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## A Little-known Defense of Polygamy from the Mormon Press in 1842

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In attempting to understand the early promulgation, development and significance of Mormon plural marriage, the scholar encounters great difficulties. Among them is the almost total lack of direct, detailed statements shedding light on the larger social and intellectual arguments used initially to justify such a remarkable departure from normative nineteenth-century American belief and practice. Although numerous contemporary allusions to plural marriage in Nauvoo exist, most of them

are brief and veiled, and those that are not come almost exclusively from unsympathetic apostate sources. Plural marriage, like other alternative forms of marriage and family organization originating in this period, was so controversial that it could be introduced only under cover of secrecy. One consequence is that almost all detailed public explanations and defenses of plural marriage were made after it was relatively well-established in Utah and had been practiced by the leaders of the Church for approximately a decade. Whether such statements represent the attitudes and beliefs of the earliest period is unclear.

The official announcement of Latter-day Saint belief and practice of polygamy was given at a special conference of the Church in late August 1852.<sup>1</sup> At that time, Orson Pratt, one of the twelve apostles of the Church, presented a major speech which provided most of the arguments that would be used to explain and justify plural marriage during the succeeding four decades when it was publicly defended and practiced by the Mormons in Utah. At the same conference, a revelation was read publicly for the first time which had allegedly been given through the prophet Joseph Smith on July 12, 1843, in Nauvoo. It explained the doctrinal justification for a "new and everlasting covenant." This called for the restoration of a form of polygamy modeled after the marriage practices of the Old Testament patriarchs and based on a larger conception of "celestial marriage" lasting for time and all eternity.

Although some have charged otherwise, evidence from internal construction, contemporary Mormon and apostate statements and later affidavits strongly suggests that this statement, now printed as Section 132 of the current Utah Mormon version of the Doctrine and Covenants, was indeed dictated by Joseph Smith and represented a part of his carefully considered beliefs.<sup>2</sup> Certainly the revelation is extremely important for understanding later Utah Mormon marriage and family attitudes. It also appears to contain clear allusions to problems in the introduction of the belief and practice in Nauvoo, including the difficulties of Joseph Smith's first wife, Emma. Nevertheless, the statement as a whole is incomplete. It provides a part of the intellectual framework for plural marriage, but no explanation of how such beliefs were to be practiced or why plural marriage should have been seen as socially desirable—or even, perhaps, as a social necessity. The revelation concludes, ". . . I will reveal more unto you hereafter; therefore, let this suffice for the present" (132:66).

Even if the theoretical possibility of the introduction of plural marriage existed, why should such marriage practices have been introduced specifically in America, in the 1840's, and among the Mormons? Many Mormons simply have assumed that Joseph Smith had been commanded by God to introduce plural marriage and that he was just mechanistically doing his best to carry out the inscrutable demands of the Almighty. This may well represent the way many Mormon believers reacted to the command; however, it does not do justice to the complex process by which Joseph Smith himself received and interpreted revelation. Typically Smith received revelation only in response to concrete intellectual and social problems which he placed before the Lord. When his heart "burned within him" with a definite sense of the answer to the problem, he would deliver it as a revelation, though not necessarily in written form or at the precise time that he received the new understanding.<sup>3</sup> Before his death, Smith frequently declared that he felt emotionally compelled to introduce plural marriage. According to a number of accounts, he declared that "an angel with a drawn sword" stood before him and told him that if he did not introduce the belief and its practice he would lose his prophetic powers and the Church would be unable to progress.<sup>4</sup>

Why might Joseph Smith have felt this so intensely? The Mormon doctrinal view summarized above fails adequately to suggest what driving dynamic could have led Smith—let alone his followers—to make such a radical transformation in their behavior. Likewise, the anti-Mormon assumption that Joseph Smith simply was rationalizing or theologizing his amorous propensities after the fact, fails to account for the complexity of his mind, the consistency of his sense of mission, or his compulsion to introduce such beliefs among his entire following. More conventional means would certainly have sufficed for purely sexual outlets. In Nauvoo many new doctrines and practices were introduced. These included new conceptions of the nature of God and of material and spiritual reality, ordinances such as baptism for the dead, and special temple endowment and sealing ceremonies. Apparently these were designed to provide a basis for a sense of security and social solidarity for Mormons within both a this-worldly and a cosmic context. Introduction of plural and celestial marriage appears to have been viewed by Joseph Smith as an important part of this total effort, but why? What concrete problems of social disorganization might Joseph Smith have hoped to solve by the introduction of plural marriage?

A remarkable thirty-seven page pamphlet defense of polygamy printed by the Mormon press in Nauvoo in the autumn of 1842 suggests new perspectives on the introduction of plural marriage. The account allegedly comprises two chapters from a larger manuscript—apparently never published—called *The Peace Maker, or the Doctrines of the Millennium*.<sup>5</sup> The pamphlet presents a brilliant, highly unorthodox intellectual and social argument for the “Biblical” basis of marriage, divorce, and polygamy, which were seen as closely related. The *Peace Maker* was published at a key point in Joseph Smith’s early attempt to prepare the minds of his followers eventually to accept plural marriage. As far as is known, the pamphlet constitutes the only explicit defense of polygamy published under the auspices of the main body of the Mormon Church before 1852.

As if to compensate for the explicitness of its argument for polygamy, the *Peace Maker* seems to suggest calculated ambiguity as to its authorship. An “Udney Hay Jacob” is indicated as the author. The “Preface” to the account states:

The author of this work is not a Mormon, although it is printed by their press. It was most convenient. But the public will soon find out what he is, by his work.

Yet, on the title page, Jacob was identified as “An Israelite, and a Shepherd of Israel”—implying a possible leadership position in the Church. Beneath that was the note: “J. Smith, Printer.”

