

Apologetic excuses

Why it was okay (according to apologists):

1. They were exploiting technical loopholes.
2. “Joseph made at least one attempt to teach the doctrine, but it was rejected”
3. “The Saints would have suffered negative consequences”

The contradiction:

To excuse Joseph, Brian Hales has said this:

the fact is that under Illinois statute, he could truthfully answer negatively because state laws prevented any person from entering into more than one marriage.

However, if that is the case, then he cannot also use the same excuse to deny that he wasn't practicing adultery and fornication (is this FairMormon?):

Since Joseph was sealed to his plural wives for either eternity, or for time and eternity, he did not view these relationships as constituting adultery or fornication. Therefore, under Illinois law, as long as Joseph and his plural wives did not live in an “open,” or “public,” manner, they were not guilty of breaking any civil law then in force in Illinois.

Furthermore, this reality [that he was being accused of adultery] explains some of Joseph's public denials, since he could be truthfully said to not be guilty of the charges leveled against him: he was not committing adultery or fornication.