

On Friday, July 22, 2016 2:29 PM, BRIAN C HALES\_ wrote:

Hi Dan,

We'll probably continue to disagree until we gain additional documentation. Hopefully it will be in the family manuscripts my friends says he will research.

I appreciate the compliment on my JSP analysis, but that was built on the assumption that Josephine was Joseph's daughter. I would discount most of it now. The DNA results were not what I expected, but they were what I had hoped. I believe the ambiguity of the evidence supporting polyandry was just notched up a couple of levels with the loss of Josephine as JS's daughter.

Phebe is interesting, but the current family history is not clear. I read it differently than you and if we extract the 1912 deposition recounting, then it reads (to me) like they were both told the same thing. It is a small point in the big scheme, but fun to debate until more evidence is found.

See you in Kirtland,

Brian

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Date: Fri, 22 Jul 2016 20:03:55 +0000  
From: dan  
To: brian  
Subject: Re: a source

Brian

Phebe says “She *again* told us of our ‘special heritage’ ...” This seems to imply that the added paragraph quoting Josephine replaced something rather than being merely inserted. When she says “our ‘special heritage,’” it doesn’t necessarily mean both were daughters of Joseph Smith in the same sense. Both had a “special heritage” even if one was a biological daughter and the other was adopted. Her statement can’t be used to modify Josephine’s statement about herself, especially when that statement didn’t exist at the time. Josephine’s statement is not ambiguous as to what she and her mother meant. Your arguments in your book in chapter 13 of volume 1 are still pertinent to the discussion.

“If no biological connection existed between Josephine and Joseph Smith, it is strange that Sylvia would wait until her deathbed to dramatically reveal to Josephine that the Prophet was her father only in eternity. ... To be sealed as one of his descendants was unexceptional. It conferred no unique or unusual status, required no special deathbed announcement, had no reason to be kept secret during most of the child’s lifetime, and would not have been a matter of interest to Church historians” (vol. 1, p. 352).

These and other arguments show that Sylvia’s statement was understood by everyone involved as meaning Josephine was a biological daughter of Joseph Smith. This still must be dealt with, not dismissed and now ignored. The DNA shows Sylvia was mistaken. I don’t know how you can escape the obvious conclusion that she was sexually active with both men.--Dan

On Sunday, July 24, 2016 10:24 AM, BRIAN C HALES\_ wrote:

Hi Again,

The DNA evidence does present some new talking points regarding polyandry. If you want to watch my video of my MHA presentation, you'll see that while polyandry is a possibility, other interpretations are supported.

I'm sure you will not be the only person to quote me to me 😊. Several things in my books and on the website require rewriting, but I'm happy to do it. When people quote *Joseph Smith's Polygamy* to me, I wonder, why don't they just quote some evidence supporting their position instead?

Does it ever make you wonder why so many otherwise good scholars accept polyandry so uncritically? It is a remarkable phenomenon in Mormon history. None of the proponents have investigated important questions like:

- Does the historical practice of a plurality of wives provide a social or religious context for the successful introduction of a plurality of husbands?
- In Nauvoo, what did the women believe after the second ceremony regarding their marriage relationships?
- Why are there no teachings supporting polyandry from Joseph Smith and no references to such teachings?
- Why is there no evidence that a woman in Nauvoo ever believed she had two husbands at the same time?

Regardless of our biases, these are valid questions that have yet to be addressed.

Instead, as in this case, we find the best supportive evidence for polyandry is a word-for-word quotation "I was the daughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith." Spoken in 1882, five years after the opening of the St. George temple where proxy child-to-parent sealings occurred, but was not recorded until 1915 when such sealings were even better known. So we now ask, "Was her perceived daughtership spiritual or physical?" Polyandry would have been shocking and explosive and this seems to be the best evidence available.

As for Phebe, she is a fun side-bar discussion and may turn out to be nothing important. Hopefully time will tell.

Any thoughts?

Brian

Vogel to Hales, 7-29-2016

I watched the video version of your MHA presentation and read what you posted on your website. That's what got me looking into the Carr Family Record, especially Phebe's statement that you seem to rely on so heavily. I also saw a video with you and Laura where some of the same arguments were expressed, and I read what you posted on your website.

On your website under Sylvia Sessions you argue: "If Sylvia had told Josephine that her father could have been *either* Joseph or Windsor, that declaration would be unambiguous evidence that she believed she had two husbands, that she was practicing polyandry." There is very little difference between *that* and what she said to Josephine. Her mistaken belief that Joseph Smith was Josephine's biological father amounts to a confession that she was having sex with both men. We don't know what made her sure that Joseph Smith was the father—a miscalculation, wishful thinking, mistaking sickness for morning sickness, a remarkable dream—but she was wrong. It doesn't require a significant gap or any gap at all. Your obstetrician colleagues are correct—"if a woman is having relations with two men and becomes pregnant, identifying the more desirable male as the father, even if other men could have been responsible for the pregnancy, is a common practice." You can see this played out nearly every day on Maury Povitch.

The evidence that she believed she had two husbands is her reluctance to talk about it, her keeping it secret, even from Josephine, and her instruction to Josephine not to talk openly about her paternity. This was her fear despite the prevalence of proxy child-to-parent sealings. You said it yourself: "If no biological connection existed between Josephine and Joseph Smith, it is strange that Sylvia would wait until her deathbed to dramatically reveal to Josephine that the Prophet was her father only in eternity. ... To be sealed as one of his descendants was unexceptional. It conferred no unique or unusual status, required no special deathbed announcement, had no reason to be kept secret during most of the child's lifetime, and would not have been a matter of interest to Church historians" (vol. 1, p. 352).

In your video you try to argue that Josephine's 1915 affidavit is ambiguous. No, it's not. When you were sure Josephine was Joseph Smith's daughter, you gave good arguments as to why Sophia's words were meant and understood literally. Those arguments still stand. They don't go away with the new DNA evidence. Rex Cooper's adopted-daughter interpretation is still wrong. Any explanation that doesn't begin with Sylvia's belief that Josephine was Joseph Smith's biological daughter is simply going to be wrong.

While the DNA evidence didn't confirm Josephine was Joseph Smith's biological daughter, it has nevertheless shed light on the nature of the relationship between Joseph, Sylvia, and Windsor. Clearly, Joseph Smith married and had sex with another man's wife. That Sylvia incorrectly believed Joseph Smith was the father shows that there was no separation and divorce preceding sexual relations with the Mormon prophet. The chronology you propose is difficult to imagine. That she could be having sex with her husband one day, separate from him, consider herself divorced, be courted by Joseph

Smith, marry and have sex with him, all within a very short time—as you say, “within days or weeks, at most a month or two”—doesn’t seem probable.

Your MHA presentation gives four possible interpretations, but on your website you drop the fourth because it amounts to nothing more than a smear of Sylvia Lyon and has nothing to do with the issue at hand. As outlined in the conclusion of your website version, the three possible interpretations are:

1. “Joseph’s sealing to Sylvia Sessions was non-sexual eternity-only and evidence of sexuality between them is unreliable.”

This is easily proven to be false and is an invented apologetic of recent date.

2. “Sylvia practiced polyandry with Windsor and Joseph who was privileged by God to experience both a plurality of wives and a plurality of husbands.”

Rather, Sylvia was confused about the paternity of her child because Joseph Smith chose to marry and have sex with a married woman. Sylvia didn’t practice polyandry. That would imply she chose Joseph Smith and could potentially choose others. Instead, it is a simple matter of Joseph Smith’s choosing to marry and have sex with another man’s wife.

3. “Shortly after becoming pregnant by Windsor, Sylvia separated from him and was sealed to Joseph in a time-and-eternity sealing and experienced conjugality with him.”

This is mere wishful thinking as there is no evidence of a separation and divorce.

You want people to conclude with you that since “much of the available evidences are contradictory, incomplete, or ambiguous ... conclusions regarding this potential marital triangle will depend primarily on which documents they are willing to dismiss and which assumptions they are willing to embrace.” Whereas the theory that Josephine was Joseph Smith’s adopted daughter and the speculation that Sylvia and Windsor were separated and considered divorced when Joseph and Sylvia had sex require a rejection of the best documentation and the embrace of undocumented assumptions. In my view, you seem to want to obfuscate by inventing improbable scenarios and pretend that they all have equal force, when they don’t. Given this propensity to invent ad hoc scenarios, your call for “additional historical information” seems disingenuous.

This is my brief review of your recent apologetic on the DNA results. Below is a more detailed response to the four possible interpretations in your MHA presentation.

#### **#1 JOSEPH SMITH DID NOT EXPERIENCE SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH SYLVIA**

This is flatly contradicted by Josephine’s testimony, and Josephine’s testimony is not contradicted by Phebe’s testimony. You flat out state: “Phebe was also present when Sylvia made her statement to Josephine. Phebe believed the declaration applied equally to

her and was not a reference to genetic relations.” I think you read too much into “our ‘special heritage.’” There is nothing in that statement that denies Josephine was Joseph Smith’s biological daughter. Both were special in different ways and would have been seen as equal in the eternities. The circumstances surrounding Josephine’s statement strongly reinforce the literal interpretation of Sophia’s words, which you well understood before the DNA revelations and which you have so far neglected to address. In your book you argued against Rex Cooper, but now quote him approvingly. Cooper’s interpretation is still wrong and your previous arguments were right.