The “Preface” to the *Peace Maker* further indicates that the goal of the account is “to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children” and vice versa as indicated in Malachi 4:5-6 and that the author of the account professes to stand in relation to the coming millennium as Elijah did to Christ’s first coming. These two claims were strikingly similar to those being developed at the time by Joseph Smith as the underlying rationale for temple sealing ceremonies connected in part with polygamy. And polygamy was one of the last major practices which must be restored before the millennium could be ushered in.<sup>6</sup> In an exhortatory conclusion, the *Peace Maker* declares:

The truth on this important matter is now clearly set before you my countrymen: . . . The question is not now to be debated whether these things are so: neither is it a question of much importance who wrote this book? [sic] But the question, the momentous question is; will you now restore the law of God on this important subject, and keep it? Remember that the law of God is

given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. *Speak not a word against it at your peril.* . . . (p. 37; emphasis in original.)

Not surprisingly, publication of the *Peace Maker* created a brief furor in Nauvoo. For nearly six months, the Church had been recovering from the impact of the devastating John C. Bennett apostasy and his series of wild allegations about lurid polygamous debaucheries in the Church. Bennett's *History of the Saints* had come out in late September; yet only a month later—seemingly with the authorization of top Mormon leaders—an account defending polygamy was published. A sometimes reliable contemporary source for Nauvoo gossip, Oliver Olney, expressed what must have been a common opinion when he said, "If the pamphlet was not written by the authorities of the Church, it by them was revised in Jacobs [*sic*] name."<sup>7</sup> As a rebuttal to such arguments, Joseph Smith mildly dissociated himself from the publication in a brief statement in the *Times and Seasons* on December 1, 1842. He denied that he had seen it in advance or that he would have printed it had he known its contents. Significantly, however, Smith defended the author's right to publish such opinions. And more importantly, he did not make any criticisms of the extraordinary claims to authority made by the pamphlet—claims that in effect would have threatened to supercede his own leadership.<sup>8</sup>

In the tense political situation in Nauvoo following the Bennett fiasco, Joseph Smith had moved to centralize all power in his own hands. As part of this effort, he had placed the Church press in control of a totally loyal subordinate, John Taylor. Taylor apparently had replaced Ebenezer Robinson in part because of Robinson's hostility to plural marriage.<sup>9</sup> Under such circumstances, it is hard to imagine how—short of extreme and uncharacteristic carelessness—the pamphlet could have been published without the sanction of the leadership of the Church. Probably, as John D. Lee later alleged, the pamphlet was put forward as a "feeler" to test Church opinion but was denied when public reaction proved too unfavorable.<sup>10</sup>

The question of the authorship of the *Peace Maker* and the circumstances under which it was written remain unclear. Overzealous Mormon supporters of polygamy as early as 1850 and as late as the mid 1960's have in fact attributed authorship of the first chapter of the pamphlet to Joseph Smith himself.<sup>11</sup> This appears unlikely. Udney Hay Jacob was a real person, not a pseudonym. He was baptized into the Mormon Church in 1843, initially joined his better-known son Norton in beginning the exodus to Utah with the original band of pioneers in 1847, and died a member of the Church in Salt Lake City in 1860.<sup>12</sup> Udney Jacob's letters reveal that he would have been entirely capable of writing a document like the *Peace Maker* and his style appears similar to that of the pamphlet.<sup>13</sup> In fact, in a letter of March 5, 1851, to Brigham Young, Jacob stated that he had written the *Peace Maker* "for the citizens of the United States who professed to believe in the Bible" and that it also served as an "apology for this people [the Mormons] who were accused by them of Polygamy."<sup>14</sup> This statement would not be incompatible with John D. Lee's assertion that Jacob had been commissioned by Joseph Smith—or by other intermediaries acting in his name—to select passages from the Bible pertaining to polygamy, to write it up in pamphlet form, and to advocate the doctrine.<sup>15</sup>

Whether other Church involvement with the *Peace Maker* might also have occurred remains unclear. The complex historical questions of the authorship of this pamphlet and its relation to the political and social aspects of the early development of Mormon polygamy must be deferred to later analysis.<sup>16</sup> Instead, the remainder of



this article will discuss the controversial social and intellectual argument for the "Biblical" basis of marriage, divorce, and polygamy raised by the *Peace Maker*. Striking similarities between the pamphlet's distinctive argument for divorce and the divorce policy in early Utah will be presented. These similarities suggest the possibility that the pamphlet's argument for polygamy may also shed new light on early Mormon belief.

The *Peace Maker* itself is without doubt an intellectual *tour de force*. It presents an argument of astonishing intellectual and social sophistication, even though one easily may find the author's extreme stress on male dominance and prerogatives one-sided and disturbing. Entering into the author's way of thinking poses some initial problems. An elaborate and highly unorthodox Biblical exegesis underlies the argument. Combined with this is an almost paranoid concern for reestablishing patriarchal authority and male dominance. This is seen as the only means by which total social chaos can be avoided. The Fall in the Garden of Eden was due to the woman, not the serpent, and implicitly that fall was related in part to woman's sexual influence over man: "Adam was enslaved by the woman, and so are we." Man should be the head over his wife; for a woman to take the lead in any way is a usurpation.

