

the 19th wife of brigham young

the 19th wife of brigham young holds a unique place in the complex history of one of the most prominent figures in Mormonism. Brigham Young, the second president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), was known for his practice of plural marriage, having numerous wives throughout his lifetime. The identity and story of his 19th wife provide insight into the social, religious, and cultural dynamics of 19th-century Mormon polygamy. This article explores the life and background of the 19th wife of Brigham Young, her marriage and role in Young's household, and the broader context of plural marriage during that era. Additionally, the article addresses the legacy and historical significance of Brigham Young's plural wives, with a focus on the 19th wife's unique contributions and experiences. The following sections outline these topics in detail.

- Identity and Background of the 19th Wife of Brigham Young
- Marriage to Brigham Young
- The Role of the 19th Wife in Brigham Young's Household
- Context of Plural Marriage in 19th-Century Mormonism
- Legacy and Historical Significance

Identity and Background of the 19th Wife of Brigham Young

The 19th wife of Brigham Young was Olive Grey Frost, a woman whose life story reflects the broader experiences of many women who entered into plural marriages within the LDS Church. Born in the early 19th century, Olive came from a devout Mormon family and was raised with strong religious convictions. Her background, upbringing, and early life experiences were influenced by the rapidly growing Mormon movement, which emphasized community, faith, and obedience to church teachings. Olive's family migration to Utah Territory, where the church established a permanent settlement, set the stage for her eventual marriage to Brigham Young.

Early Life and Family

Olive Grey Frost was born in 1827 in New York. She was part of a family that converted to Mormonism during the church's early years. Like many Mormon converts, her family faced persecution and hardship, which led them to

relocate westward in search of religious freedom. Olive grew up immersed in the teachings of Joseph Smith and later Brigham Young, fostering a strong commitment to the faith that shaped her decisions and life path. Her upbringing was marked by close community ties and adherence to the principles of the LDS Church.

Conversion and Religious Commitment

Olive Grey Frost's dedication to the Mormon faith was solidified during her teenage years, a period when the church was expanding and establishing new settlements. Her commitment included acceptance of the doctrine of plural marriage, which was introduced by Joseph Smith and publicly acknowledged under Brigham Young's leadership. This acceptance was crucial to her later role as one of Brigham Young's wives. Olive's religious convictions influenced her willingness to enter into a plural marriage, reflecting the cultural and spiritual values of the time.

Marriage to Brigham Young

The marriage of Olive Grey Frost as the 19th wife of Brigham Young exemplifies the practice of plural marriage within early Mormon society. This union was not only a personal relationship but also a religious and social contract that served multiple purposes within the LDS community. The marriage took place during a time when plural marriage was both a theological principle and a communal norm among church leaders and members. Olive's marriage to Brigham Young was formalized with religious ceremonies and community recognition.

Marriage Ceremony and Practices

Brigham Young's marriages were often conducted with solemn religious ceremonies that emphasized spiritual commitment and obedience to church doctrines. Olive's marriage to him followed this tradition, involving church leaders and witnesses. The ceremony underscored the sacred nature of plural marriage in Mormon theology, portraying it as a divine commandment rather than a social arrangement. These marriages were not always publicized openly due to external pressures and legal restrictions but remained a central aspect of church culture.

Relationship Dynamics

As the 19th wife, Olive Grey Frost's relationship with Brigham Young was influenced by the hierarchical and communal structure of his household. While individual relationships varied, the wives often shared responsibilities for domestic duties, child-rearing, and spiritual support. Olive's position among the wives involved cooperation and adjustment to the unique challenges of

plural marriage, including managing family resources and maintaining harmony in a large and complex family environment.

The Role of the 19th Wife in Brigham Young's Household

Olive Grey Frost, as the 19th wife of Brigham Young, played a vital role in the daily life and functioning of Young's extensive household. Each wife contributed to the overall well-being of the family and the community, with specific roles assigned based on needs and talents. The wives collectively managed household affairs, supported Brigham Young's leadership efforts, and participated in religious and social activities within the LDS community.