In addition to what you noted about the circumstances of Josephine’s 1915 statement, the historians taking the statement are careful not to refer to Windsor as Josephine’s father—“Josephine Rosetta, a daughter of Sylvia Porter Sessions Lyon, was born in Nauvoo, Ill., Feb. 8, 1844, and when Mr. Lyon, her mother’s husband died in Iowa, she was about five years old.”

Joseph Smith III’s statement is useless since he was wrong about Sylvia being “childless in Nauvoo.” Besides, we already know she wasn’t willing to tell just anyone about her daughter Josephine’s paternity, especially a critic like Brand.

The statements of Brimhall and Cannon are not false because of the DNA. They are still true pertaining to what was believed about Josephine and hence provide additional reason to reject the eternity-only/adopted-daughter interpretation as heavy-handed apologetic. Hence, we do not have “contradictory evidence” in this case, but rather strong interpretation of the data and weak interpretation.

## #2 POLYANDRY—PLURALITY OF HUSBANDS

This is really the only viable interpretation, but not in quite the way you state—“A second interpretation of Ugo Perego’s findings is that Sylvia practiced polyandry or a plurality of husbands with both Joseph and Windsor ...” Normally, polyandry is where the woman chooses a plurality of husbands, whereas this polyandry occurs incidentally when Joseph Smith marries other men’s wives. In this situation, there is no chance for the woman to have three or more husbands. Hence, some like Ehat have called it pseudo-polyandry.

You quote the “happiness letter” as possible explanation for Joseph Smith’s would ignore the traditional aversion to polyandry—“That which is *wrong* under one circumstance, may be, and often is, *right* under another.” Well enough. But the part I think is more important for Joseph Smith’s convincing women to marry him states—“Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is.” That statement can be applied to whatever Joseph Smith wanted. Who wants to argue with God?

You ask—“Does it ever make you wonder why so many otherwise good scholars accept polyandry so uncritically?” No. I think you are missing what is obvious to most others. You ask a series of questions you think need to be answered to show one is critical. However, your questions are not necessary to answer before one can conclude Joseph

Smith married other men's wives for time and eternity. Rather, I think they are artificial barriers and red herrings. Nevertheless, I'll consider them.

"In Nauvoo, what did the women believe after the second ceremony regarding their marriage relationships? Why is there no evidence that a woman in Nauvoo ever believed she had two husbands at the same time?"

There is such evidence; just not in the form you demand. When Mary Elizabeth Lightner says she was married to Joseph Smith for "time and eternity" while at the same time being married to Adam Lightner, why do you need to ask if she knew she had two husbands? It might be nice to hear what she thought about it, but it's not necessary to establish the fact. Sylvia Lyon Clark's unwillingness to talk about Josephine's paternity shows she was sensitive of the subject of having two husbands, even among other polygamists.

"Why are there no teachings supporting polyandry from Joseph Smith and no references to such teachings? Does the historical practice of a plurality of wives provide a social or religious context for the successful introduction of a plurality of husbands?"

The simple answer is that Joseph Smith's marrying other men's wives was not an attempt to establish a general practice of polyandry. There was no thought of women being given the power to choose other husbands. Emma may have threatened it and Joseph may have suggested someone (D&C 132:51, 54), but by the time a revelation was issued it forbid the practice for both of them. I interpret D&C 132 as Joseph Smith's repentance for taking other men's wives.

Of course, when Mormons you quote denounce polyandry, it is in the sense of a woman taking more than one husband, and therefore subverting the patriarchal order, which is historically why polyandry is rare. Mormons denouncing polyandry is irrelevant since they were speaking to the standard definition of polyandry and not responding to Joseph Smith's practice of taking other men's wives. Besides, it is not likely that they would have associated Joseph Smith's activities with polyandry.

Let me respond to the conclusions you wish to draw from your analysis of the evidence.

"First, that a small body of evidence exists that could support polyandry, but unambiguous documentation has not been found."

You have tried to shrink the evidence with an overly skeptical minimalist approach. The evidence is quite substantial. Anyone with a little imagination can always create ambiguity. For example, using the term "eternity" one time and "time and eternity" another is not contradictory. One is just more complete. Mary Rollins Lightner's correcting her diary from the former to the latter is an example. I think you are wrong to place her in the "eternity-only" column.

"Second, it would have involved a very small number of marriage relationships."

Out of the fourteen, it seems Vose is the only exception since it was a rather exceptional circumstance to begin with. While you see evidence for possibly three time and eternity polyandrous marriages, I see clear evidence for six, and I see no reason to class any of the polyandrous marriages as eternity-only, except for the obvious case of Ruth Vose.

“Third, it would not have been introduced as a restoration of a religious practice because such was unknown in all major religions of that time.”

Marriage was never a religious practice, to say nothing of polygamy. Priests in the Old Testament didn't perform weddings and it wasn't part of temple worship. Catholics made it a sacrament of the church, which Protestants rejected as the teachings of men. Early Mormons didn't consider marriage differently than Protestants, but in Nauvoo Joseph Smith moved toward the Catholic concept, while at the same time shrouding his marriage practices in Masonic-like secrecy. I don't think Joseph Smith would have seen his practice of marrying other men's wives in terms of a “restoration” of a specific kind of marriage like polyandry vs. polygamy. Rather, he claimed to have been given the same blessings as Abraham pertaining to the taking of additional wives, which he apparently did without regard to their current marital status.

“And fourth, it probably would have arisen as a novel marital idea justified by Joseph's revelatory declarations that have been universally lost and never specifically referred to by participants and other Nauvoo polygamy insiders.”

Joseph Smith would not have necessarily needed a special revelation justifying polyandry. Besides, as I have already discussed, polyandry isn't the right term for Joseph Smith's practice of sometimes taking other men's wives. The only revelation he needed was God's permission to take additional wives. This need not be an audible revelation either, but rather an impressionistic or non-specific revelation. He sometimes told the women that he had a revelation that God had given them to him despite their marriages to other men and that they should seek a revelation of their own. That was probably the only type of revelation he had until July 1843 (D&C 132).

### #3 SEPARATION FROM WINDSOR AND SUBSEQUENT SEALING TO JOSEPH

Here you suggest the following scenario—“shortly after becoming pregnant by Windsor, she separated from him, being sealed to Joseph Smith and experiencing conjugal relations with the Prophet.” You further suggest that Windsor's “excommunication allowed the sealing to proceed.” But you have Sylvia conceiving about 18 May 1843, which is six months after Windsor was excommunicated on 19 November 1842, which means they were still having sexual relations and probably cohabiting in mid-1843. They were still cohabiting when Emily Partridge came to live with them about October 1843 and were sleeping in the same room when Josephine was born on 8 February 1844.<sup>1</sup> Emily recalled

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<sup>1</sup> “My sister Eliza found a home with the family of Brother Joseph Coolidge, and I went to live with Sister Sylvia Lyons” (Emily Dow Partridge Smith Young, *Autobiography*, April 7, 1884, typescript, Herald B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, UT).

in 1877: “I got a place (or Joseph did for me) with a respectable family. The lady [Sylvia Lyon] was very kind to me in some things, and I suppose she meant to be in everything, and I felt very thankful to her, but the work was rather hard. I had to sleep in the same room with her and her husband [Windsor Lyon] in order to be where I could get up nights and tend her baby [Josephine Lyon] when it was worrisome.”<sup>2</sup>

Besides having no evidence of a separation/divorce, the chronology is highly improbable. This would require Sylvia to have sex with the excommunicated Windsor on about 18 May 1843, separate from him and consider herself divorced within days or weeks, be sealed to Joseph Smith and have sex with him, and have Windsor return before Emily Partridge came to live with them about October. This speculated scenario exists only to serve an apologetic need. Not good.

Obviously, the examples of “common law bigamy” and “frontier divorce” to which you refer are nothing like what you suggest for Joseph, Sylvia, and Windsor.<sup>3</sup>

When Sylvia said she was “sealed to the Prophet at the time that her husband Mr. Lyon had was out of fellowship with the Church,” it didn’t mean they were “formally separated in what might have been the equivalence of a frontier divorce,” as you conclude. That is a leap in logic.

Andrew Jenson’s note calling Sylvia “formerly the wife of Windsor Lyon” doesn’t mean she was divorced from Windsor, which she wasn’t. Windsor died in 1849 and she remarried soon after and was known as Sister Clark at the time of her death in 1882, so in 1886-87 it was only appropriate to refer to her as “formerly the wife of Windsor Lyon.”

#### #4 SYLVIA IN CONFUSION OR TRANSGRESSION

You argue that there is the “possibility that Sylvia didn’t understand the restrictions of her time and eternity sealing to Joseph Smith or she violated the covenant.”

