

Abbas Raptus : Exploring Factors that Contribute to the Sexual Abuse of Females in Rural Mormon Fundamentalist Communities

By Janet Bennion

Associate Professor of Anthropology, Lyndon State College

Abstract

This paper traces the causes of the sexual abuse of females, particularly father-perpetrated rape, in rigid patriarchal communities in Montana, Mexico, and Utah. Based on 15 years of research among fundamentalists in the Intermountain West (Bennion 1997, 2004), the predicting variables were found to consist of 1) a male supremacist ideology that is sanctioned by both scriptural and economic prerogatives, 2) female circumscription, which is the geographic and social isolation of women and children from the mainstream, and 3) economic deprivation, leading to an increase in male underemployment and general dissatisfaction with their masculine role. It is my premise that the combination of these factors within contemporary millenarian fundamentalist movements contribute to the expression of child sexual molestation and domestic violence against women.

The Nature and Cause of Sexual Abuse

Human males are not unique in the animal kingdom in their ability to maintain sexual arousal and copulate with unwilling female victims. Certainly, there are other creatures which are capable of rape--such as the scorpionfly that has identified a clamp on the top of the male's abdomen as an adaptation specifically for rape (Wilson 2000). Yet humans are the only species that willingly choose to rape, torture, and then kill a female victim with impunity. The human male is capable of sexual penetration without the consent of the female, at any age of the female, from birth, as in the case of the raping of babies in South Africa (LoBaido 2001), or in the golden years, as occurred in England with the rape of an elderly woman (Gupta 2002)¹. This threat of sexual violence affects the lives of females everywhere, of any race and culture, at any time, in the home and in the community, during war or peace. In short, females around the world are beaten, sexually molested, mutilated, and killed by the millions.

According to Amnesty International, at least one out of every three women throughout the world has been "beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her

lifetime” (2005:1). The Council of Europe has stated that violence within the home by someone well known to the victim is the major cause of “death and disability for women aged 16 to 44 and accounts for more death and ill-health than cancer or traffic accidents” (Amnesty International 2005:1).

Rape is often associated with the *availability* of marginalized women, as in the case of young Chinese female workers, nannies, and household servants who are raped by their bosses (Shang 1992), Ugandan female refugees who were gang-raped by soldiers (Swiss 1993), or Sierra Leone female refugees who were abducted and molested by soldiers and civilians (Human Rights Watch 2000). Other war-time victims occur in places like Iraq, where the government uses rape and sexual assault to get information and forced confessions from detained family members. Some Iraqi authorities even carry personnel cards identifying their official duty as the "violation of women's honor" (U.S. Department of State 2002:1).

In other situations, rape is used to promote brides-wealth, as in Pakistan where a village committee had deemed that five teenage girls should be kidnapped, raped, and killed for refusing to be betrothed to men chosen by the village elders (Wilkinson 2005). Or, rape is used to rid a man of AIDS, as in South Africa, where 21,538 rapes and attempted rapes of children under the age of 18 were reported (LoBaido 2001). It is believed that by raping a baby the men will become purified and cured of their illnesses.

Nearly 15 million American women have been victims of sexual exploitation and one-third of all victims were abused before the age of nine (Carter-Lourensz et al 1995). Yet, in America, there is no war, bride payments, and the rapes of children have little to do with HIV. Ironically, when children are raped, it is typically by a loved one in or near

their homes. In a 1991 study, two-thirds of sex offenders had victimized children and almost one-third of the victims were their own children or step-children (Greenfeld 1996). In short, father-daughter incest and sibling incest are the most common forms of sexual molestation reported in the U.S. (Flowers 2000).

Explanations for Rape and Child Sexual Abuse

What is it that compels males to rape their own kin? According to evolutionists Thornhill and Palmer (2000), rape is a natural response to a biological need. Men have rape-specific adaptation located in their brains which promote rape when beneficial, such as when a fertile female can be raped with low costs of injury and punishment to males. They argue that although a rapist may have all kinds of reasons for raping a woman or girl, the evidence points to sexual stimulation as the primary motivation. Further, rape is typically performed by men who were poor growing up and who are not now, as an adult, able to locate a genetically-attractive consensual partner. These impoverished males must sidestep the cultural norm in favor of forced penetration to access valued females without incurring any costs.