The pamphlet argues that the unnatural female usurpation of power in the family has brought in its wake a host of social evils. Children have become ungoverned and ungovernable, while husbands have even been pushed into abandonment of their families "to the mercy of a heartless world" due to "the unnatural and in-

tolerable nature of female tyranny and usurpation." "Multitudes of families are now in confusion and wretchedly governed. This is a great evil." Woman's unnatural leadership in the family and her sexual power over men has had a ruinous effect under the present laws; it is "such an unnatural shackle to the dignity and original excellency of the mind of man" that it threatens to corrupt the very fountainhead of life. The married woman should see that she revere her husband, for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. Satan "must be expelled by exalting man to his original authority and dignity, and by forming our laws exactly according to divine pattern."<sup>17</sup>

Underlying the frantic, paranoid surface tone of much of the *Peace Maker* is a genuine concern for overcoming the existing alienation between men and women in marriage and reestablishing satisfying relations between the sexes. The question is how this is to be accomplished. The *Peace Maker* offers some highly unorthodox and controversial suggestions. One problem area is divorce. The author of the pamphlet is profoundly disturbed at the existing divorce laws. That these laws are wrong in principle is shown by the fact that such great variation in divorce standards exists in different states. These varying standards, he concludes, cannot all be right. There can be only one divine standard of divorce, just as there can be only one true standard of religious authority.

The true or Biblical standard of divorce which is necessary to reestablish social order must be based on Christ's statement, as given in the King James translation, that to put away a wife for any cause but fornication and then marry again is to commit adultery (Matt: 5:32). The meaning of "fornication" in this statement is not immediately obvious. The normal meaning of "fornication" involves intercourse prior to marriage; this cannot be meant here. Likewise, "fornication" in this quotation could not be translated as "adultery," since the Biblical punishment for adultery was death by stoning, not divorce. And the Bible remains the same from beginning to end, according to the author of the pamphlet. Then what is the Biblical "fornication" which is the only true basis for divorce? According to the author of the *Peace Maker*, it is *the alienation of the affections of the wife from her husband*. That, and that alone, constitutes the divine basis of divorce.

The *Peace Maker* sees marriage, therefore, as a relationship in which the wife should be fully devoted mentally and physically to her husband, subject to his authority in all things:

The truth is this: the spiritual law of marriage is binding upon both the body and the mind of the wife equally. The prostitution of the body after marriage constitutes adultery; but the alienation of the mind or affections from her husband constitutes fornication in a married woman. (p. 7)

An alienated wife, held in wedlock against her will is peculiarly harmful. She will bear spiritually corrupted children and rear them to disrespect her husband. Her children, born of "fornication" are "bastards" and are disqualified from entering the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation.

It is evident that the minds or souls are propagated by natural generation as well as bodies. . . . The woman is the producer, and while she remains pure, truly attached in spirit to her husband, her children are pure, and born in honor, but not otherwise. (p. 13)

Thus, when a woman becomes totally alienated from her husband, he should "write her a bill of divorcement according to the strict letter of the law of God given by Moses."

A right understanding of this matter, and a correct law properly executed, would restore this na-

tion to peace and order; and man to his true dignity, authority and government of the earthly creation. It would soon rectify the domestic circle, and establish a proper head over the families of the earth, and be the means of driving satan; together with the knowledge and restitution of the whole penal law of God, and the glorious and everlasting gospel; yea, of driving satan from the human mind and, setting [*sic*] a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more until his time. And by no other means can order and peace be restored to man. And by no other means can the heart of the fathers be turned to their children, and the heart of the children be turned to their fathers. (p. 10)

The wife, then, should be divorced by her husband should her affections become alienated from his; however, if the husband's affections are alienated from hers while she remains sincerely attached to him, the same standard does not apply, for "a man shall not take advantage of his own wrong." If a man could go about divorcing wives and taking new ones at his own whim, he would be acting with gross irresponsibility and contributing to social chaos. What recourse does the man have in a less-than-ideal marriage? After all, the wife may not be unfaithful, yet "she may be a perfect devil to her husband." This is not desirable, for God's will is orderly and harmonious social relations.

Underlying the solution to this problem proposed by the *Peace Maker* is a special view of male authority in marriage, a view which was still widely prevalent in less explicit form in nineteenth-century America. The pamphlet declares repeatedly that a married woman is the property of her husband, property in a very special sense, "very precious, near and dear to him as his own body." As the property of her husband, the wife cannot in turn own her owner, for that would be a logical absurdity. Thus the husband is not under the law of marriage to his wife; in his treatment of his wife, he is responsible only to God's law. If a husband is unreasonable toward his wife or if he physically abuses her, he can be held legally accountable by society, but not by his wife.

Since the man is not under the law of marriage to his wife, the *Peace Maker* thus concludes that the solution for a man in an unsatisfactory marriage situation is the ancient one of taking additional wives while continuing to maintain the first:

In ancient times under the law of God, the permission of a plurality of wives had a direct tendency, to prevent the possibility of fornication in the wife. For the law of divorcement, and all the law on the subject, sustained the lawful and independent power of the husband over the wife; and his dignity of character was thereby supported. The interest, the hopes, the prospects of the wife, were all turned in the opposite direction by the law; where indeed her mind ought always to be. Her main object was to win, and retain the affections of her husband. And there was no means more successful for this purpose, than to bear him many children; . . . The ruinous evil of a woman's being jealous of her husband, could not then exist under the law, and this evil is almost the only source of fornication in a wife. . . . And the wife was perfectly passive, submissive and non-resisting towards her husband. (pp. 17-18)

Following out this line of argument, the *Peace Maker* develops some of its most controversial assertions. According to the pamphlet, for a married man to "entice a maid . . . is not an offence against his wife; neither is it against the maid; but altogether in the maid's favor"—*provided* the man then take the maid in a regularized fashion and support her as a wife. Since the man is not under the law of marriage to his wife, there is no possibility of the man abrogating the marriage covenant by taking additional wives in such a fashion.