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<sup>2</sup> Emily Dow Partridge Young, “Written expressly for my children, Jan 7th 1877,” typescript, 3, MS 2845, CHL. Typescript begins: “From the journal of Emily Dow Partridge Young.” Catalogue title: “Emily P. Young diary and reminiscences, 1874 February-1899 November.” Hales quotes this source in vol. 2:111, but the words quoted here are replaced with ellipses. See also “What I remember,” compiled by Emily Dow Partridge, April 7, 1884, typescript, MS 5718, fd 1, CHL. My thanks to Johnny Stephenson for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Smith explicitly stated in a First Presidency Proclamation dated 12 June 1842: “Suffer no man to leave his wife because she is an unbeliever, nor any woman to leave her husband because he is an unbeliever. These things are an evil and must be forbidden by the authorities of the church, or they will come under condemnation ...” (*Millennial Star* 3 [Nov. 1842]: 115). D&C 101 (1835): “All legal contracts of marriage made before a person is baptized into this church, should be held sacred and fulfilled. Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy: we declare that we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again. It is not right to persuade a woman to be baptized contrary to the will of her husband, neither is it lawful to influence her to leave her husband.”

The only way to show polyandry is to show that the husband was still living with his wife after Joseph Smith married her. But, alas you have an answer to that as well—she broke her covenant with Joseph Smith and committed adultery with her real husband. Hilarious!

You then quote Joseph Smith III: “There was a scandal about Mrs. Lyons, while yet in Nauvoo, but on inquiry was either fruitless of results; [or] it was hushed up, whitewashed. But she was then a married woman” (Joseph Smith III, Letter to Bro. E. C. Brand, 26 Jan. 1894, 64). And you refer to James Whitehead’s statement that a “Mrs. Lyon” was found in bed with “S. Markham”. Assuming this is more than gossip and pertains to a sexual indiscretion by Sylvia Lyon, of what relevance is that to the question of polyandry with Joseph Smith? None.

Finally, I will conclude with my advice to the Mormon apologists trying to come to terms with polyandry. I suggest that they consider adopting the most straightforward interpretation, which is that Joseph Smith thought he was permitted to take other men’s wives until he got a revelation that it was wrong (D&C 132) and so he repented and discontinued the practice.

Hales to Vogel 8-2-16  
Hi Dan,

I appreciate this exchange. I hope you don't mind if I post it sometime in the future. I think that polyandry proponents might like to see the evidences and arguments that you present to support your position.

Let me say that you use some form of "apologist" five times and even label something I wrote as "wishful thinking" and another statement "hilarious." When I see such labels I usually figure it probably indicates the writer doesn't have good evidence so he/she has resorted to name-calling. I try to avoid labels whenever I can.

Regarding evidence, I think any objective reader is going to recognize that you dismiss evidences you don't like and embrace those you do. I guess that is the prerogative of writers. However, I think you make some fantastic statements:

"The evidence is quite substantial" for polyandry.

"I see clear evidence for six" polyandrous relationships.

"Substantial" and "clear" evidence of polyandry? I hope it is okay to assume that you would have included some of those evidences in your response and if you have other evidences then please share them in your next email. I don't have to tell you that allusions to evidence do not constitute evidence.

Let's examine the evidences your do mention.

### **Mary Elizabeth Lightner Statement**

In response to my declaration that there is no evidence of a woman believing she had two husbands in Nauvoo, you respond:

"When Mary Elizabeth Lightner says she was married to Joseph Smith for "time and eternity" while at the same time being married to Adam Lightner, why do you need to ask if she knew she had two husbands?"

I don't know if you are simply misinformed or if you are trying to mislead me. Mary Elizabeth's statement does not support polyandry unless you quote one sentence out of context:

I hope you will not think me intrusive, I am sure I do not wish to be- If I could have an opportunity of conversing with you, and Brother Joseph [F. Smith] I could explain some things in regard to my living with Mr L, after becoming the *Wife of another*, which would throw light, on what *now* seems mysterious – and you would be perfectly satisfied with me. I write this; because I have heard that it had been commented on to my injury. I have done the best I could, and Joseph will sanction my action – I cannot explain things

in this Letter – some day you will know *all*. That is, if I ever have an opportunity of conversing with either of you.<sup>1</sup>

Mary Elizabeth doesn't explain what information would make Apostle John Henry Smith "perfectly satisfied." Yet if had she reported that she had experience sexual polyandry (or whatever you want to call it—sex with both Joseph and Windsor), John Henry Smith would not have been "perfectly satisfied." In 1892, Church members would have considered sexual polyandry to be adultery.

It is also interesting that this is apparently the *best* evidence that could be found to support a woman believe she had two husbands in Nauvoo. Taken in context it is not supportive evidence, but actually contradicts the theory.

### **“Mary Rollins Lightner’s Correcting her Diary”**

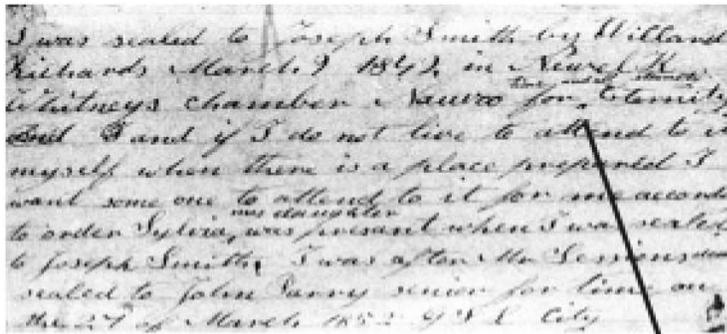
Your reference to “Mary Rollins Lightner’s correcting her diary from the former to the latter is an example” is confusing. I think you mean Patty Bartlett Sessions. Here’s a transcript of her journal:

I was sealed to Joseph Smith by Willard Richards March 9 1842 in Newel K Whitneys chamber Nauvoo for \time and all eternity/ Eternity and I and if I do not live to attend to it myself when there is a place prepared I want some one to attend to it for me according to order Sylvia \my daughter/ was present when I was sealed to Joseph Smith. I was after Mr. Sessions death sealed to John Parry senior for time on the 27 of March 1852 G.S.L. City<sup>2</sup>

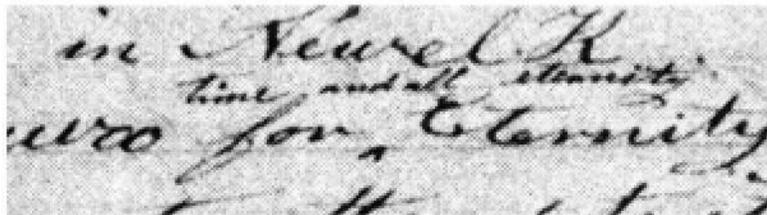
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<sup>1</sup> Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner to John Henry Smith, January 25, 1892, in George A. Smith Family Papers, MS 36, Box 7, Folder 12 (John Henry Smith, incoming correspondence); Marriott Library; emphasis in original. This quotation is referenced in Danel Bachman, "A Study of the Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage Before the Death of Joseph Smith." M.A. thesis, Purdue University, 1975, 135. Bachman lists the recipient as John A. Young in the text and John A. Smith in the footnote (*ibid.*). Also cited by Richard S. Van Wagoner as a letter to “John R. Young,” in "Mormon Polyandry in Nauvoo." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Fall 1985): 77, 82 [67-83]. Van Wagoner’s second reference in the article lists the date as “January 25, 1892,” as does his citation in *Mormon Polygamy: A History*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989, 43, 232. Apparently Van Wagoner did not locate the original, but repeated Bachman and assumed the recipient was John R. Young.

<sup>2</sup> Donna Toland Smart, ed., *Mormon Midwife: The 1846-1888 Diaries of Patty Bartlett Sessions*, 276-77. In addition to the typeset text, Smart has reproduced the holograph on p. 277.



I was sealed to Joseph Smith by Willard Richards March 9 1842 in Newel K. Whitney's chamber in Nauvoo for eternity. And if I do not live to attend to it myself where there is a place prepared I want some one to attend to it for me according to order. Sylvia, <sup>my daughter</sup> was present when I was sealed to Joseph Smith. I was after the Sessions was sealed to John James senior for time on the 27 of March 1852 93 & City



in Newel K. Whitney's chamber for eternity

We can see here that the original entry described her sealing “for eternity,” but why did she make the change?

Her statement: "I want some one to attend to it for me" is apparently referring to a resealing by proxy in a temple that she believed needed to be done. Seven years later in 1867 in response to a "request" from an unidentified individual, perhaps Joseph F. Smith, Patty Bartlett, now age seventy-two, signed an affidavit providing much of the same information:<sup>3</sup>

I Patty Bartlett daughter of Enoch and Anna Bartlett was born February 4th 1795 town of Bethel State of Maine[.] I was Baptised into the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Saints July 2d 1834[.] I was sealed to Joseph Smith the Prophet by Willard Richards March the 9th 1842 in Nauvoo in Newel K Whitney's chamber Sylvia my Daughter was present[.] I received my Endowment in Nauvoo Dec 16 1845 I Never was sealed at the alter to any one.