In spite of its elegance, the evolutionary analysis cannot possibly explain all factors contributing to rape, especially the rape of boys, men, and non-reproductive-age females. Further, if reproduction is indeed the goal of rape, then there must be a significant amount of pregnancy associated with rape. In addition, not *all* men are potential rapists; if a latent gene for rape exists, not every male is apt to express it unless he is given adequate prompting from society. Feminist theories of rape, which address this prompting, state that rape is an attempt by men to dominate and control women and it only occurs when males are taught by their culture, directly or indirectly, to rape. This

explanation holds that the motivation to rape has very little to do with sexual desire, or biological need, and that all factors leading to rape are found exclusively in the socio-cultural context.

While I agree that an evolutionary basis of rape exists, I suggest that it is only expressed when satisfactorily prompted by certain socio-cultural and environmental cues. I have shown elsewhere (Bennion 2004) that certain ecological and social environments contain barriers to females' ability to access valued resources, including the ability to escape violence, the capacity for self-defense, and mostly importantly, the access of a vehicle for autonomy and empowerment. These same environments pave the way for male privilege and trivialize male offenses against females. If the environment makes rape easy, then men will more likely act on their sexual impulses in those specific geographic and social environments. Economic deprivation plays an enormous role in this environmental paradigm. If males are raised in impoverished conditions as children, they have a tendency to become poor themselves. They then resort to cutting the costs of accessing attractive, healthy, women and children, via the mechanism of molestation.

Reducing rape and incest will depend, then, upon a full knowledge of the evolutionary *social* and *cultural* cues, such as socioeconomic status of perpetrator, the social and geographic barriers to female autonomy, and the cultural beliefs that allow, and in some cases, *encourage* the rape of women and children without punishment. I predict that female sexual abuse is more prevalent in environments which contain the following three socio-cultural cues: 1) male supremacy, 2) female circumscription, and 3) economic deprivation. Firstly, there must be an ideological mandate constructed by society that sanctions male dominance and female subordination. This mandate is

typically supported by a religious text or code that clearly states and enforces the superiority of males and the inferiority of females. It also confirms the general cultural practice of the marginalization and alienation of females in the form of restrictions pertaining to their clothing, their education, their sexuality, and their access to economic resources. Secondly, females in a patriarchal environment are circumscribed, that is, they are geographically and socially isolated from the mainstream. Women and children who live in a rural setting, bounded by mountains, oceans, deserts, or forests, are typically at higher risk for abuse than those in urban settings where they may have greater access to support groups and government agencies (Myers and Brasington 2002, Bennion 2004). And finally, economic deprivation--caused by unemployment, underemployment, lack of economic resources, and lack of job mobility--is another abuse characteristic, directly tied to dissatisfaction with the masculine role and cognitive dissonance, the failure to match one's ideals to one's socioeconomic reality (Festinger 1957).

I first applied these socio-cultural cues to 1999 sex offender profiles provided by 22 licensed sex abuse counselors in the State of Utah, focusing on father/daughter incest (Bennion 2000). Of 320 profiles, 120 were fundamentalist polygynists. The therapists filled out a two-page survey which consisted of the basic demographics of the perpetrator: family structure, religiosity, parenting style, environment, gender roles, socioeconomic status, and education. The study showed that the typical perpetrator profile was of a male, aged 30-50, who had himself been victimized as a child. This man exerted formal control over a typically large, overcrowded household, and often traveled away from the home on business or to visit other families (in the case of polygynists). The perpetrator was "religious" with high expectations of righteousness for himself and

his family. Yet, in spite of religiosity, the perpetrator had a history of using pornography and was described as having a sexual addiction. Furthermore, the perpetrator lived with his family in relative poverty in a rural, isolated region. In sum, these Utah cases revealed that the offender had a high level of eroticism and tended to take out his economic frustration on a submissive wife and vulnerable children, in a confining, troubled household. The man of the house reinforced his dominion over his wife and children through physical and sexual abuse, as well as, restricting their access to the larger mainstream world.

Mormon fundamentalist cases in Montana and Mexico

Ever since Salt Lake City teenager, Elizabeth Smart, was abducted in 2002 by the self-proclaimed polygynist prophet, Brian Mitchell, Mormon fundamentalists have been targeted as sex offenders. Tom Green set the media stage when he was charged with four counts of polygamy for marrying his 13-year old step-daughter in 1995 (State vs. Green 2001). In another recent case, a father indoctrinated and “groomed” his 12-year old biological daughter and 13-year old step-daughter to marry him. After having sexual intercourse with both of them, the father was turned into the police by the first girl’s mother; yet the 12-year old refused to testify against her father (Myers and Brasington 2002: 2).