But if a man commits adultery with another man's wife; it has a direct tendency to produce the great evil of alienation in the wife; which is murder to her posterity in its nature; and he robs the husband of his most precious rights, violates the interest of his life and family in the most sacred points of a man's existence [*sic*]. He therefore, and the adulteress shall be put to death. God now

calls us to peace, and purity and order; for his house is a house of order, and not of confusion. This is the object of the whole law. (p. 19)

To recapitulate, the complex and sometimes convoluted social argument of the first chapter of the *Peace Maker* may be summarized as three main assertions. First, patriarchal authority and proper related patterns of male-female roles in the home and in society must be restored if social chaos is to be avoided. Second, to aid in accomplishing this end, a true or "Biblical" form of divorce must be reestablished. It would allow women who had become irrevocably alienated from their husbands to be divorced. Thus the atmosphere of the home would not become poisoned because women were held in wedlock against their will. Finally, as a counterpart to restoring the "Biblical" standard of divorce, polygamy, the "Biblical" form of marriage, must be reinstated. Polygamy would allow men to reassert their proper authority and leadership. It would free them from the unnatural sexual influence women hold over men in a monogamous system. And it would provide men with an acceptable response to unsatisfactory marital situations short of the socially irresponsible one of divorcing rebellious but not fully alienated wives.

Underlying the three-fold social argument presented in the *Peace Maker* is the assumption that only by reestablishing such a patriarchal basis for social authority can the true order of Christ's Church on earth be realized. The proper relationship between husband and wife is seen as analogous to the proper relationship which should exist between Christ and his Church. Inversion of proper male and female roles was a key factor in the Great Apostasy from Christ's Church. Such role inversion destroyed the Patriarchal Order, thereby undermining the whole family organization and resulting in chaos. A restitution of patriarchal authority is thus of overriding importance both for the social order and for Christ's Church.<sup>18</sup>

The second chapter of the *Peace Maker* develops more fully these and other arguments about the specific circumstances under which polygamy is legitimately to be practiced. Although interesting, these details will not be presented here. The most intellectually and socially distinctive ideas in the pamphlet are all outlined in the first chapter.

What relation, if any, do the ideas advanced in the *Peace Maker* have with early Mormon values, especially those of Joseph Smith? This is a difficult question which might be approached from a number of different perspectives. Here only a few tentative documentary suggestions of the possible relationship will be provided, based on some early Mormon statements about divorce.

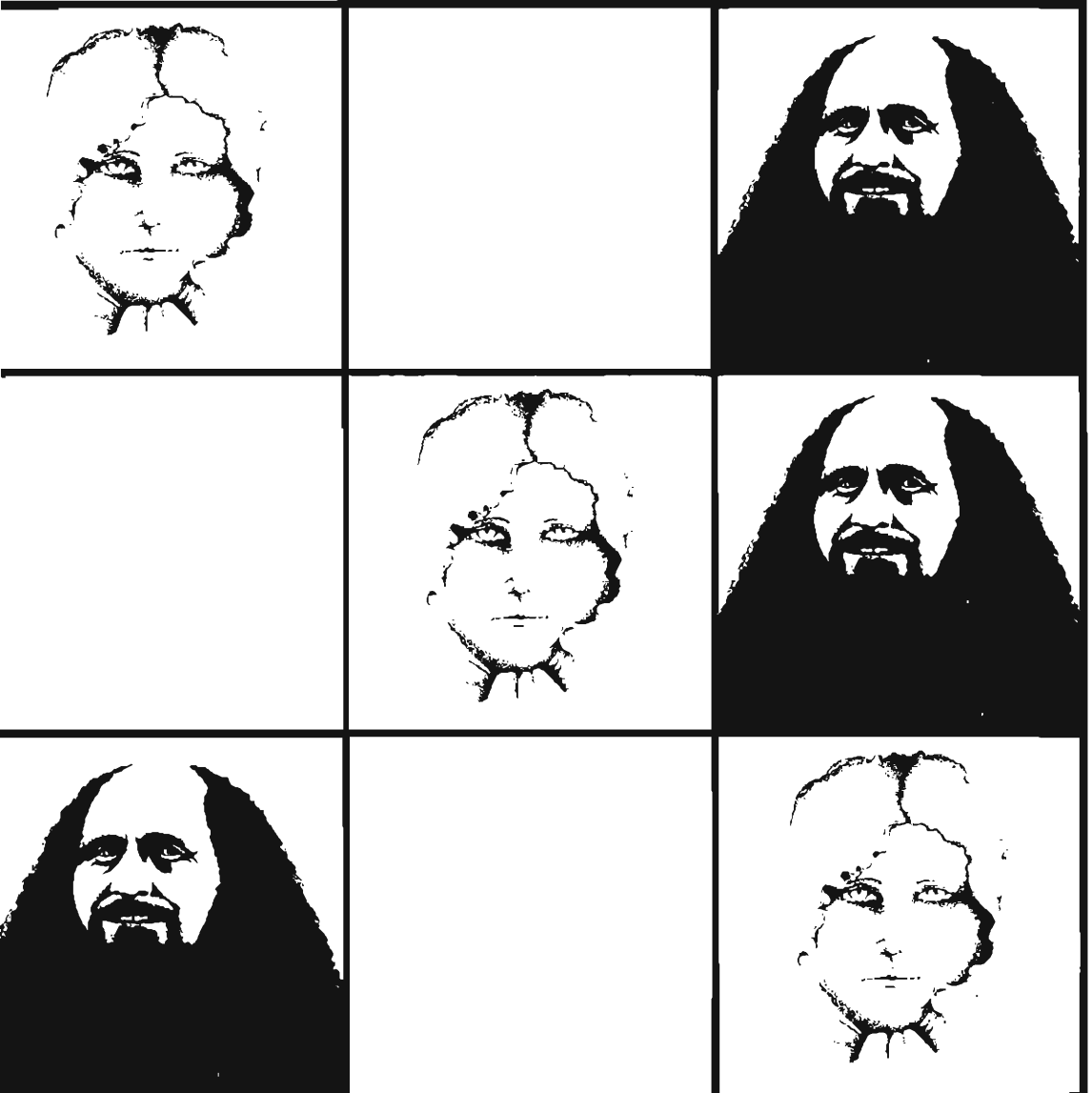
Despite its shrill tone and almost pathetic fearfulness that women were getting out of their place, many of the arguments in the *Peace Maker* offered possibilities for humanizing relations between the sexes. Probably the most striking thesis advanced in the pamphlet was that the alienation of the affections of the wife from her husband was the only legitimate grounds for divorce. This was a significant liberalization from the attitudes in many parts of antebellum America. Despite the increasing flexibility of divorce laws in the period, divorce generally remained hard to arrange and desertion frequently provided the only practical means of terminating an unsatisfactory marriage relationship. Like the argument of the *Peace Maker*, one of the most distinctive aspects of polygamy in early Utah was its relation to Utah's relatively liberal divorce policy in which women's feelings were seriously taken into account. Women in early Utah had the primary initiative in determining when to terminate a relationship, while their husbands could not easily divorce their wives if the wife were opposed. This contrasts with the practice in many polygamous