Yours Truly Patty Sessions<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The first line of the affidavit begins "According to your request," but the intended recipient is not identified on either side of the single sheet. Salt Lake Temple Sealing Records, Book D, 243, April 4, 1899; Thomas Milton Tinney, *The Royal Family of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr.* Salt Lake City: Tinney-Greene Family Organization, 1973, 41. See Chapter 33.

<sup>4</sup> Patty Sessions, Affidavit, n.d., received June 1867.

In 1845-1846, many of Joseph Smith's plural wives were resealed to him by proxy in the Nauvoo Temple, but for reasons that are unclear, Patty was not. The only sealing ceremony she had experienced in 1860 was her original March 9, 1842 that was "for eternity."

As of 1867, a repeated proxy sealing had not yet been performed. Just weeks after receiving the affidavit at Church headquarters, Priesthood leaders invited Patty to be resealed, with Apostle Joseph F. Smith serving vicariously for his Uncle Joseph Smith. A July 3, 1867 entry in Patty's personal journal reads:

I was sealed to Joseph F. Smith for time and all eternity... He Joseph F. Smith acting for and in behalf of his Uncle Joseph. Smith. The Prophet. Who was Martyred June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1844. in Carthage Jail with his Bro Hiram. Joseph Fs Father.

[signed] Patty Sessions<sup>5</sup>

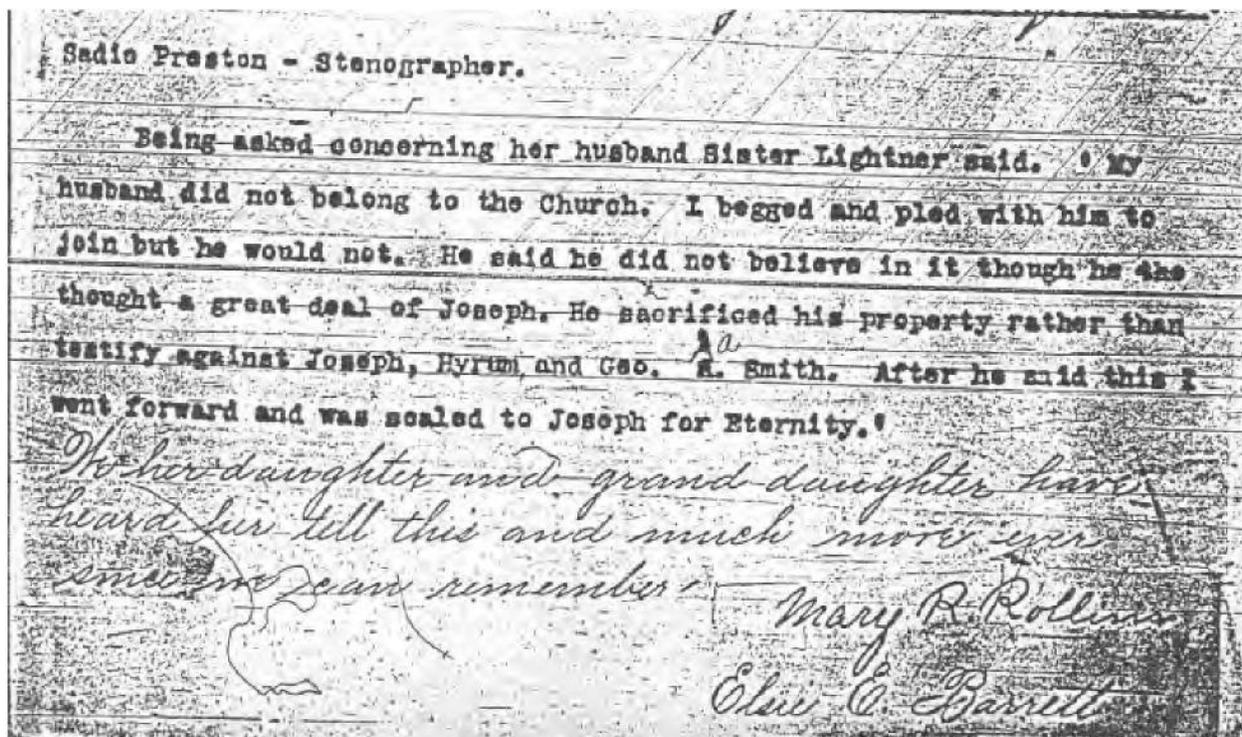
Concerning the interlineal handwritten addition to Patty's journal of "time and eternity," Todd Compton explained: "the superscript, in Patty's hand, was probably written in 1867 (the ink is identical to that of her 1867 proxy marriage/second anointing sealing notation attached to the page) as a clarification (rather than as a correction)."<sup>6</sup> In other words, her original wording described an eternity-only sealing and then after the 1867 proxy resealing, she updated the wording to replicate that of the vicarious ordinance "time-and-eternity." There is no evidence the original sealing was time-and-eternity.

Mary Elizabeth Rollins did not keep a journal. However, in 1905, her daughter and granddaughter recorded this statement:

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<sup>5</sup> Donna Toland Smart, ed., *Mormon Midwife: The 1846-1888 Diaries of Patty Bartlett Sessions*, Logan, Utah: Utah State University, 1997, 276,-77.

<sup>6</sup> *In Sacred Loneliness*, 682nVII.



You can see here that when describing her initial ceremony, she used the words “for eternity.” She was sealed by proxy to Joseph in the Nauvoo Temple for “time and eternity” and thereafter could say she was sealed to him using that language, but it did not describe her initial marriage to him.

### The Josephine Lyon’s Statement

You mention the Josephine Lyon statement several times:

Just prior to my mothers death in 1882 she called me to her bedside and told me that her days on earth were about numbered and before she passed away from mortality she desired to tell me something which she had kept as an entire secret fro me and from others until no but which she now desired to communicate to me. She then told me that I was the daughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith, she having been sealed to the Prophet at the time that her husband Mr. Lyon had was out of fellowship with the Church.<sup>7</sup>

Regarding the sentence “She then told me that I was the daughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith” you respond to my assessment that it is ambiguous with “No, it’s not.” Actually, it is.

As you know Sylvia’s grandson-in-law Edwin Myron Carr blessed his daughter saying: “Remember you are a granddaughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith.” Edwin’s wife was Phebe Clark’s daughter Sylvia Ellis Carr. I realize you don’t like this line of reasoning, but dismissing it

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<sup>7</sup> Affidavit of Josephine R. Fisher, February 24, 1915, CHL, Ms 3423, folder 1, images 48-49.

out of hand is what I mean when I say critical thinking has largely vanished by otherwise good scholars.

But that is not all. Josephine's statement adds: "she [Sylvia] having been sealed to the Prophet at the time that her husband Mr. Lyon had was out of fellowship with the Church." If this were polyandry (in your redefinition or in the normal definition), why would this statement be important? Why include it at all? If polyandry was as you described, Windsor's membership would be unimportant and Joseph could have implemented the relationship at any time.

But if Sylvia's sealing was eternity-only, then it is clear why she would have included this detail. Once Sylvia saw she could not be sealed to Windsor because of his excommunication, she would have been motivated to choose Joseph just as her mother Patty had done the previous March 9. Occam's razor would support this interpretation.

Regarding this statement, you wrote: "Sylvia Lyon Clark's unwillingness to talk about Josephine's paternity shows she was sensitive of the subject of having two husbands, even among other polygamists." This is certainly one possible explanation, but good scholarship requires us to examine other possibilities. We must recall that Sylvia's family believed they were descendants of Windsor Lyon. This had been their belief for decades. Eternity-only sealings were unheard of in 1882 and 1915 so that would have been a novelty at best. Also, two of Sylvia's children had left the faith. Doubtless learning they were spiritually the children of Joseph would probably have not been a positive thing. There is also evidence in the Carr history that someone was talking about their family having a spiritual heritage long before 1882 so Sylvia's claim she had not told anyone is suspicious. Hopefully, I'll have more on this in a few months.

Isn't it also interesting that this declaration constitutes the best evidence of polyandry that you can muster? Does it bother you this is apparently the best supportive documentation for a practice that would have been shocking and highly controversial.

### **Emily Partridge Recollection**

You cited Emily Partridge:

I got a place (or Joseph did for me) with a respectable family. The lady was very kind to me in some things, and I suppose she meant to be in everything, and I felt very thankful to her, but the work was rather hard. I had to sleep in the same room with her and her husband in order to be where I could get up nights and tend her baby when it was worrisome. Some nights I would get up several times and have sat before the fire nodding for hours trying to get the baby to sleep. I made no complaints, but left when I thought I could stand it no longer.

I had recently reviewed this quotation, which I missed when compiling my trilogy, and I agree it is consistent with the family history that Windsor left but soon returned. This is very consistent with an eternity-only sealing. There's no mention of Joseph visiting Sylvia or anything resembling polyandry.

If polyandry happened, then we have to account for Emily's recollection. Either she never saw Joseph with Sylvia, or she did and was aware of the relationship and accepted it and never spoke of it. (For no one ever mentioned anything about polyandry or whatever you want to label a woman sleeping with two men as her husbands). She would have needed to be oblivious to the relationship or a co-conspirator in keeping the practice completely concealed. Or maybe you have another explanation?