Polygyny has been established in the literature as a risk factor for sexual molestation (Myers and Brasington 2002, Bennion 1997, Green 1996), as the families tend to be large, overcrowded, and are rigidly controlled by a patriarchal figure. These groups are also generally isolated with little to no secular education for the children. Currently, there are approximately 50,000 fundamentalist Mormons practicing polygyny

in defiance of the law (Bennion 1997). It is nearly impossible to gauge how many families are incestuous as women and children are forced to keep all family troubles quiet. What is possible, however, is a thorough scrutiny of perpetrator profiles of men who were already arrested or publicly identified as sexual offenders.

These cases illuminate the strong relationship between religious fundamentalism and the occurrence of father/daughter incest. My research focuses on data collected over the period of 1989-1999 in two fundamentalist locales: one in the cold Bitterroot Mountains of southeastern Montana, where the closest town is 25 miles away and the other, in the stark, dry Chihuahuan Desert, where the population density is about one person for every 10 miles and the closest town is 45 miles away.

In the case of the small 800-peopled Montana Allred order, there were 25 sex offenders identified through a series of interviews with victims, only two of which were reported to the local police and then forced to leave the group: John Jay and Joe Thompson (Bennion 1993). In the 600-peopled LeBaron Mexico order, there were 17 sex offenders identified through interviews with members of the community (Bennion 2000). Two offenders associated with the Mexico group were arrested. The first was Ervil LeBaron, the convicted murderer of the LeBaron clan. The second, Chevril Palacios, who later joined the Allred Group, was arrested for incest and prostituting his daughters out to other men.

Sociocultural Background of Mormon Fundamentalism

The Montana order, known publicly as the Allred Group a.k.a. the Apostolic United Brethren, was formed by Rulon Allred in 1960 as a refuge from government persecution and the evils of Babylon (Bennion 1997). Likewise, the LeBaron order,

formally known as the Church of the Firstborn of the Fullness of Times, was established in 1955 by Joel LeBaron as a sanctuary in the Mexican desert, away from the sinners and corruption of the modern world (Bennion 2004).

For the most part, female recruits to these Mormon fundamentalist orders were facing serious marginalization in the mainstream Mormon Church. As Rex Cooper points out, single women, single mothers, divorced and widowed women and unmarriageable women are often socially and economically deprived of the resources available to the rest of the membership (1990). Women who convert are typically drawn to polygyny to find a husband, bear children, and access priesthood resources tied to their salvation. The women are baptized and integrated into an already established polygynous extended family. While many women find a greater access to valued resources and are quite content in their memberships, other women, albeit a lesser portion, are dissatisfied because of abuse, abandonment, poverty, or jealousy issues. The task of disengagement is serious and often too threatening for women to make an effort to leave. Many are told that they will lose their children to the group or to the dominant family kingdom to which they are aligned if they leave. These threats are grounded in real cases where children have been kidnapped from their mothers never to be heard of again. Women are also told that they will not survive economically on the outside, which is often true, as women are financially dependent on the order for their basic needs. Some are told they will be damned and tossed out of their family kingdom, and/or that their skin will turn dark, like Cain's.

New members in both groups were asked to consecrate all their properties and assets to the order to be "worthy to have their names written in the book of the law of

God" (LeBaron 1981:166). They were asked to improve on their stewardships (private industry) and consecrate all assets to the order; thus, some men are left without a means of supporting their growing families. Further, men and boys are expected to be "kings in the making;" taking up the mantle of religious priesthood leadership, economic stewardship, and absolute purity. Women play no role in this formal priesthood scheme. A woman may, if she is worthy and married to a high-ranking Melchizedek priesthood holder, tap into his power when she is with him. By and large, females are expected to bear and raise a "righteous seed" for their husband's kingdom.

Both groups believe that God is an exalted man and that if they are worthy, they can become gods and goddesses of their own worlds. They see polygyny as a way of restoring the fullness of the Gospel and the regal status of the Garden of Eden. It is a divine principle "dedicated by the Gods for the perpetuation of life and birth of earths" (Musser 1944:102). According to fundamentalists, polygyny also washes away the filth of the "daughters of Zion," as recorded in Isaiah 4:4. Many suggest that if polygyny were adopted throughout the United States, prostitution would be eliminated. In short, polygyny is the catchall solution for prostitution, infidelity, homosexuality, spinsterhood, childlessness, and various types of sexual sin (Bradley 1990).