societies in which, typically, women have little to say in such matters, while husbands are relatively free to divorce their wives. In Utah, therefore, women possessed a significantly higher and safer status than in many polygamous societies elsewhere.<sup>19</sup>

That the *Peace Maker's* theory of the alienation of affections may relate closely to Joseph Smith's beliefs is suggested by a number of sources. A statement made by John D. Lee presents Joseph Smith's alleged attitudes in the same paragraph in which he discusses the Jacob pamphlet.

About the same time [1842] the doctrine of "sealing" for an eternal state was introduced, and the Saints were given to understand that their marriage relations with each other were not valid. That those who had solemnized the rites of matrimony had no authority of God to do so. That the true priesthood was taken from the earth with the death of the Apostles and inspired men of God. That they were married to each other only by their own covenants, and that if their marriage relations had not been productive of blessings and peace, and they felt it oppressive to remain together, they were at liberty to make their own choice, much as if they had not been married. *That it was a sin for people to live together, and raise or beget children in alienation from each other. There should exist an affinity between each other, not a lustful one, as that can never cement that love and affection that should exist between a man and his wife.*<sup>20</sup> (Emphasis added.)



Evaluating the accuracy of Lee's statement involves numerous problems of memory, bias, and editing. Certainly he may well be confusing the argument of the *Peace Maker* itself with Joseph Smith's own beliefs, since Lee is writing about both in the same paragraph. However, other sources also suggest that Joseph Smith possessed the sort of sensitive concern for the quality of relationships between men and women that is expressed here.

One of the most articulate of Joseph Smith's alleged plural wives, Lucy Walker Kimball, wrote of his concerns for the quality of relations between the sexes in a way that would seem at least partially to support Lee's statement. She said that Smith

Often referred to the feelings that should exist between husband and wives, that his wives, should be his bosom companions, the nearest and dearest objects on earth in every sense of the word. He said that men must beware how they treat their wives. They were given them for a holy purpose that the myriads of spirits waiting for tabernacles might have pure and healthy bodies. He also said many would awake in the morning of the resurrection sadly disappointed; for they, by transgression would have neither wives nor children, for they would surely be taken from them, and given to those who should prove themselves worthy. Again he said, a woman would have her choice; this was a privilege that could not be denied her.<sup>21</sup>

Hints of similar attitudes on Joseph Smith's part toward the alienation of affections are suggested in two entries in Wilford Woodruff's Journal. In the first entry, for June 15, 1851, Woodruff summarizes the conclusion of one of Brigham Young's sermons as follows: "In speaking of the married state [he] says if man & wife become allinated [*sic*] from each other it is in one sens [*sic*] the spirit of Adultery."<sup>22</sup> An entry for June 2, 1857, in Woodruff's Journal records the following conversation with Brigham Young:

The subject of Adultery again came up Joseph said a man cannot commit adultery with his wife so says the revelation on the Patriarchal Marriage Yet a man can do rong [*sic*] in having connection with his wife at times Joseph Young [indecipherable] said the Ancient Apostle said that a man should not put away his wife save for the cause of fornication If he did they would both commit Adultery. Brigham Young said that Joseph taught that when a womans [*sic*] affections were entirely weaned from her husband that was adultery in spirit her Affections were Adulterated from his.<sup>23</sup>

Possibly the most striking parallel between the *Peace Maker* and stated Mormon beliefs is found in a sermon by Brigham Young in the Tabernacle on October 8, 1861. As reported by James Beck, Young

then gave some instructions in relation to sealing He said that there were many men & women who after having been sealed to each other for time & all Eternity. Came to him for a Bill of Divorce. & for the sum of 10 dollars he gave them a Bill Because the Lord permitted it but it was of no use to them. they might Just as well tear off a Peice [*sic*] of Blank Paper for a divorce. But on account of the hardness of their hearts. the Lord permitted it. as it was in the days of Moses. But there was a way in which a woman could leave a man lawfully. When a woman becomes alienated in her feelings & affections from her husband, it is then his duty to give her a Bill & set her free which would be fornication for the man to cohabit with his wife after she had thus become alienated from him. the children begotten of such a woman would be bastards in the true Scriptural term of the word Fornication. for the crime of adultery a woman (& also men) would be stoned to death & come up in the morning of the Resurrection & claim all of her rights & Priviledges [*sic*] in the marrage [*sic*] covenant.<sup>24</sup>

This statement will be recognized as virtually a précis of the main thesis of the *Peace Maker*. One can not help but think of the concluding sentences in that pamphlet: "The question is not now to be debated whether these things are so:

neither is it a question of much importance who wrote this book?" What is significant is that—however it may have happened—this obscure pamphlet and the official position of the early Church appear essentially the same, at least on the vital question of the grounds for terminating the marriage relationship. The possibility that the *Peace Maker* may also shed important light on larger aspects of the development of new marriage and family forms among the early Mormons also deserves serious scholarly consideration.