### **Redefining "Polyandry" to Account for the Lack of Evidence**

You accuse me of an "overly skeptical minimalist approach" but you seek to change the "standard definition of polyandry" to simplify it to account for the lack of evidence. You wrote:

The simple answer is that Joseph Smith's marrying other men's wives was not an attempt to establish a general practice of polyandry. There was no thought of women being given the power to choose other husbands [how do you know this?] . . . . As I have already discussed, polyandry isn't the right term for Joseph Smith's practice of sometimes taking other men's wives. The only revelation he needed was God's permission to take additional wives.

This logic seems contrived to me. At best, it might work for Joseph personally, but you fail to account for the others who were involved. This is a primary weakness of your interpretation. You not only minimize the married women's roles, but essentially ignore the undeniable reality that women would not have easily shared themselves sexually with two men even at Joseph's insistence, with or without a revelation (and there is no revelation). You do a disservice to the women to portray as such gullible automatons.

Also, other individuals would likely have had questions even if the women had not. Among the documents referring to Joseph Smith's plural marriage ceremonies, there is no record of him performing any by himself without an officiator or witnesses. That is, he never pronounced a ceremony sealing himself to a woman performing both roles as groom and officiator (and perhaps witness) at the same time. While all documents do not list the names of these participants, the consistent pattern was that a male priesthood authority and witnesses were required for the sealing to be valid (see LDS D&C 6:28).

Among the individuals who were present at some of the plural ceremonies were Hyrum Smith, Emma Smith, Brigham Young, Dimick Huntington, Fanny Huntington, Willard Richards, Sylvia Sessions, Heber Kimball, Vilate Kimball, Eliza Partridge, and Emily Partridge. Added to this

group are officiators and witnesses whose names were not recorded along with family and friends who might have learned of the sealing ordinance. It seems if a plurality of husbands resulted from an ordinance administered under Joseph Smith's direction, then dozens of men and women might have questioned such a new and unconventional marital relationship. You wrote that Joseph "only revelation he needed was God's permission to take additional wives," but if such a revelation had been given, he would have needed to convince dozens of men and women of its validity and there is no evidence of any such process.

Brigham Young performed the sealing of Marinda Johnson (wife of Orson Hyde) to Joseph Smith in May of 1843. Regardless of Brigham's beliefs regarding polyandry at that time, he declared plainly in 1852: "[Polyandry] is not known to the law."<sup>8</sup> Other Nauvoo polygamists recalled only condemnation of polyandry. In contrast, no statements attributed directly or indirectly to Joseph Smith approbating polyandry or some pseudo-I can-sleep-with-another-man's-wife practice have been found in the historical record.

### **Summary**

The polyandry proponents' position would be greatly strengthened if they could construct a plausible context for Joseph marrying or bedding other men's wives. This would require their active participation (for there would be no other way to do it) *and* at least the approval of those who performed and witnessed the ceremonies and family members who knew of them. Critical thinking requires nothing less.

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<sup>8</sup> Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:361, August 1, 1852.

Vogel to Hales 8-10-16  
Brian,

I don't consider the words "apologetic" or "apologists" to be name-calling. They are the correct words to describe your work on polygamy as well as your responses to the CES Letter on youtube. Indeed, your three volumes are less a history of polygamy than a sustained defense of Joseph Smith. I don't consider these labels as necessarily pejorative. The term has a long history and many scholars do not shy away from labeling themselves apologists. Recently you went to Sweden to explain to believers that Joseph Smith didn't really practice polyandry under the banner of FAIR—Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research.

I also don't consider "wishful thinking" name-calling. It is a recognized category of logical fallacy. "This fallacy consists in assuming that because one wants something to be true, it is or will be true. Conversely, it consists in assuming that because we don not want something to be true, then it is not or will not be true." So when I call your suggestion that "shortly after becoming pregnant by Windsor, Sylvia separated from him and was sealed to Joseph in a time-and-eternity sealing and experienced conjugality with him" "mere wishful thinking as there is no evidence of a separation and divorce," I'm saying you are engaging in fallacious thinking. Simply put, you are making things up as you wish them to have been. You want to preserve Joseph Smith's integrity and so you invent a divorce. This move is also known as an ad hoc hypothesis.

I didn't need to use the term "hilarious," but it was an honest reaction to the idea that a woman can commit adultery with her own husband. But it certainly doesn't mean I have no answers.

You assert—"I think any objective reader is going to recognize that you dismiss evidences you don't like and embrace those you do." Well, I think otherwise. Liking and disliking doesn't have anything to do with it. The point is who has the best arguments for dismissing and embracing. I believe I do.

#### *Evidence for Polyandry*

I didn't go into detail on the evidence for polyandry because I didn't want to distract too much from a response to your handling of Sylvia Sessions case. I'm in the process of reviewing your classification of each of the fourteen polyandrous wives of Joseph Smith. I'll give you one example of how I see the evidence differently.

After reviewing the evidence for Zina Huntington Jacobs on your website, you conclude: "That her sealing to Joseph Smith was for eternity only and without conjugality or for time and eternity and consummated is undocumented, except for Zina's one statement in the Wight interview, and will probably never be known. Regardless, there is no evidence of polyandrous sexuality in any of Zina's marriages."

However, I think there is indirect evidence that her marriage to Joseph Smith was for time and eternity and included sexual relations. In the same interview, Zina also told Wright:

It was something too sacred to be talked about; it was more to me than life or death. I never breathed it for years.<sup>1</sup>

In a biographical sketch, Zina revealed the reason she didn't want to discuss her marriage to Smith:

When I heard that God had revealed the law of celestial marriag. ... I obtained a testimony for [my]self that God had required that order to be established in his church. I mad[e] a greater sacrificse than to give my life for I never anticipated again to be looked uppon as an honerable woman by those I dearly loved. ... <sup>2</sup>

Zina's worry about her reputation and wanting to keep her marriage to Smith a secret even from her family seems excessive for an eternity-only sealing. Rather, it would seem to confirm that her marriage to Joseph Smith was indeed polyandrous and included sexuality.

#### *Mary Elizabeth Lightner Statement*

You assert that "there is no evidence of a woman believing she had two husbands in Nauvoo." This sounds like misdirection to me. One doesn't look for evidence of believing but actually having two husbands. If she has two husbands, it is assumed she knows she has two husbands.

On your webpage you argue, "She [Sylvia Lyons] had experienced a civil marriage ceremony with Windsor and a sealing ceremony to Joseph, but the documentation of two marriage ceremonies is not proof that she believed both were still valid after the second ceremony was completed." Oh, when did she divorce Joseph Smith? You have even suggested that she didn't understand the covenants she made with Joseph Smith and that she committed adultery with Windsor. Now, wouldn't that require her to believe she had two husbands? Or, should we exclude that from the three possible explanations you have suggested?

You classify Lightner as an eternity-only marriage, but the evidence is clearly otherwise. She said: "Brigham Young sealed me to him, for time and all eternity – Feb. 1842."<sup>3</sup> So I asked: "why do you need to ask if she knew she had two husbands?"

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<sup>1</sup> John Wight, "Interview: Evidence from Zina D. Huntington Young," *Saints Herald*, 52 (11 January 1905): 29.

<sup>2</sup> Zina D. H. Young—Undated Biographical Sketch, in Zina Card Brown Collection, MS 4780, Box 2, Fd. 17 (on Reel 2).

<sup>3</sup> Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, "Statement" signed Feb. 8, 1902, Vesta Crawford Papers, MS 125, bx1 fd 11.

You try to explain why Lightner sometimes said she was sealed to Joseph Smith for “eternity” and at others for “time and eternity” as follows: “The reason for the dual reports may be due to the fact that she had experienced two sealing ceremonies. If the first sealing to Joseph Smith during his lifetime was for eternity only and the second a time and eternity proxy sealing performed on January 16, 1846, in the Nauvoo temple, then both answers would have been accurate.”

It is not likely that she would want to give the impression that she was married to Joseph Smith for “time and eternity” if it weren’t historically accurate. That would be an impression she would want to avoid at all costs if it weren’t true. So why did she sometimes say she was married to Joseph Smith “for eternity”? A far more likely explanation is that she used “eternity” as shorthand for “time and eternity” because “time” is obvious. While one can assume being married for “time” excludes eternity, one cannot assume being married for “eternity” means “eternity only”. You cannot apply your definition uncritically to every instance of someone saying they were married for “eternity”. Given her reticence to discuss the particulars of her marriage to Joseph Smith, it is also probable that in her 1905 remarks at Brigham Young University that she intentionally used “eternity” to mislead her audience.

You quote Lightner’s 1892 letter to Apostle John Henry Smith, and then give a most improbable interpretation of it. You state: “Mary Elizabeth doesn’t explain what information would make Apostle John Henry Smith ‘perfectly satisfied.’ Yet if she had reported that she had experience[d] sexual polyandry (or whatever you want to call it—sex with both Joseph and Windsor [Adam]), John Henry Smith would not have been ‘perfectly satisfied.’”