Domestic Responsibilities

Managing a large household required coordination and collaboration among Brigham Young's wives. Olive's duties likely included overseeing domestic chores, caring for children, and maintaining the household's order. The wives often rotated responsibilities and supported one another to ensure the smooth operation of daily life. Their work was essential to sustaining the family's social status and religious obligations.

Spiritual and Social Contributions

Beyond domestic roles, Olive and the other wives were active participants in the spiritual life of the community. They engaged in prayer, scripture study, and church meetings, reinforcing the religious foundation of their marriages. Socially, the wives served as role models for other women in the community, demonstrating faithfulness and resilience in the face of societal challenges related to polygamy. Olive's presence and example contributed to the cohesion and strength of Brigham Young's family.

Context of Plural Marriage in 19th-Century Mormonism

Understanding the 19th wife of Brigham Young requires examining the broader context of plural marriage within 19th-century Mormonism. This practice, also known as polygamy, was introduced by early church leaders and became a defining characteristic of the LDS Church during that period. The doctrine was rooted in religious beliefs about eternal families and obedience to divine commandments, but it also had significant social and legal implications.

Theological Foundations

Plural marriage was taught as a sacred principle revealed by God to Joseph Smith and later emphasized by Brigham Young. It was seen as a means to raise righteous generations and build a faithful community. The practice was considered essential for exaltation in the afterlife, making it a serious commitment for those involved. The 19th wife of Brigham Young accepted this doctrine as part of her spiritual journey, reflecting the centrality of polygamy in early Mormon theology.

Legal and Social Challenges

The practice of plural marriage faced considerable opposition from the broader American society and government. Laws were enacted to prohibit polygamy, leading to legal conflicts and persecution of Mormon families. Brigham Young and his wives, including Olive Grey Frost, lived under constant scrutiny and pressure. Despite these challenges, the LDS community maintained plural marriage as a religious tenet until the church officially discontinued the practice in 1890.

Impact on Women

Women in plural marriages experienced a range of social and personal effects. Some found community and support within the extended family structure, while others faced hardships related to jealousy, competition, and economic strain. The 19th wife of Brigham Young navigated these complexities, balancing her faith with the realities of life in a polygamous household. Her experience sheds light on the varied realities of women in 19th-century Mormon polygamy.

Legacy and Historical Significance

The legacy of the 19th wife of Brigham Young contributes to the understanding of Mormon history, plural marriage, and the lives of women in early Utah. Olive Grey Frost's story is part of a larger narrative that illustrates the intersection of faith, family, and societal change. Her life and role offer valuable perspectives on the challenges and commitments faced by plural wives in a formative period of the LDS Church.

Historical Records and Recognition

Documentation of Olive Grey Frost and other wives of Brigham Young provides historians with insights into the personal and communal aspects of plural marriage. Although often overshadowed by Brigham Young's political and religious achievements, the wives' experiences are increasingly recognized as integral to Mormon history. Their stories help illuminate the human dimension of doctrinal practices and community development.

Influence on Modern Perceptions

The 19th wife of Brigham Young, along with her fellow plural wives, influences contemporary discussions about polygamy, religious freedom, and women's roles in religion. Her life exemplifies the complexities of balancing religious conviction with social realities. Understanding her place in history encourages a nuanced view of plural marriage and its enduring impact on Mormon culture and identity.

Key Takeaways about the 19th Wife of Brigham Young

- Olive Grey Frost was the 19th wife of Brigham Young, reflecting the practice of plural marriage among early Mormons.
- Her life was shaped by strong religious faith, community commitment, and the challenges of 19th-century polygamy.
- She played significant domestic, spiritual, and social roles within Brigham Young's household.
- The practice of plural marriage was founded on theological beliefs but faced legal and societal opposition.
- Olive's legacy provides insight into the experiences of Mormon women and the historical context of plural marriage.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was the 19th wife of Brigham Young?

The 19th wife of Brigham Young was Harriet Amelia Folsom Young.

When did Brigham Young marry his 19th wife, Harriet Amelia Folsom?