In summary, the aim of this paper has been a rather narrowly restricted one: to evaluate an obscure early pamphlet defense of polygamy printed by the Mormon Church and to raise the possibility that the pamphlet might shed light on issues of much broader significance in both the social and religious development of the Church. Evidence summarized in this paper suggests that the *Peace Maker* probably was published with the sanction of the leaders of the Church, even though it was later denied by them because of the controversy it aroused. The author or chief writer of the pamphlet probably was Udney Hay Jacob, but whether his work was encouraged, edited or revised by Joseph Smith or other leaders of the Church remains unclear.

Given the striking similarities between the argument for divorce in the *Peace Maker* and in early Utah, the possibility that some of the key ideas for which Jacob found Biblical support might have been based in part on prior discussions with Mormons or have influenced later Mormon leaders remains a live option. In the final analysis, however, the chief significance of the *Peace Maker* lies not in its authorship or in the authority behind it. Rather the pamphlet's significance is to be found in the degree to which it may open a window of understanding into the values and felt social necessities underlying the remarkable Mormon effort to establish a distinctively American form of Biblical polygamy and the culture of the Hebrew patriarchs in mid-nineteenth-century America.

<sup>1</sup>The minutes of the conference appeared as a *Deseret News* Extra for September 14, 1852, and were reprinted as a Supplement to Volume 15 of *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*. Orson Pratt's speech is most readily available in the *Journal of Discourses*, 1 (1854), 53-66 (hereinafter *JD*). An early reprinting of Joseph Smith's alleged revelation of July 12, 1843, is in the *Millennial Star*, 15 (January 1, 1853), 5-8.

<sup>2</sup>Full documentation for this and other statements made here about the origin and early development of Mormon plural marriage will be provided in my forthcoming dissertation in progress at the University of Chicago: "The Family and the Millennium: The Early Shaker, Oneida Perfectionist, and Mormon Reorganization of Marriage and Family Life." The Mormon chapters of this dissertation will analyze the development of the distinctive Mormon form of polygamy between its probable intellectual origins in the early 1830's and the mid 1850's when the general character of its development had become largely set. Special consideration will be given to the values underlying this remarkable new form of family organization. I am very grateful for the support of this research by individuals in the LDS Church Historical Department in Salt Lake City, particularly Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton. The assistance of these as well as of many other fine Mormon scholars has been of inestimable value.

<sup>3</sup>The complex process by which Joseph Smith received and interpreted revelation has not yet received adequate scholarly analysis. Some starting points for such an analysis are found in *The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [Utah edition] (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1968), especially Sections 6, 9, and 10; Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Period I, History of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 6 vols. 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1955), 5: xxiv-xlvi; Eduard Meyer, "Nature and Mechanisms of Smith's Revelations" in his *The Origin and History of the Mormons*, trans. Heinz F. Rahde and Eugene Seach

(Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, 1961), 30-38; Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence, Mo.: Herald, 1969); and Jan Shippis, "The Prophet Puzzle: Suggestions Toward a More Comprehensive Interpretation of Joseph Smith," *Journal of Mormon History*, 1 (1974), 4-20.

<sup>4</sup>Accounts of the "angel with a drawn sword" story are widespread, although manuscript evidence for such a story apparently does not exist from the period when Joseph Smith was alive. Whether or not Joseph Smith ever made this particular statement, his actions in attempting to introduce polygamous belief and practice among his closest followers in Nauvoo suggest that he was, indeed, operating under a sense of intense inner compulsion.

<sup>5</sup>The title page of the pamphlet reads as follows: *An Extract. From a Manuscript Entitled The Peace Maker, or the Doctrines of the Millennium: Being a Treatise on Religion and Jurisprudence. Or a New System of Religion and Politicks [sic]. For God, My Country, and My Rights.* By Udney Hay Jacob. An Israelite, and a Shepherd of Israel. Nauvoo, Ill. J. Smith, Printer, 1842. Apparently there are only two extant copies of this extremely rare document. The one to which reference is made in this paper is found in the William Robertson Coe Collection of the Beinecke Library at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. A xerox made from this pamphlet is found in the Library of the LDS Church Historical Department in Salt Lake City, Utah. The other copy of this document is in the Everett D. Graff Collection of the Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois. A typescript from this copy made by Dale Morgan is located in the Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>6</sup>In his sermon "Celestial Marriage" which introduced the Mormon belief in and practice of plural marriage to the world, Orson Pratt provided a succinct summary of normative nineteenth-century Mormon belief on that topic. According to Pratt, Joseph Smith held the "sealing keys of power, or in other words, of Elijah, having been committed and restored to the earth by Elijah, the Prophet, who held many keys, among which were the keys of sealing, to bind the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers; together with all the other sealing keys and powers pertaining to the last dispensation. They were committed by that Angel who administered in the Kirtland Temple and spoke unto Joseph the Prophet, at the time of the endowments in that house." *JD*, 1 (1854), 64. See also *Doctrine and Covenants*, Sections 2 and 110.