Obviously, Lightner didn’t want to tell them she was married to Joseph Smith only for eternity, or else she would have simply stated it and that would have been the end. Moreover, if the marriage had been an eternity only sealing, there would have been no concern over her continuing to live with Mr. Lightner, which was too sensitive to explain in a letter. In person, she would have likely justified her actions by telling them about her visions and revelations and how Joseph Smith convinced her to marry him. She would have probably also told them what she told Emmeline B. Wells: “I could tell you why I stayed with Mr. Lightner. Things the leaders of the Church does not know anything about. I did just as Joseph told me to do, as he knew what troubles I would have to contend with.”<sup>4</sup> This is probably what she meant in the letter to John Henry Smith when she said: “Joseph will sanction my action.” This would imply that Joseph Smith was fine with the polyandrous arrangement. With this information John Henry would have been “perfectly satisfied.” She was following Joseph Smith’s counsel.

*Marriage “for eternity” does not always mean “eternity only”*

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<sup>4</sup> Excerpts from a letter from Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner dated November 21, either 1870 or 1880, Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner Collection; MS 752, Folder 4; LDS CHL.

You are right. I meant Patty Bartlett Sessions's changed her diary from "eternity" to "time and eternity". It's not a dated entry but a short sketch of her early life in the center pages of her diary, written in June 1860. Why did she change it? She obviously changed her diary, evidently after she was resealed in 1867 in the temple, to make it more accurate. She certainly wouldn't change her description of her 1842 marriage to Joseph Smith to give the impression that she was married to Joseph Smith for "time and eternity," which according to you would be scandalous, if it weren't true.

You argue that the original journal entry said "for eternity" and accurately reflected the language of eternity-only sealings, and when it was changed to "time and eternity" that it reflected the language of the time and was just a formality but was historically inaccurate.

The problem is that you can't assume when someone says they were married "for eternity" that it means *eternity only*. When there is evidence for a woman being married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" and "for time and eternity," as in the case of Mary Rollins Lightner, the conflict is only apparent because the "time" part is obvious and doesn't always need expression. It is still common for Mormons to refer to marriage "for eternity" when they mean "for time and eternity." You try to label these instances as ambiguous, when in fact they are saying the same thing in different ways.

Thus when Patty Bartlett Sessions changed her diary it wasn't a change in meaning, but rather a clarification. It makes little sense for her to change her account of the historical event to comport with the language of the 1867 resealing, that is, if the resealing was merely formal but historically inaccurate. However, if the resealing used the historically accurate term, it would explain why Sessions would want to make the change in her diary.

So when you try to argue that when Sessions says she was married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" she meant "eternity only" because it "is similar to the language found in other eternity-only sealings," you have only created an interpretive loop because in the sources you reference in the footnote are simply other instances where you have imposed the same problematic definition or selectively interpreted the evidence.

Briefly, the evidence from your footnote amounts to this: Ruth Vose Sayers, an exceptional case that can't establish a rule. Zina Huntington in Wight interview, which was both vague and evasive, but the evidence shows she was probably sealed to Joseph Smith for time and eternity. Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, who said in a 1902 signed affidavit that she was married to Joseph Smith "for time and all eternity" and then in a 1905 address at BYU she was "sealed to Joseph [Smith] for eternity" is not a contradiction but the latter was probably intended to avoid a discussion of polyandry. Oliver Huntington regarding Zina and Presendia, who said his sisters were married to Joseph Smith "for eternity" is not an authority but there is no indication that he meant *eternity only*. Moreover, there is evidence that both Zina and Pricindia were married to Joseph Smith for time and eternity. Bathsheba Smith's testimony regarding Jane Law, who was speculating in 1892 based on her rationalization of how Joseph Smith married the already-married Jane Law, which never happened. Bathsheba knew eternity-only

marriages existed for women who married Joseph Smith after his death. John D. Lee regarding Marinda Hyde, who reports rumor and doesn't say it was an eternity-only marriage but implies otherwise when he quotes Brigham Young saying Joseph Smith's "time on earth was short, and that the Lord allowed him privileges that we could not have." Lucy Meserve Smith, handwritten statement dated May 18, 1892, who was told by Emma Smith in 1845 that Joseph Smith only married for eternity and never for time, which was a self-serving lie.

To recap, there is no evidence that Sessions' meant *eternity only* when she wrote in her diary that she had married Joseph Smith "for eternity". There is also no evidence that she changed it to "time and all eternity" to match the wording of the 1867 proxy sealing, although it was historically incorrect. It is much more likely she changed the diary to clarify what she had written, not to correct it—meaning she originally intended "for time and eternity" but had shortened it to "for eternity" leaving the "time" implied. You quote Compton saying the same thing, but somehow you misconstrue his words to agree with you. Your conclusion that "[t]here is no evidence the original sealing was time-and-eternity" can only be sustained if I agree with your interpretation of Sessions' diary entry, which I don't.

#### *Lightner Revisited*

You quote a 1905 statement of Lightner's daughter and granddaughter that they hear her say that she "went forward and was sealed to Joseph for Eternity." You want to accept this as her description of the initial ceremony, while any account where she says she was married to Joseph Smith for "time and eternity" was a reflection of the proxy sealing in the Nauvoo temple. So, I presume you include her own statement in 1902 when she said that "Brigham Young sealed me to him, for time and all eternity – Feb. 1842." Here you not only insert your own problematic definition of "for eternity" but also give priority to a secondary source over a primary one, upon which you also impose your self-serving definition. However, as previously discussed, Lightner's letter to John Henry provides circumstantial evidence for sexual polyandry.

#### *The Josephine Lyon's Statement*

You can't isolate the sentence "She then told me that I was the daughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith" and then claim it is ambiguous. It is meaningless to compare it to similar sentences from a different context. The context of the first demands that "daughter" be taken literally or biologically, while in the latter it is by adoption. No critical thinker is going to fall for that, Brian.

Sylvia's mentioning that her marriage to Joseph Smith occurred at the time Windsor was "out of fellowship with the Church" does not equate with divorce, as you have argued. It may mean that she couldn't be sealed to Windsor for eternity, but that doesn't preclude her marriage to Joseph Smith for time and eternity. The contextual evidence supporting Sylvia's belief that Josephine was Joseph Smith's biological daughter, her continuing to live with Windsor and bear him children, and the DNA evidence showing Windsor was

Josephine's actual father is enough to conclude Joseph Smith engaged in sexual polyandry. His way of justifying such an act was that whatever God commands is right no matter what it is, even if it seems abominable to us at the time. Any other explanation would have to be considered ad hoc and highly speculative.

To my statement—"Sylvia Lyon Clark's unwillingness to talk about Josephine's paternity shows she was sensitive of the subject of having two husbands, even among other polygamists"—you respond: "This is certainly one possible explanation, but good scholarship requires us to examine other possibilities." Yes, it's good to test other possibilities, but it's also good to admit which is the most probable and has the strongest arguments and evidence and which are ad hoc, speculative, and required the most special pleading.

You seem surprised that the Josephine's mistaken paternity is the best evidence for sexual polyandry and that there isn't more evidence given its controversial nature. But that is precisely the reason for the lack of specific statements, or at least in the quantity and specificity you seem to require. There was such a tight lid on plural marriage that someone like Bathsheba Smith, wife of Apostle George A. Smith, didn't have any firsthand information about any of Joseph Smith's wives and had to guess as to who might be. Some of the polyandrous wives say they kept it a secret. Nevertheless, you have to use what we have and we have enough to reasonably conclude that sexual polyandry probably occurred between Joseph and some of his wives. Now, you can use old fashioned apologetics to struggle against it, but it's far easier to admit that Joseph Smith repented and denounced the practice in July 1843 (D&C 132).

You sometimes argue that the anti-Mormons would have made more of polyandry if it were happening when you are perfectly aware that Bennett and Sarah Pratt did just that.

#### *Emily Partridge Recollection*

Regarding Emily's going to live with Sylvia and Windsor about October 1843 and taking care of the baby after it was born in February 1844, you state: "I agree it is consistent with the family history that Windsor left but soon returned." The family history only states that Windsor was disfellowshipped from the Church, not that he left and came back. That is your speculation. You are on your own when you suggest that Windsor and Sylvia separated and got a "frontier divorce" before she had sexual relations with Joseph Smith, and that she committed adultery when she went back to Windsor.

You seem to abandon that theory and state that Emily's account is "very consistent with an eternity-only sealing." In what way? I don't see your reasoning here. However, this is contradicted by the evidence that Sylvia thought Josephine was Joseph Smith's biological daughter. That's why it's important to interpret Josephine's statement in context, because it constrains the field of possible interpretations. That's also why I said any theory that doesn't begin with this fact is going to be wrong.

I don't know how you can try to turn Emily's statement into an argument against sexual polyandry when you have put Sylvia's conception to about 18 May 1843, months before Emily arrived.

*Redefining "Polyandry" to Account for the Lack of Evidence*

You accuse me of trying to change the standard definition of polyandry to account for the lack of evidence. I did no such thing. I merely acknowledged that the standard definition of polyandry doesn't fit what Joseph Smith was doing by marrying other men's wives. Polyandry is a misnomer, but it has become shorthand when discussing the topic. This is an important distinction that you missed, which has led you to make irrelevant arguments.

