

Ex-Mormon Polygamous Family Makes Reality TV Debut in 'My Five Wives'

Cable network TLC recently aired a reality show following a polygamous family, similar to the channel's show *Sister Wives*.

My Five Wives features Brady Williams, his five wives and their 24 children. The Utah family, which withdrew from the fundamentalist Mormon Church in the mid-2000s, considers itself progressive and independent.

Living in a rural community outside of Salt Lake City, the Williams family borrows from teachings such as Buddhism to instill moral values into their children, who range in age from 2 to 20.

"Since we have left the religion, it's now about love, and it's about commitment, and it's about happiness as a family," 43-year-old Brady Williams told the Associated Press. "It's not about the fear of hell or the promise of heaven."

Brady and his first wife, Robyn; second wife, Paulie; third wife, Rosemary; fourth wife, Nonie; and fifth wife, Rhonda, will star in the hourlong special, which is also the pilot for a potential series if ratings are good.

Williams is a project manager for his brother's construction business. He built the two large multiplexes his family lives in. One two-story building, which resembles a motel, houses three wives. The other two wives live on the ground floor of an adjacent fourplex.

All of the wives have been married to Williams for at least 14 years. While two wives work outside of the home and one works in the construction business, the other two are taking college

courses. They take turns preparing meals on weeknights.

Like Kody Brown and his four wives, the stars of *Sister Wives*, the Williamses hope their show will make the American public more accepting of polygamy.

"Sure, it's scary," Brady said in a *Salt Lake Tribune* story. "But it's important to stand up for what's right. And it's right to allow consenting adults who are well-adjusted and not coerced to be able to share their lives and raise their children in a stable and loving environment."

Brady left the mainstream Church of Latter-day Saints for fundamentalist Mormonism when he was 16. All five of his wives were raised fundamentalist and grew up in polygamous families.

According to the AP, the two largest organized polygamous churches are Warren Jeff's Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the Utah-Arizona border and the Apostolic United Brethren in northern Utah, to which the Williams used to belong.

Up to this point, the Williamses have "avoided going public" with their lifestyle, Williams says. "But this time we really felt like we could make a difference in a world in showing that our family is a high-functioning, normal family that's got a unique twist to it," he told *The Salt Lake Tribune*.

He told the AP, "There is an unhealthy stigma attached to polygamy. There is nothing wrong with consenting adults living and loving how they choose."

The family is taking a risk in coming out, as polygamy is illegal in Utah. The Browns escaped to Las Vegas from Utah in 2011 when a local prosecutor opened an investigation after the first season. No charges were filed against the *Sister Wives* family.

Rosemary Williams says there is always a lingering fear of

persecution, but they feel polygamy is more widely accepted than when the Browns' TV show first aired.