<sup>7</sup>For a contemporary discussion of the context within which the restoration of the patriarchal order and plural marriage was conceived of by 19th-century Mormons as part of a necessary prelude to the coming of the millennium, see Hyrum L. Andrus, *Doctrines of the Kingdom: Volume III, Foundations of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), especially pp. 1-19 and 439-489.

<sup>8</sup>Oliver H. Olney, *The Absurdities of Mormonism Portrayed: A Brief Sketch* (Hancock County, Ill.; n.p., 1843), 10.

<sup>9</sup>The complete statement as printed in *The Times and Seasons*, 4 (December 1, 1842), 32, read: "NOTICE. There was a book printed at my office, a short time since, written by Udney H. Jacobs [sic], on marriage, without my knowledge; and had I been apprised of it, I should not have printed it; not that I am opposed to any man enjoying his privileges; but I do not wish to have my name associated with the authors [sic] in such an unmeaning rigmarole of nonsense, folly, and trash. JOSEPH SMITH."

This is one of the mildest of all Joseph Smith's carefully worded apparent denials of polygamy. Far stronger denial statements were made of beliefs and practices which contemporary apostate and later Utah Mormon sources clearly verify existed with official sanction in Nauvoo. Note the possible *double entendre* in the phrase: "not that I am opposed to any man enjoying his privileges." At the obvious level, this statement could be taken to mean that Joseph Smith would not oppose publication of the pamphlet. But in later Utah Mormon usage, statements about men exercising or enjoying their privileges often referred to polygamy. And there is some evidence that Joseph Smith may have made similar oblique references to polygamy in some of his own statements. Thus, this phrase could also have been a word to the wise that even if Joseph Smith was disavowing this particular pamphlet for the record, he was not opposing properly sanctioned polygamy. Since polygamy was illegal in Illinois at this time, any explicit public statement in its support was hardly to be expected from Mormon leaders.

It would be useful to know whether other printed items from the Mormon press at Nauvoo also bore the designation: "J. Smith, Printer." I have not as yet been able to make such a survey of the literature emanating from the Church press in Nauvoo. If the *Peace Maker* were unique or almost unique in bearing Joseph Smith's name as printer, then that would tend to suggest that the pamphlet might be viewed as being of special importance.

<sup>10</sup>Joseph Lee Robinson, a brother of Ebenezer Robinson, wrote on July 14, 1846, in Nauvoo, as a loyal member of the Church, that the involvement of Ebenezer's wife Angeline in anti-polygamy efforts with Emma infuriated Joseph Smith. Apparently Ebenezer's support of his wife's stand in the matter was a contributing factor in his precipitous removal from the editorship of the *Times and Seasons* in February 1842. Joseph Lee Robinson, *Autobiography and Journal*, 49. The original manuscript is in the Brigham Young University Special Collections. For the larger context of this controversy, see Robert Bruce Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana, Ill.: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1965), 249-251.

<sup>11</sup>John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled; or The Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee*, ed. W. W. Bishop (St. Louis, Mo.; Bryan, Brand & Co., 1877), 146.

<sup>11</sup>When a Paul Harrison of Manchester, England, had copies of the first chapter of the *Peace Maker* privately printed in 1850, attributed it to Joseph Smith's authorship, and then proceeded to give public lectures at which he sold the pamphlets, a great commotion was created in the British Mission. Prior to 1852, all statements linking the Mormon Church with belief in or practice of polygamy were being emphatically denied. Harrison thus was a considerable embarrassment to the Church, whether or not his claims had any validity. For the controversy, see Eli B. Kelsey, "A Base Calumny Refuted," *Millennial Star*, 12 (March 15, 1850), 92-93. Harrison's letter of July 29, 1850 abjectly begging to be readmitted to the Church was printed, with additional comments by Orson Pratt, as "Beware the Apostate's Doom," *Millennial Star*, 12 (September 15, 1850), 280-283. Significantly, Harrison's four page letter nowhere denied the truth of his assertions about the authorship of the pamphlet. The only extant copy of Harrison's extremely rare imprint is found in the Coe Collection of the Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

That Paul Harrison may have been a premature or ill-advisedly open polygamist is implied in Kelsey's article in the *Millennial Star* and by Harrison's arrest sixteen years later for bigamy, reported in the *Millennial Star*, 28 (December 15, 1866), 793. Harrison's relationship to the Church and to the *Peace Maker* remains obscure. The LDS Geneological Society Library in Salt Lake City contains a family group sheet referring to a Paul Harrison in Manchester, England, who was baptized into the Church in 1843, but whether this is the man in question remains in doubt. How Paul Harrison secured a copy of what was even at the time an extremely rare and controversial pamphlet or why he attributed it to Joseph Smith is unclear.

In the mid 1960's a minor stir was created when an item entitled "A Little Known Discourse by the Prophet Joseph Smith" was distributed in Mormon circles in California. Allegedly it was taken from an unpublished biography of Warren and Amanda Smith. Thomas G. Truitt of the Library of the LDS Church Historical Department showed that striking line by line similarities exist between the "Discourse" and the first chapter of the *Peace Maker*. I am also informed that the Historical Department knows of no original documentary source for the biography of Warren and Amanda Smith. If such an original source existed and contained the "Discourse," it would raise new questions. For a discussion of these issues, see Kenneth W. Godfrey, "A New Look at the Alleged Little Known Discourse by Joseph Smith," *BYU Studies*, 9 (Autumn 1968), 49-53; and Ogden Kraut, "The Little Known Discourse: A Documentary," n.p., n.d. Xerox copies of Thomas G. Truitt's analyses and of Kraut's typescript are in the Library of the LDS Historical Department.

