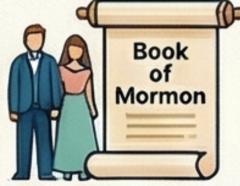


# The Messy Origins of Mormon Polygamy

The introduction of polygamy in early Mormonism was a complex and contradictory process, marked by secrecy, retroactive justifications, and theological inconsistencies.



## 1829: Scripture Condemns Polygamy



The Book of Mormon explicitly calls the practice of having many wives an "abomination."

## Troubling Tactics & Justifications



### Polyandry: Marrying Other Men's Wives

Many of Smith's first plural wives were already married to other faithful Mormon men.

## 1833-36: A Secret Affair Begins

Joseph Smith has a relationship with teen maid Fanny Alger, later called a "dirty, nasty, filthy affair."



### History Was Retroactively Changed

The church now claims the revelation began in 1831 to frame the Fanny Alger affair as a marriage.



## 1835: Church Publicly Denounces Polygamy

A new scripture is added declaring "one man should have one wife."



**"If you will not accuse me,  
I will not accuse you."**

– Joseph Smith, 1841

A teaching used to ensure silence and discourage accountability for his actions.



## 1841-43: Secret Marriages Escalate

Smith marries over 30 women before the official revelation on polygamy is ever written down.



## 1843: The "Revelation" Is Finally Recorded

Doctrine & Covenants 132 is dictated from memory to justify the ongoing practice.