The appropriate behavior of husbands and wives is that of ruler and subject, respectively, based on the teachings of Joseph Smith (Musser 1944, 1948). Husbands must be instructional and dominating, and wives must be obedient and respectful. Further requirements for women are summarized in Genesis 3:16: "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Women should "respect and revere themselves, as holy vessels, destined to sustain and magnify the eternal and sacred relationship of wife

and mother." A wife is the "ornament and glory of man; to share with him a never fading crown, and an eternally increasing dominion" (134). Musser also wrote that a man "shall fight the physical battles in protection of his loved ones, and bring into the home the necessaries of life." The wife "adorns the home, conserves the larder and renders the habitation an earthly heaven where love, peace, affection, gratitude, and oneness shall abound, she the queen and he the king" (1948:134).

Although the patriarchs of the households are not usually permanent residents, spending time with their other wives and working outside LeBaron or the Bitterroot area, they can exert enormous control over their wives and children. They typically preside over three to four wives and 20-40 children. There is great variability in the living arrangements. For example, in some families the women live in separate dwellings and meet all together only once a week. In others, up to five or six wives live under one roof and share bathrooms, kitchen, and dining areas, with a separate bedroom for each wife.

In general, Mormon fundamentalists do not celebrate sexuality, which is a necessary evil--a force men must learn to control and from which pregnant, lactating, and menstruating women must be protected. Because women's single most important role is motherhood, a task associated with celestial rewards and kingdoms of glory, barrenness is seen as a reproach---God's curse on the woman and her husband.

Data Analysis of Four Fundamentalist Perpetrators

John Jay of the Allred Group was married to 12 women and was said by his victims to have molested three young women outside his family and at least eight of his own children. To John this abuse was a natural, sacred enterprise. He would travel a great deal away from the order on Priesthood business and then come home to find that a

daughter had blossomed “as a rose.” He would then ask her to join him in the shed out back, where he would rape her and “school” her in two vital areas: 1) she was now connected to him through blood and sex which meant he would be her Savior on Mt. Zion and 2) if she told anyone, he would torture her through the Blood Atonement, which allows fathers to physically punish their children.

The case of Joe Thompson, a High Councilman of the Allred Group, is quite similar. He was charged with four counts of sexual abuse against 10 children, four of whom were not biological offspring. In most cases, the victims were asked to join him in his bedroom, when his four wives were not around. The abuse typically began at age 7 and continued on until the girls left the house to marry. One daughter reported to have borne Thompson’s child, although it was whispered that other such pregnancies were hidden from the larger group. The girls were simply sent out to a more rural area in the desert or the mountains until they bore their child. Joe also was said to have set up a torture enterprise in Oregon with a fellow councilman in the 1960s (which led to his temporary arrest) where he would join in molesting and beating pre-pubescent children. Joe’s motives were transparent to all, as he preached his beliefs at the pulpit during Sunday meetings, which I personally witnessed. He believed that God asked him to mate with his own daughters. He referred to the Law of Lot, stating that Lot was asked by God to have sex with his children in order to build up a more righteous seed after his own wife had been turned to salt outside of Sodom.² He said that as a direct descendant of Joseph Smith and Jesus Christ, he had to keep the blood lines pure via inbreeding. He knew his daughters were pure, therefore, if they could produce a child who was also pure, he

would insure the continuation of the Thompson family kingdom. I also heard Joe use the story of Sarah and Abraham to sanction incest:

Abraham replied, "I said to myself, there is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.¹² Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife"(Genesis 20:11-12).

Ervil LeBaron of Chihuahua, Mexico, was convicted of murdering his own brother, Verlan LeBaron, and many other members of the Firstborn order. In addition, he was identified as having taken young, teenage, women to bed, who he later married in the "covenant." Ervil's daughter confessed her father's actions in the film, *The Godmakers* (1980), stating that her father's eleven wives created a house full of jealousy and perversion, "as he would take several women to bed with him at one time." She claimed that young pre-teens were often reserved for older men, who would have a harder time securing wives because of their age. Ervil considered himself to be the "lamb of God" and also used Blood Atonement³ to keep if his wives, children, and other members of the group, in line. Ervil believed that he was the right hand of God with the authority to pass judgment on all sinners of the order; that right also gave him the authority to mate with young adolescent girls, as compensation for his good deeds and to build up his mighty family kingdom, if the mating resulting in pregnancy.¹ Like King Solomon the wise with his 800 concubines, Ervil LeBaron believed his eleven wives represented his power and