In distinguishing Joseph Smith's practice from polyandry, I said—"There was no thought of women being given the power to choose other husbands." You ask: "how do you know this?" Really? Are you seriously skeptical of that statement or just quibbling? You seem to be avoiding the point that no one has claimed that Joseph Smith was trying to establish anything like polyandry when he married other men's wives, and therefore you have been engaged in attacking a straw man.

To escape serious discussion of this you turn to ad hominem—"You not only minimize the married women's roles, but essentially ignore the undeniable reality that women would not have easily shared themselves sexually with two men even at Joseph's insistence, with or without a revelation (and there is no revelation). You do a disservice to the women to portray as such gullible automatons."

You realize we are talking about women who were willing to share themselves with a man who had thirty some wives, who were so enamored with the Mormon Prophet that they rejected their real husbands to be sealed to Joseph Smith for eternity instead, who subjugated their own desires and needs to what they thought was the will of God, and who later publically defended polygamy despite their own personal suffering and dislike for it. This is the reality, but I regard them as victims of a hyper patriarchy. They did what they needed to do to survive.

We shouldn't forget that some women did object—women like Jane Law and Sarah Pratt—and look what happened to them. As expected, most went along with what the charismatic leader wanted and a few objected.

Again, to mention that there was no revelation on polyandry is to argue against a straw man. There was no revelation on polygamy either. The only revelation was on an individual level. Joseph Smith claimed he got a revelation to marry another man's wife and that was it until he dictated a general revelation in July 1843 that condemned his practice (D&C 132).

You seem to want the kitty gritty of polyandry explained before you will concede that it existed. We know that Dimick Huntington presided over the marriages of his two sisters

to Joseph Smith, and that he explained the principle to them. We just don't know the content. We can safely assume that it wasn't easily explained as some of the women rejected Joseph Smith's proposal, and that others reluctantly moved forward based on personal revelation rather than force of argument. So you can't say Joseph Smith "would have needed to convince dozens of men and women of its validity and there is no evidence of any such process" when it seems to have not rested upon reason but revelation.

You bring up the apparent contradiction of Brigham Young's performing the polyandrous marriage between Joseph Smith and Orson Hyde's wife, Nancy, and his subsequent declaration that "[Polyandry] is not known to the law."<sup>5</sup> The polyandry that Young condemned in 1852 wasn't anything like Joseph Smith's marrying other men's wives. Besides, you have quoted John D. Lee's report that Brigham Young saying Joseph Smith's "time on earth was short, and that the Lord allowed him privileges that we could not have." If true, this shows one possible way Young rationalized Smith's behavior. To believers, the Prophet could do no wrong. Its useless to ask why Joseph Smith's followers followed him.

### *Summary*

It is abundantly clear that Sylvia's statement to Josephine was that she was Joseph Smith's biological daughter, and there is only one viable interpretation of Sylvia's being confused about Josephine's paternity and that is that Joseph Smith practiced sexual polyandry, or more accurately, that Joseph Smith had sex with other men's wives.

Finally, it's quite obvious when Joseph Smith married other men's wives it did not nullify the civil marriage but superseded it, so perhaps those who oppose polyandry need to show why Joseph Smith would think he would have to delay the conjugal rights of marriage until the next life.

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<sup>5</sup> Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:361, August 1, 1852.

Hales to Vogel 8-24-16

Hi Dan,

I really appreciate this continued dialogue. With the transparency the LDS Church is trying to achieve, getting all the evidences out surrounding claims of polyandry is important.

### **Evidence Verses Argumentation**

Your last response defending your interpretations employed language that was a little surprising. It used “probably” six times (1, 3, 3, 4, 4, 6) along with other words like “safely assume” (8), “it is not likely” (3), “one can assume” (3), “obviously” (3), “would have likely” (3), “This would imply” (3), “She obviously” (4), “She certainly” (4), “This is much more likely” (5), “it may mean” (5), and “indirect evidence”(2).

I think your response is an example of what I call “bread crumb scholarship.” It means if we follow the bread crumbs the writer lays out, without considering things on the right or the left, we can arrive at the conclusion of the author. I am watching your latest video (on universalism and the BofM). I’ve watched them all and can see how if I follow your evidences as you line them up and interpret them, then I can arrive at your beliefs.

Alternatively, a useful method is to instead present all the evidence for various interpretations to allow the audience to make their own decisions instead of trying to mold the evidence into one interpretation. This is what I tried to do in my MHA presentation.

Part of the reason I’m writing this is that I’m not afraid of the evidences—not afraid of the truth. I think we should get all the evidences out there including that which deals with polyandry (more on this in a minute).

### **Josephine Lyon Statement**

You repeat this message several times: “The context of the first [part of the Josephine Lyon statement] demands that ‘daughter’ be taken literally or biologically” (5, see also 6, 8).

Concerning Josephine Lyon’s affidavit, does it ever concern you that the best evidence for polyandry, apparently, is a single narrative written in 1915 purportedly quoting an 1882 statement word-for-word, that some reviewers say is unclear or inconsistent in its meaning?

You claim there is only one possible interpretation of Josephine’s statement. Critical thinking would encourage us to look at all possibilities. If we did, we would notice that the statement also includes an explanation stating why Sylvia was sealed to Joseph. “She then told me that I was the daughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith, *she having been sealed to the Prophet at the time that her husband Mr. Lyon had was out offellowship with the Church*” (italics added).

If Sylvia was talking about polyandry (or whatever you want to call it), the then second half of the sentence is superfluous and puzzling. If she was talking about an eternity-only sealing, it makes perfect sense because with Windsor excommunicated, Sylvia could not hope to be sealed to him, at least at that time.

You insist that “daughter” must mean biological. That requires us to ignore other cultural realities of the time. Beginning in 1877 in the St. George temple proxy child-to-parent sealings were being performed. “Daughters” were being created to parents who had no blood kinship relations. An eternity-only sealing between Joseph and Sylvia would have been similar, making Josephine a “daughter” spiritually. It is obvious why you don’t like this, discounting it in a frontal assault. But it really is a valid interpretation despite your desires to dismiss the possibility.

As I mentioned before, the *Carr Family Record and History* mentions a blessing given to Lillian by her father, who was Sylvia’s grandson: “You are a granddaughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith” (pages 159-60). Yet she came through Ezekial Clark and could not have had any genetic relationship to the Prophet. Admittedly, this is a different person using that language, but it is curious that anyone would be so rigid in their interpretation.

### **Definition of “Polyandry”**

Dan I need your help understanding these statements:

“No one has claimed that Joseph Smith was trying to establish anything like polyandry when he married other men’s wives” (7).

“The polyandry that Young condemned in 1852 wasn’t anything like Joseph Smith’s marrying other men’s wives” (8).

You insist Joseph married other men’s wives, but you don’t want to call it polyandry. The women would have had two husbands, by definition, which is polyandry. But you say it isn’t. Please help me understand what you mean.

This is really important because the biggest problem for polyandry proponents, besides the lack of unambiguous supportive evidence, is that they don’t have any context for polyandry in Nauvoo. Questions like, “Was it in agreement with Joseph’s teachings?” (where are those teachings?) or “Was it in contradiction to his teachings?” (where are claims of hypocrisy?) have yet to be answered. Please feel free to give it a try.

### **Secrecy**

I’m very intrigued by your attempts to try to justify the lack of evidence. You wrote: “the polyandrous wives say they kept it a secret” but they were talking about polygamy (polygyny) or were they? It is an interesting question because polygamy was kept secret at the time, but look

how much we know about it today. Hundreds of documents referring to polygamy in plain language have been found and large books written on the subject.

Similarly, the Council of 50 was secret—ultra secret—and Signature Books has already published a book on it and LDS Church is publishing its minutes in the next few weeks. The endowed quorum were secret, but we have several books about them. The Masons were secret too, but we know about them as well.

Yet, what about polyandry (or in your words, Joseph marrying other men's wives)? It was so secret we can't find any plain references to it as a doctrine or practice.

### **Dual Conjuality, Ceremonies, Husbands?**

A weakness in pro-polyandry arguments might be the inability to identify dual husband *conjuality*, but we would not necessarily expect such conservative women to talk about sex.

Yet, talking about dual *husbands* would be expected. If dual husbands were permitted, then why not discuss it as secretly as dual wives were discussed secretly? If that had happened, we would know about both today—right?

If polyandry were not permitted and needed to be top secret—never acknowledged—then why would the women ever admit to have been sealed to Joseph at all? Why not keep the ceremonies secret too?

It seems that all the proponents have to discuss is dual *ceremonies* (legal marriage plus sealing). Yet that conversation is complicated by the reality that non-sexual eternity-only sealings could be performed. Despite the rhetoric, when the type is sealing is not specifically documented in the historical record, demanding that all of the sealings be for time-and-eternity is not justified.

