayar girl ceremoniously married a member of her caste (Gough 1959, 25); at sexual maturity, she could have sex with any man with whom she chose as long as he was from her caste or higher (Gough 1965, 9). She was likely to accept him as a partner as long as he brought her small gifts during the festivals (Gough 1952, 73-74).

Among the Mosuo of China, a woman will invite a suitor to her home. He will arrive after dark and be sure to leave before sunrise (Lugo Lake Mosuo Cultural Development Association). There is no expectation of exclusivity, but these couplings are frequently long term and mutually fulfilling (Lugo Lake Mosuo Cultural Development Association). Mosuo men do not live with their sexual partners or their children, but they do invest in their children (Mattison, Scelza, and Blumenfield 2014, 602). The Mosuo struggle to maintain individual identity while performing their scripted culture according to the expectations of the tourists (Walsh 2005, 455). The tourist interest in their community is so significant as to render their farming and fishing endeavors almost unnecessary (Mattison, Scelza, and Blumenfield 2014, 594). There are serious questions concerning the validity of the Mosuo lifestyle: might the entire marital system have changed except for the inherent supply and demand dynamic produced by the tourism?

Familial Polyandry

Familial polyandry is the expectation of sexual relations with people outside the marriage. This expectation can come from the husband, from either of their families, or from the community at large. In familial polyandry, the brother of the husband frequently expects sexual access to the wife, especially when the husband is away. This situation occurred in the Lamotrek of Alaska (Alkire 1965, 70). The Aleuts of Alaska allowed the nephew of the husband sexual access to the wife (Liapunova 1996, 146). Jones (1976, 16) extended the list an Aleut man had sexual access to: "his wives, his wives' sisters, his older brothers' wives, his maternal uncles' wives, cousins, concubines (slaves), and transvestites." The Tlingit of Alaska allowed the brothers and nephews of the husband sexual access to the wife (De Laguna 1972, 489-490). At Point Hope in Alaska, men offered their wives to travelers and friends in a show of hospitality (Vanstone 1962, 90). The Tigara of Alaska followed the same practice, and the women resented being used in such a way (Rainey 1947, 242).

The Pawnee tribal group of Kansas had a complicated set of expectations that included both sides of the family. The brothers of the husband had sexual access to the wife, and the sisters of the wife had sexual access to the husband (Lesser 1930, 99). In addition, the nephew of the husband usually lived with the couple before puberty, and it was expected that his first sexual experience would be with the wife (Lesser 1930, 101). This group of tribes included the Skiri Pawnee, three south bands of Pawnee, the Arikara, the Wichita, and the Kitsai (Lesser 1930, 100). For the Cherokee of New York, the community expected women to be sexually available to others, but it was wholly her decision (Reid 1970, 119). This situation was similar to walking marriage, but was different because Cherokee women frequently married, while in walking marriages, the women do not marry.

The Matis of Brazil held festivals throughout the year where they expected marital couples to refrain from sex with each other, but to be available to members of the larger community other than their usual partners (Erikson 2002, 130). For the Matis, their usual partners included their spouse, the siblings of their spouse, and their cross-cousins (Erikson 2002, 128). To refuse sexual access to one's spouse, a sibling of one's spouse, or a cross-cousin was considered rude and inexcusable (Erikson 2002, 128). During festival times, it was rude to have sex with any of one's usual partners, and it was considered rude to refuse sex to a member of the wider community (Erikson 2002, 130). In the Himalayan Mountain region, the Pahari of Garhwal extended sexual access of wives to the brothers of the husband, even though they claimed that they did not participate in polyandry (Berreman 1962, 62). In Eastern Russia, the Koryak would "exchange wives for a night, or that the wife would be placed at the disposal of the transient guest," (Jochelson 1908, 755). Jochelson did not specify whether the Koryak women resented this arrangement as did the Tigara women in Alaska (Rainey 1947, 242).

Comparisons

Fraternal polyandry requires that all of the husbands be brothers, and familial polyandry is extended to family members. Fraternal polyandry is the only type that requires equality between the husbands within the family. Walking marriage and polykoity are the two types of polyandry that offer the woman the most power over her own sexuality. Secondary polyandry and walking marriage are the most equal toward all participants. In secondary polyandry and walking marriage, all participants make their own sexual decisions. Associated polyandry offers the least equality for the husbands because of the clear hierarchy between them. Familial polyandry offers the least autonomy for the women because most societies that allow it hold an expectation that the women will participate without asking their opinion on the matter.

Fraternal and associated polyandry were practiced mainly for financial or practical reasons. For instance, in the Himalayan Mountain Region, fraternal polyandry was practiced to maintain land holdings in one family per generation. In addition, this form of marriage ensured population control, maintaining a stasis within the area, preventing the problems associated with overpopulation and the overtaxing of the finite resources. On the Marquesas Islands, important families, such as that of the chief, improved the family standing by acquiring an assistant in the form of a second husband for the wife of the chief. In a sense, the second husband was paid for his services to the chief by sexual access to the wife of the chief when the chief was away from home. This follows the logic offered by Korn (2000, 370) in that a man of lesser quality (the second husband) gained access to procreative capabilities (the wife). Korn stated that the purpose of polyandry is not merely for population control as is seen in the Tibetan communities.