¹ According to one fundamentalist, Leviticus sanctions sexual relationships between a father and a daughter via omitting that it is, indeed, a sin. If you look for biblical restrictions against incest you will find that a man is forbidden to sleep with his mother, his wife's mother, his sister, his aunt, with animals, with other men, with a daughter-in-law, or with a menstruating woman. But nowhere does it mention the father/daughter relationship, therefore, it is interpreted as being acceptable. The rationale, often provided, is that daughters come from the loins of their fathers. They are under their father's jurisdiction.

authority to spread his seed in righteousness. Walking in Ervil's shoes is a recent polygynist of LeBaron, Orson W. Black, who has several wives, including two teenage brides, the youngest just 13 years of age (Kocherga 2005). Both Ervil and Orson claimed to be following the example of early prophet, Joseph Smith, when he sanctioned the law of polygyny in his own household in 1835 the same year that Fanny Alger, a 17-year old orphan living in his home, became pregnant (Cairncross 1974).

I met Chevral Palacios, 70, in the Allred Group years after he had left the Mexico order. He was High Councilman at the time, and I noticed how well he held his small family of two wives and seven children together. They seemed to be doing quite well financially and socially. A few weeks later, I read in the Salt Lake Tribune that he was charged with four counts of child rape which included three counts of sodomy on a child and one count for having sex with his young step-daughters (Cantera 2001). I learned from an informant that he had also given two other daughters away to other Councilmen as payment for favors that they had done for him and encouraged his young son, of 13, to have sex with his youngest wife, who was 24.

Discussion

In this section, I attempt to apply three socio-cultural cues—patriarchy, female circumscription, and economic deprivation—to the cases of incest and child abuse in Mormon polygynous society. The perpetrators used these cues embedded in their environments to sanction their abuse and effectively indoctrinate their wives and children.

Patriarchy

Firstly, through the vehicle of a patriarchal ideology, the offenders were ultimately responsible for the leadership of the family and control of the household. They were also in charge of the spiritual salvation of their kingdoms, insisting that they adopt the patrilineal pathway to heaven that runs through them to God. They used their priesthood powers and the biblical blueprint of the Abrahamic Covenant, with its promise of infinite progeny, as the exemplary tool for the selection of child brides and the abuse of their own daughters. Abraham was promised that his seed would be more plentiful than the "sands of the seas" if he would but obey God's commands. In the cases of the Allred Group and Colonia LeBaron, the men practice "elite polygyny," a phenomenon studied extensively by Musisi (1991) in which a small, powerful cluster of high-ranking males in the lineage has hegemony over women, children and resources. The father dominates others by coercion; he invokes God's authority to sanction sexual abuse and threatens damnation, the removal of economic resources, and physical abuse to any who challenge him. The victims, themselves, become strongly convinced that their father is justified in raping them, "refusing to equate it with incest" (Myers and Brasington 2002:4).

Further, the perpetrators insisted on huge families, even when the economic conditions were poor. As one patriarch stated, "overcrowded households are actually preferred, as they bring opportunities to polish each other as jewels are polished by rubbing against one another" (Bennion 1997). The offenders also required that their children be home schooled, avoiding the evil of the secular schools of the mainstream world. This restriction often disadvantaged females over males. For example, the LeBaron colony offers a high school education for the boys who will need rudimentary math and science skills to work in the agricultural and drywall industries, but LeBaron

girls are not encouraged to finish high school and likewise stop their training after sixth or seventh grade, at which time they are rigorously taught homemaking skills and reverence for male authority in their homes through the examples of their mothers and their mothers' co-wives. They apply these skills early, marrying at age seventeen or eighteen. Most LeBaron homes are isolated---surrounded by fields, orchards, and open range---and young girls' activities are restricted to the homestead. Since few women have a driver's license, they rarely travel outside their own family compound.

Another feature of a patriarchal ideology is sexual repression. The offenders were often heard discussing the evil of sex and the temptations of men by young attractive women. Polygyny was adopted to “modify the trouble and subdue the natural animal in man” (Musser 1948: 182-3). Any sexual intercourse between conception and the child's weaning is forbidden; if a man looks upon his wife with lust, he is damned (Bradley 1990).

Circumscription

Circumscription, first coined by Carneiro (1980), refers to the blockage of emigration of dissatisfied factions by features of the physical or social environment. In the Utah Valley pilot study, 95 percent of the abuse cases occurred in a rural environment. In the polygynous cases, the desert's geographic barriers of heat, drought, predators, poor soil, and imposing sierras together create a physical barricade against apostasy, and for that matter, escape. The isolating mountains of the Bitterroot valley of Montana contain these same circumscriptive barriers, particularly for women and children who are abused in the winter months, which last from October to June.