In summary, we have accounts of two ceremonies. We have no plain statements of sexuality with two husbands. But we also have no accounts of a woman believing she had two husbands. Is secrecy sufficient to explain this lack of evidence?

### **Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner**

You've discussed Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner a number of times alleging that she gave evidence of having two genuine husbands simultaneously. You affirm that her words to Apostle John Henry Smith indicate this:

I hope you will not think me intrusive, I am sure I do not wish to be- If I could have an opportunity of conversing with you, and Brother Joseph [F. Smith] I could explain some things in regard to my living with Mr L, after becoming the *Wife of another*, which would throw light, on what *now* seems mysterious – and you would be perfectly satisfied with me. I write this; because I have heard that it had been commented on to my injury. I have done the best I could, and

Joseph will sanction my action – I cannot explain things in this Letter – some day you will know *all*. That is, if I ever have an opportunity of conversing with either of you.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning excerpt you wrote:

If the marriage had been an eternity only sealing, there would have been no concern over her continuing to live with Mr. Lightner, which was too sensitive to explain in a letter. In person, she would have likely justified her actions by telling them about her visions and revelations and how Joseph Smith convinced her to marry him (3).

You are right that if Mary Elizabeth had two husbands, with whom she had conjugal relations, it would have been very very “sensitive.” However, we disagree that she could have told John Henry Smith of this (two genuine husbands at the same time) even embellishing the account by referring to “visions and revelations” or how “Joseph Smith convinced her” (none of which is documented) and made John Henry feel “perfectly satisfied.” I don’t think she could have made him feel *slightly* satisfied learning of dual husbands no matter what she said.

An alternate interpretation is that her motive for not mentioning the reason in the letter is because she (and other of Joseph's plural wives then living) believed the Church should be supporting her after Adam Lightner's death. On October 9, 1887, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney penned a letter to Church leaders encouraging their financial support of her: “I consider her worthy of your attention, and that she, as the Prophet's wife, should be relieved and provided for the remainder of her days.”<sup>2</sup> Yet, by admitting to being an eternity-only wife, Church leaders may have had less sympathy. Mary didn't want to be seen as a second class plural wife, different from several others who were still alive. If this were her reason, she could have shared it in person and John Henry would have been perfectly satisfied.

### **Jane Law and Sarah Pratt**

You’ve mentioned Jane Law and Sarah Pratt several times affirming they pushed back against polyandry. I wonder if you have studied the evidence surrounding Jane Law’s interactions with Joseph Smith? See *Joseph Smith’s Polygamy 2:221-232*. Also, check out Alexander Neibaur’s diary, entry for May 24, 1844.

Sarah's claims regarding Joseph’s offer to her evolved. At first, it was an indecent proposal and later dastardly attempt on her virtue. That doesn't sound like polyandry. Regardless, Orson

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner to John Henry Smith, January 25, 1892, in George A. Smith Family Papers, MS 36, Box 7, Folder 12 (John Henry Smith, incoming correspondence); Marriott Library; emphasis in original. This quotation is referenced in Danel Bachman, "A Study of the Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage Before the Death of Joseph Smith." M.A. thesis, Purdue University, 1975, 135. Bachman lists the recipient as John A. Young in the text and John A. Smith in the footnote (*ibid.*). Also cited by Richard S. Van Wagoner as a letter to “John R. Young,” in "Mormon Polyandry in Nauvoo." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Fall 1985): 77, 82 [67-83]. Van Wagoner’s second reference in the article lists the date as “January 25, 1892,” as does his citation in *Mormon Polygamy: A History*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989, 43, 232. Apparently Van Wagoner did not locate the original, but repeated Bachman and assumed the recipient was John R. Young. Dan Bachman was unable to recall the precise primary reference (email to author June 14, 2008). I am indebted to Don Bradley for solving this mystery.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, Collection, MSS 363, BYU HBL Special Collections, item 31

believe Sarah lied. I think I mentioned before that if one of your best witnesses is Sarah Pratt, you may want to qualify your confidence level a bit.

Lucy Meserve Smith remembered that in Nauvoo: "Emma had told me... they [Joseph's plural wives] were only sealed *for eternity*, they were not to live with them and have children."<sup>3</sup> Concerning this you wrote: "Bathsheba Smith's testimony regarding Jane Law, who was *speculating* in 1892 based on her *rationalization* of how Joseph Smith married the already-married Jane Law, which never happened" (italics added). How do we know she was speculating and rationalizing? Dan, I don't think I could find better example to show how you dismiss evidence you don't like.

### **"For Eternity" is not "Eternity-Only"?**

Your extended comments about "for eternity" not being "eternity-only" are curious. But it is interesting that:

- Ruth Vose Sayers' husband insisted she "should be sealed to the Prophet for eternity"
- Mary Elizabeth Rollins reported being sealed to Joseph "for eternity."
- Patty Session wrote she was sealed to Joseph "for eternity."
- Zina Huntington told John W. Wight she was sealed "for eternity."
- Oliver Huntington recalled Presendia and Zina were sealed "for eternity."

These were all women who had legal husbands. An important question is how many of the previously unmarried women ever said they were sealed to Joseph "for eternity"? Answer: None. You also say Ruth Vose Sayer's sealing was the only one. How do you know that?

You mentioned Marinda Hyde's sealing. Here's another account saying it was only "for eternity." It is not the best source, but certainly as good as anything from Sarah Pratt:

When Joseph Smith first taught polygamy, and gave the wives as well as the husbands opportunity to make new choice of life-partners, Mrs. Hyde, at that time a young and quite prepossessing woman, became one of the Prophet's numerous fancies... Hyde was away on a mission at the time, and when he returned, he, in turn, imbibed the teachings of polygamy also, and prepared to extend his kingdom indefinitely. In the mean time it was hinted to him that Smith had had his first wife sealed to himself in his absence, as a wife *for eternity*. Inconsistent as it may seem, Hyde was in a furious passion."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Lucy Meserve Smith, handwritten statement dated May 18, 1892, copy of holograph in Linda King Newell Collection, Marriott Library, University of Utah; italics added.

<sup>4</sup> Ann Eliza Webb Young, *Wife Number 19, or, The Story of a Life in Bondage, Being a Complete Exposé of Mormonism, and Revealing Sorrows, Sacrifices and Sufferings of Women in Polygamy*. Hartford: Dustin, Gilman, and Co., 1876, 325-26; emphasis added.

## Patty Sessions

You wrote: “It is not likely that [Patty Sessions] would want to give the impression that she was married to Joseph Smith for “time and eternity” if it weren’t historically accurate.” But you argue that anyone saying they were sealed “for eternity” is *not* historically accurate. The women experienced more than one sealing so assuming they used the same language, especially when we have the Ruth Vose Sayers account is not justified.

I continue to disagree with your assessment of Patty Sessions’ addition to her journal. Donna Toland Smart, Todd Compton, and Don Bradley disagree as well. Quinn even says it wasn’t Patty, but the handwriting of someone else, which would leave the original statement “for eternity” strictly Patty’s.<sup>5</sup>

## A Proposal

I have a proposal. How about we finish this exchange up by having you pick the very best 5-10 evidences (or as many as you would like) supporting polyandry (or whatever you want to call it). We’ll put them in the left side of a chart and you can explain the “pro” or supportive aspect and I’ll in the last column provide the counterpoint? We’ll both have chances to edit our previous entries after reading the changes made by the other so we’re happy with everything we publish on the web. I put a couple of quotes in for you below.

Evidence	Point-supportive	Counterpoint
Affidavit of Josephine R. Fisher, February 24, 1915, CHL, Ms 3423, folder 1, images 48-49: “Just prior to my mothers death in 1882 she called me to her bedside and told me that her days on earth were about numbered and before she passed away from mortality she desired to tell me something which she had kept as an entire secret from me and from others until no but		
which she now desired to communicate to me. She then told me that I was the daughter of the Prophet Joseph Smith, she having been sealed to the Prophet at the time that her husband Mr. Lyon had was out of fellowship with the Church. She also told me that she was sealed to the Prophet about the same time that Zina D. Huntington and Eliza R. Snow were thus sealed. In conclusion mother told me not to make her statement to me too public,		

<sup>5</sup> D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997, 497-98

as it might cause trouble and arouse unpleasant curiosity.”		
<p>Mary Elizabeth Rollins to John H. Smith, 1892:</p> <p>I hope you will not think me intrusive, I am sure I do not wish to be- If I could have an opportunity of conversing with you, and Brother Joseph [F. Smith] I could explain some things in regard to my living with Mr L, after becoming the <i>Wife of another</i>, which would throw light, on what <i>now</i> seems mysterious – and you would be perfectly satisfied with me. I write this; because I have heard that it had been commented on to my injury. I have done the best I could, and Joseph will sanction my action – I cannot explain things in this Letter – some day you will know <i>all</i>. That is, if I ever have an opportunity of conversing with either of you.<sup>6</sup></p>		

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<sup>6</sup>Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner to John Henry Smith, January 25, 1892, in George A. Smith Family Papers, MS 36, Box 7, Folder 12 (John Henry Smith, incoming correspondence); Marriott Library; emphasis in original.