<sup>12</sup>The primary biographical source for Udney Jacob is in the Norton Jacob, *Journal and Reminiscences, 1842-1852*. The original manuscript is held in the Archives of the LDS Church Historical Department, hereinafter cited as Church Archives.

<sup>13</sup>Two letters written by Udney Hay Jacob suggest his writing style and thought processes. One, to President Martin Van Buren, dated March 21, 1840, is now located in the Illinois State Historical Society Library, Springfield, Illinois. The other, to Joseph Smith, dated January 6, 1844, is in the Joseph Smith Collection, Church Archives.

<sup>14</sup>Letter, Udney Hay Jacob to Brigham Young, March 5, 1851, Church Archives.

<sup>15</sup>Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, p. 146.

<sup>16</sup>I plan to provide further analysis of some of the complex problems connected with the *Peace Maker* in an appendix to my forthcoming dissertation.

<sup>17</sup>*Peace Maker*, pp. 3-6. The argument in this pamphlet is often rather convoluted and repetitious. In this presentation, the main lines of thought and their interrelationships have been highlighted, but quotations have not necessarily been used in their order of appearance. To avoid unnecessary footnote clutter, page citations will be given only for the longer quotes. All remaining citations from the *Peace Maker* in this article are from the first of its two chapters, identified as: "Chapter XVIII: On the Law of Marriage."

The argument of the *Peace Maker* is similar to that of many other contemporary publications in fearing that the family, and with it the whole social order, were threatened. However, the *Peace Maker* attributes this problem to different causes and proposes different solutions to it than did most antebellum Americans. For instance, note that the *Peace Maker's* argument that the Fall in the Garden of Eden was the fault of Eve, the Temptress, is an older belief that was not generally shared by other nineteenth-century Americans. Instead, the literature of the period stresses the pure, innocent qualities of the woman. The man was the lascivious one; his animal passions were the ones which needed to be curbed. The pure, asexual woman would be the one to do it and thus restore order in the family and by extension in society itself. See Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly*, 18 (Summer 1966), 151-174, for a summary of this point of view.

<sup>18</sup>The social argument of the *Peace Maker* has been emphasized in this paper, but that argument is integrally connected with and receives its intellectual justification from an argument for the nature of true religious authority. A discussion of the relationship of the religious and social argument of the *Peace Maker* and "Discourse" to contemporary Mormon values is presented in C. Jess Groesbeck, "Psychosexual Identity and the Marriage Relationship," *Dialogue*, 2 (Spring 1967), 130-135.

<sup>19</sup>Divorce policy, like marriage practice and other aspects of antebellum American life, was also in flux. Between 1800 and 1870, fairly drastic changes took place in the legal grounds for divorce in many states. During this period, a number of states and territories, including Indiana, Illinois, Connecticut, Maine, Washington, Louisiana, and Arizona adopted "omnibus" clauses which in practice permitted the courts and legislatures to grant divorces almost at their discretion. Utah adopted such a clause in 1852. Restrictions on the remarriage of divorced parties also were eased. Following the Civil War, a conservative trend developed and much of the earlier liberal legislation was repealed. For a detailed analysis of changes in English and American marriage and divorce policy over the past several hundred years, see George Elliott Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions, Chiefly in England and the United States*, 3 vols. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1904). A convenient summary of American divorce trends in the nineteenth century is found in James Harwood Barnett, *Divorce and the American Divorce Novel, 1858-1937: A Study in Literary Reflections of Social Influences* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1939), 15-68.

The development of early Utah's relatively flexible divorce policy and its relationship to plural marriage and to the idealization of marriage as an eternal relationship and basis of social stability deserves careful study. Any such analysis would have to be based largely on manuscript material, since questions of marriage and divorce were handled primarily by the Church not the courts in early Utah. While divorce was strongly discouraged in Utah, especially in cases of temple marriages, divorce nevertheless appears to have been fairly widespread during the difficult early days of Utah settlement. In addition to the problems of early Utah settlement, plural marriage itself undoubtedly placed special stresses on marital relationships in the period.

For evidence of Brigham Young's strong official disapproval of divorce, especially when requested by the man, see the *Journal of Discourses*, 8:202 and 17:119, *Historian's Office Journal, 1858-1859 Book*, p. 11 (December 15, 1858), and *Historian's Office Journal, 1858-1859 Book*, p. 15 (December 17, 1858). These citations were kindly called to my attention courtesy of D. Michael Quinn. See also Herbert Ray Larsen, "'Familism' in Mormon Social Structure" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Utah, 1954), 201-205; Kimball Young, *Isn't One Wife Enough?* (New York: Holt, 1954), 226-240; and D. Michael Quinn, "Organizational Development and Social Origins of the Mormon Hierarchy, 1832-1932: A Prosopographical Study" (M.A. thesis, University of Utah, 1973), 246-291. The Utah divorce law passed on March 6, 1852, is found in *Acts, Resolutions and Memorials, Passed at the Several Annual Sessions of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah* (Great Salt Lake City: Joseph Cain, 1855), 162-164.

<sup>20</sup>Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, pp. 146-147.

<sup>21</sup>Lucy Walker Kimball, Statement. Copied for the Federal Writers Project, 1940, 5. A slightly longer original manuscript is held in the Church Archives.

<sup>22</sup>Wilford Woodruff, Journal, Church Archives, June 15, 1851. This and the following entry were called to my attention by D. Michael Quinn.

<sup>23</sup>Woodruff, Journal, June 2, 1857. Compare this final play on words with the *Peace Maker*, 8: "Adultery signifies simply, the act which adulterates, legally, that which defiles the marriage bed."

<sup>24</sup>James Beck, Notebooks, 1859-1865, I, Church Archives, October 8, 1861.