According to O'Dea, Mormon colonies are conducive to such isolating environments as a way to escape the evils of the outside world and to stimulate an agrarian lifestyle (1954).

People who leave their abusive environment risk hunger, economic hardship, and possibly even death on the outside. This geographic hindrance combines with a harsh social boundary to ensure that people stay put. Fears of isolation, of losing one's soul, of spiritual death, and of betraying the family keep people within the group. Women, especially, face this type of circumscription because they have been raised to value relationships, loved ones, and solidarity. They also risk losing their children if they attempt to leave (the offspring of a man belong to his patrilineage in the next life). Thus, if a mother is aware of her daughter's abuse, she is not likely to tell anyone about it for two reasons: 1) her husband, and the Brethren would condemn her for it, and 2) she would have to travel a great distance to locate an appropriate sounding board for such a grievance. Implicit in this circumscriptive pressure is the presence, then of a local cultural cue that sanctions the abuse, or at the very least, refuses to see it punished.

Economic Deprivation

Thornhill and Palmer wrote that most male perpetrators are raised in poverty and then use sexual force to gain access to women with good genes (2000). They predicted that if you can combat poverty of males, you can combat rape. My studies agree with this prediction. In the case of the Utah Valley perpetrators, the abuse occurred in the context of a lower socioeconomic household, where the offender was either unemployed or underemployed. In the case of the polygynous orders, most people live well below the official U.S. poverty level of \$17,000 a year for a family of four. For example, Thompson and Jay were self-proclaimed scholars, with little to no income. Palacios was

in and out of construction work while LeBaron was a sometime-farmer. The women in such households are often dependant on their husband's priesthood stewardships or the charity of the community to gain access to food and clothing for their children. They, therefore, are not likely to leave an abusive situation unless they have an outside relative—one who has not disowned them, that is--who can provide them with economic support, or if they have a job of their own.

Impoverished parents often share their frustration with their children through beatings, verbal abuse, as well as sexual abuse. Therefore, in an overcrowded, impoverished environment, sibling abuse is greater and the abuses a father doles out on his wife and other children is often ignored. And finally, in economically deprived families, the father will often go further from the home for work, at longer intervals, in order to access better jobs, which then leads to the father absence issue. It is well known in the literature (Parker 1976) that male absence creates opportunities to for sexual abuse as the man is not often present during the imprinting years of his children and becomes sexually attracted to them.

Towards an End to Female Abuse

In summary, this study has provided several cultural, environmental, and economic cues to help reduce sexual abuse against women and children. Firstly, we know that rural conditions produce more abuse. Therefore, more attention and funding for the reduction of domestic violence should be centered in the small towns and villages of the world, especially those with geographically isolating features such as deserts and mountains. Secondly, we know that a culture's ideology has an enormous impact on abuse. Thus, educating and empowering women may be the best recourse to stopping the perpetual

abuses inherent in patriarchal environments and reduce the vulnerability of females to sexual coercion. Thirdly, we know that one's economic status has a huge bearing on the frustration that may eventually lead to the abuse of a loved one. Government policy may be the answer; it can help alleviate problems in low income families through tax credits, livable wage programs, or some other means to assist rural impoverished conditions.

In short, admittedly, biological foundations exist for the rape and sexual violence against females. But society and the environment determine whether or not that rape gene will manifest itself, and to what degree and in what frequency. Culture contributes directly to violence against females by treating it as expected, normal, or deserved. The police contribute to abuse by calling rape a simple domestic dispute; the courts contribute to abuse by reducing sentences of perpetrators, and the community contributes to abuse by hiding abusers within its homes, churches, and schools. The acknowledgement of such socio-cultural cues could satisfactorily reduce the high incidence of rape, and specifically, child sexual abuse, throughout the world.

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¹ In August of 2002, a woman of 52 was raped on Wimbledon Common (Gupta 2002).

² Lot and his daughters sought refuge in a cave near Zoar; his daughters got him drunk with wine and lay with him in order to preserve their family line (Genesis 19:31-32).

³ Based upon the teachings of Mormon Church patriarch Brigham Young, death is the only redemption for grievous sins, such as adultery. Other sins may need the shedding of blood for atonement. If you love someone, you must be willing to shed their blood to pay for their sins. Young's statement was delivered in an 1857 sermon in Salt Lake City and memorialized in the primary fundamentalist Mormon document Purity in the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage (Dougherty 2003).

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