

THE PROPHET'S PROPOSALS: A PATTERN OF COERCION

JOSEPH SMITH'S POLYGAMY PLAYBOOK: 6 COMMON PATTERNS

THE FRAMEWORK FOR INFLUENCE

THE INDOCTRINATION SEQUENCE



THE PROPHET AS THE "MIDDLEMAN"
By positioning himself between a follower and their eternal salvation, Joseph Smith could encur their parents' eternal compass, reframing obedience to him as the highest morality.

"It doesn't have to make sense, it doesn't have to feel right, we just have to do it in the name of obedience."
- Alicia Lee

CONSENT VS. FREE AGENCY
The concept of consent is undermined when a person's eternal refraction is threatened, effectively short-circuiting their ability to exercise true free agency.



1. TARGETING GIRLS IN HIS HOUSEHOLD
Smith often proposed to young women who were living in his home, giving him time to "acclimate them" while holding authority as both prophet and guardian.



2. USING OLDER WIVES AS RECRUITERS
He used existing plural wives as intermediaries to "soften up" and convince younger women, giving him plausible deniability if the proposal was rejected.



3. PROPOSING TO VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS
Many proposals were made to girls in vulnerable situations, such as directly after the death of a parent or while their heads were away on missions.



4. PROMISES AND THREATS
He offered a direct path to excitement for the women and her eternally resurrecting, while threatening that the "gate will be closed forever" for refusing.



5. THE ANGEL WITH A DRAWN SWORD
When rejected, Smith often claimed an angel with a sword had commanded him to practice polygamy, threatening his life if he refused - placing the burden of his safety on the women.



6. THE "RELUCTANT POLYGAMIST" NARRATIVE
This story positioned Smith not as a predator, but as a witness of God's wrath and punishment, making the women's refusal seem like a defiance of God that would harm the prophet.

CASE STUDIES: ILLUSTRATING THE PATTERNS

VULNERABLE LUCY WALKER

VULNERABLE SITUATION (AGE 16)
After her mother, Ged, died, Joseph Smith age 13 was left in charge of her and her father on a mission.

THE PROPOSAL
Smith told her, "I have been conversing with God to take another wife, and you are the woman." He gave her one day to decide.

"If you reject this message the gate will be closed forever against you."
- Joseph Smith to Lucy Walker

A "MARRIAGE" CONFIRMATION
After a three-day fast of prayer, she experienced a "vision" where Smith immediately turned as her divine revelation of the principle.

SACRIFICE, NOT LOVE
In an 1840 court case, Lucy testified of her marriage: "I got out a love match... in a stormy giving up of myself as a sacrifice."

"Oh that the grave would kindly receive me... I am only a child in joys and experience"
- Lucy Walker's journal

CASE STUDY 2: ZINA HUNTINGTON JACOBS

PURSUIT DESPITE MARRIAGE
Zina rejected Smith's initial proposal and married Mary Gaskell. She was the third, Smith refused to oblige the wedding, claiming she had been "given to him by the Lord."

THE ANGEL WITH THE DRAWN SWORD
An angel appears to her in a dream, saying that if she does not marry Smith, she will be killed.

POLYANDRY UNDER DURESS
Zina married and was seduced to Joseph Smith, with her legal husband, Hove, standing by as a witness to the ceremony.

HUSBAND SENT AWAY
After the wedding, Joseph Smith and his wife Hove were sent on a mission, leaving Zina behind.

A FALSE LEGACY
Despite Hove's initial faithfulness and loving letters, Zina eventually abandoned her family to follow Smith, leaving Hove behind.

CASE STUDY 3: EMILY & ELIZA PARTRIDGE

ORPHANED SISTERS IN THE SMITH HOME
After their father's death, Emily and Eliza Partridge, with their teenage siblings, moved to the Smith household.

REJECTION AND RECRUITMENT
After Emily (age 18) initially rejected Smith, he sent her another proposal. Elizabeth Partridge, her sister, used the "witness" and persuaded her.

SECRET, SEPARATE MARRIAGES
Joseph married both sisters in secret, claiming the same time in 1843. Neither witness knew the other was also married to him.

THE SHAM WEDDING
When his first wife, Emma, instantly agreed to marry and "pray" for the Partridge sisters for their father, she staged a fake wedding ceremony to deceive Emma and hide that he was already married to them.

RELATIONSHIP SOURS
Soon after the sham ceremony, Emily's relationship with the Smiths soured, and she eventually moved out of the house.