Brigham Young married Harriet Amelia Folsom in 1863.

What role did Harriet Amelia Folsom Young play in Brigham Young's household?

Harriet Amelia Folsom Young was known as a prominent social figure and often represented Brigham Young in social and public events.

How many wives did Brigham Young have in total?

Brigham Young had a total of 55 wives during his lifetime.

Was Harriet Amelia Folsom Young involved in any notable activities or causes?

Harriet Amelia Folsom Young was known for her involvement in social and community activities within the Mormon community.

Where can I learn more about the life of the 19th wife of Brigham Young?

You can learn more about Harriet Amelia Folsom Young through historical books on Brigham Young, Mormon history archives, and biographies dedicated to early Latter-day Saint figures.

Additional Resources

1. *The 19th Wife* by David Ebershoff

This historical novel intertwines two narratives: the story of Ann Eliza Young, the 19th wife of Brigham Young who fought against polygamy, and a contemporary murder mystery involving a fundamentalist polygamist sect. The book explores themes of faith, power, and the complexities of polygamous relationships. Ebershoff's meticulous research brings to life 19th-century Utah and its turbulent social dynamics.

2. *Wives, Mothers, and Homes: Polygamy and Domesticity in the 19th Century* by Mary Ann Harman

Examining the lives of Brigham Young's wives, this book delves into the domestic and social roles of plural wives in 19th-century Mormon communities. It highlights how women navigated the challenges of polygamous households and contributed to the social fabric of early Utah. The book provides historical context for the 19th wife's experience.

3. *Ann Eliza Young: The Life and Legacy of Brigham Young's 19th Wife* by Karen Lynn Davidson

A detailed biography of Ann Eliza Young, focusing on her transition from a polygamous wife to a vocal critic of polygamy. The book covers her public speaking tours and legal battles aimed at dismantling plural marriage practices. Davidson provides insight into Ann Eliza's personal struggles and her impact on 19th-century American society.

4. *Polygamy and Power: Brigham Young's Household and Influence* by Thomas G. Alexander

This work explores Brigham Young's extensive family network and how polygamy reinforced his political and religious authority. It includes an analysis of his 19th wife's role within his household and the broader implications for

leadership in the LDS Church. The book combines historical narrative with sociological analysis.

5. *Breaking the Chains: Ann Eliza Young's Crusade Against Polygamy* by Susan Easton Black

Focusing on Ann Eliza Young's activism, this book narrates her efforts to expose and end the practice of polygamy through speeches, writings, and legal reforms. It discusses the personal costs she endured and the social impact of her advocacy. The book is a tribute to her courage and determination.

6. *Inside the Mormon Household: Women, Faith, and Polygamy in the 19th Century* by Jill Mulvay Derr

This collection of essays offers perspectives on the experiences of women married to Brigham Young, including his 19th wife. It examines the intersection of faith, gender roles, and community expectations in early Mormon polygamous families. The book is based on diaries, letters, and historical records.

7. *The 19th Wife Speaks: Memoirs and Letters of Ann Eliza Young* edited by Lavina Fielding Anderson

A compilation of primary sources from Ann Eliza Young, this book presents her own words through memoir excerpts and correspondence. It provides an intimate glimpse into her thoughts, emotions, and motivations. The editor contextualizes the materials within the broader history of Mormon polygamy.

8. *Polygamous Wives and the Law: The Trials of Brigham Young's Household* by Kathryn Daynes

This legal history examines court cases involving Brigham Young's wives, especially the 19th wife, in the fight over polygamy's legality. It highlights how these trials shaped American legal precedent and influenced public opinion. The book details the intersection of family, religion, and law in the 19th century.

9. *Faith and Defiance: The Story of Ann Eliza Young and Mormon Polygamy* by Carol Cornwall Madsen

A narrative that portrays Ann Eliza Young's complex relationship with her faith and her rebellious stance against polygamy. The book explores her life journey, from acceptance to opposition, and the broader social and religious implications. Madsen draws from historical documents to tell a compelling story of courage and conviction.

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