It would be easy to blame patriarchal control for the practice of familial polyandry. If familial polyandry was practiced in the United States today, patriarchal control might be a convenient explanation. Alternatively, investigators would suspect a sex trafficking situation. However, researchers must guard against applying the standards of their society upon those they study. Those societies presented in this survey that employed familial polyandry, did so as a viable tactic to increase genetic diversity into their respective isolated communities. For instance, the Matis of Brazil were on the brink of extinction. That community regarded the survival of the whole society as more important than the happiness of any given couple. Thus, they required sexuality beyond marriage for all adult tribal members, at least during a specific time in their history. Similarly, the Alaskan societies welcomed male travelers in part because of the genetic diversity they brought with them. The Pawnee group of societies in Kansas had a high mortality rate. By extending the definition of family, the widows and children were better cared for.

Secondary polyandry and walking marriage both present a high degree of autonomy to all involved. Secondary polyandry is only one step removed from walking marriage because of the requirement for marriage and divorce. If the society tolerant of secondary polyandry removed the assumption of formal marriage, walking marriage would be more common. Communities tolerant of walking marriage might be described as multi-male, multi-female mating systems, such as is found among baboons. Given the sexual dimorphism present in these groups in the wild, and the minimal sexual dimorphism in human populations, this might be considered devolution for humans. Contrariwise, both types of polyandry present a community expectation of a lack of jealousy between sexual partners and metamours (the lover of one's lover). This lack of jealousy might be considered an evolutionary step forward for humans.

Conclusion

Of all of the relationship systems humans can choose from, this work focused on polyandry, the umbrella term for one woman having sexual access to more than one man. Six types of polyandry were discussed, with varying degrees of autonomy and family relatedness for the participants. Each society tolerant of any given type of polyandry held valid reasons for its practice. For the fraternally polyandrous societies in the Himalayan Mountain Region, the reason was to increase productivity and decrease procreation. For the familial polyandrous Matis and Aleut societies, the reason was to increase genetic diversity. Walking marriage societies such as the Nayar and the Mosuo provide genetic diversity and sexual autonomy. An outsider to the practice can only surmise the motivations of a practicing group. While no outsider can ever gain a completely emic perspective, it is important to understand a society from their point of view as much as is possible. This survey was an attempt to understand the practice of polyandry, in all its types, as completely as possible.

Implications for Future Research

This survey of the six types of polyandry naturally leads to questions concerning the current practice of polyandry. All of the resources presented in this work are significantly dated, except for those concerning the Mosuo. The Mosuo community in China is the only society confirmed to be currently practicing or tolerant of any type of polyandry. It is possible that the Tibetan populations in the Himalayan Mountain Region are continuing the practice of fraternal polyandry, as the most recent reference herein was from 2008 (Tiwari 2008). Unfortunately, Tiwari did not specify the time frame of their field research. Further research into the current polyandrous practices around the world is warranted. With a high degree of relative certainty, the author hypothesizes that polyandrous relationships exist today.

Because bigamy (the act of being married to more than one person at the same time) is illegal in the United States, finding people who practice fraternal or associated polyandry, and who are willing to interview about it, could prove tricky. In addition, adultery (the act of being married to one person while having sex with another) is at least a misdemeanor in several states. For this reason, finding practitioners of polykoity or secondary polyandry might prove difficult, but the author hypothesizes these could be found through such avenues as swingers clubs or polyamorous online chat rooms. The personal interview included in this survey was polykoity, and the author hypothesizes that using the snowball method of interviewing might prove useful in addition to the other methods already mentioned. Walking marriage could be researched if the definition was extended to single (not married) women having sex with more than one man with overlapping timelines. The conditions implied with familial polyandry are unethical at best, and the author would decline such research. Further research should focus on the prevalence of the current practice and the motivations of the practitioners.

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Appendix A: Societies Tolerant of Polyandry

Table 1: Types and Occurrence of Polyandry

Six Types of Polyandry	
Type	Number of Societies
Fraternal Polyandry	11
Associated Polyandry	7
Polykoity	17
Secondary Polyandry	3
Walking Marriage	3
Familial Polyandry	10
Total	43*

*Seven societies accept more than one type

Table 2: Type of Polyandry of Which Each Society is Tolerant

Society	Type(s)
Ache	Polykoity Secondary
Aleut	Fraternal Associated Familial
Barí	Polykoity
Canela	Polykoity
Cashinahua	Polykoity
Cherokee	Polykoity Familial
Cubeo	Associated
Curripaco	Polykoity
Ese Eja	Polykoity
G/wi	Secondary
Hawaiian	Fraternal
Interview	Polykoity
Irigwe	Secondary
Kinnaur	Fraternal
Koryak	Familial
Kulina	Polykoity
Lamotrek	Familial
Lele	Walking
Marquesan	Associated
Matis	Polykoity Familial
Mēbengokre	Polykoity

Mosuo	Walking	
Nayar	Walking	
Netsilik	Associated	
Nyinba	Fraternal	
Pahari	Fraternal	Familial
Paliyan	Associated	
Pavlotso	Fraternal	
Pawnee	Familial	
Piaroa	Polykoity	
Point Hope	Familial	
Secoya	Polykoity	
Shoshoni	Fraternal	
Siona	Polykoity	
Tibetan	Fraternal	
Tigara	Fraternal	Familial
Tlingit	Associated	Familial
Tsang	Fraternal	
Tukanoan	Polykoity	
Utes	Fraternal	
Warao	Polykoity	
Yanomami	Polykoity	
Yokut	Associated	