The Representation of Nonmonogamy on Feminist Blogs

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By

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Abstract

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Advisor: Professor Barbara Katz Rothman

When young women look to enhance their understanding or knowledge about sexuality and relationships they often seek out internet resources. Young women, who are looking for knowledge that challenges norms surrounding relationships and sexuality, can go to feminist blogs to discuss and discern these topics. Therefore, it is important to note what these blogs are offering the women who read them and how the blogs challenge compulsory norms in our society.

This thesis will combine a study of content pertaining to nonmonogamy on feminist blogs and a literary analysis of cyberfeminist theories. Through these findings I will determine what information is presented and neglected about nonmonogamy on feminist blogs as a resource for young women.
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Communities are built online. Awareness is spread online. Discussions happen online. Knowledge comes from online sources. When trying to explore where young women would be discovering and discussing intimate relationships and sexuality I looked for community sources online that would be considered a safe and open space. I believe that for young women feminist blogs represent this space. These blogs provide an arena that not only can be used as a knowledge portal, but a place for community building and a source for news and advice.

I am particularly interested in what information is available to young women concerning nonmonogamy, and whether or not feminist blogs are a resource for this information. I am looking at feminist blogs because as the blogger Angi Becker Stevens writes on the Ms. Magazine blog, “although there are polyamorous folks across the political and ideological spectrums, a large number are feminists, progressives and leftists- hardly the people who come to mind when we [first] think of traditional, patriarchal polygamy” (Becker, 2013). For the purposes of this study I will be exploring who is silenced relating to nonmonogamy.

**Research Question**

(R1) *Are those who are nonmonogamous well represented or represented at all?*

(R2) *How is nonmonogamy portrayed on feminist blogs?*
When women use the internet they often go to places that create communities, such as blogs and various forms of social media. Knowledge, information and interactions within online community spaces transform into the lived experience for many women. This extends beyond the assumed shopping, recipe and health sites that are commonly thought to make up a woman’s internet usage (Lee, 2011; Fallows, 2005). Absorbing advice on everyday affairs, relationships and lifestyles online translates to knowledge and actions for women offline. This is especially true for the feminist activist community. Activists spread news of events, legislation and petitions through digital spaces. Emily Nussbaum describes how young women spread information about the SlutWalk protests in her piece “The Rebirth of the Feminist Manifesto.” Starting in Toronto and spreading across the globe young women held protests to call for policy changes surrounding street harassment and sexual assault. But it wasn’t just word of mouth or email exchanges that spread awareness of the upcoming protests; the main source of reporting on SlutWalk came from blogs, Facebook and Twitter (Nussbaum, 2011). Courtney Martin’s article “Girls Tweeting (Not Twerking) Their Way to Power” builds upon Nussbaum’s piece. Martin describes how girls are finding empowerment on social media platforms to create great change (Martin, 2013).

Scholars who study cybertheory such as Nakamura, Herring and Blood explain that there is so much content out there that users seek to look through it in a valuable way (Herring et al. 2004; Blood, 2002; FemTechNet, 2013). We must use filters that allow us to do that, such as blogs. Within the vast content on the internet, I am using feminist blogs as my filter for this paper. While certainly not the preferred genre of all women, women who seek out information about sexuality and intimacy that may resist norms have a chance of finding that information on
feminist blogs. This is not to say that women seeking information about sexuality and intimacy that abides by norms do not seek this information on the internet/blogs, but this information is already woven throughout most mainstream discussions.

The feminist sphere usually considers itself a place open to peoples, practices, and lifestyles unacknowledged and devalued by traditional views on gender and sexuality. Yet mainstream feminism still has its limits and borders of what it deems acceptable. Where do the blogs explored draw the line for acceptable forms of relationships including monogamy? When it comes to nonmonogamy, how inclusive are the writers? How are polyamory and other forms of nonmonogamy represented? I hypothesize that when nonmonogamy is discussed on feminist blogs much of what I will find will be similar to a belief summarized as “people should be allowed to have whatever romantic relationships they wish, but monogamy is for me,” with little discussion or analysis of why people choose monogamy as the default.
Literature Review

Blogs

As Rachel Loews proclaims in her article on feminism and blogging, “a blog is an always unfinished, always provisional place” (Loews, 2010). Blogs allow ideas to morph with changing times and thoughts with the ability to constantly update them. Blogs also provide a progressive place for feminist in the academic community to engage and study the public. Loews goes on to state that blogging can dismantle the traditional organization of the academy that often creates distance between itself and the public. The widespread use of blogs by both academics and non-academics can hold academic fields accountable not only for their developments, but also for their barriers to public discourse. For fields such as feminist studies which aim to advance unheard communities, blogging is crucial. Blogging is a space where academics can study and create new feminist theory. More importantly, feminist blogs can illustrate to feminist studies scholars how best to represent the people about whom they theorize.

It is incredibly difficult to get a clear reading on how many blogs exist across all genres. Some say over a hundred million; others over four hundred and fifty million (Chapman, 2011; Haynes, 2010). It is difficult to obtain a firm number because blog platforms such as WordPress give public numbers on bloggers, other sites do not. Furthermore, to get further numbers on which of those blogs are actively used is even more difficult. Many scholars studying blogs are in agreement that many blog authors are young people. A study by Sysomos claims that 73.5% of blogs are written by those under 35 (Sysomos, 2010).

It is less clear whether men or women dominate the blogosphere (Trammell & Keshelashvili,
Sysomos claims women write more blogs by 1.8%, but other sources say men write 20% more blogs than women (Sysomos, 2010 & Rampton, 2012). Trammell and Keshelashvili’s study on blogs did find a pattern in the ways women communicate on blogs and why. Women tend to prefer intimate communication and self-disclose more. In addition, they write more personal information and/or long-essay format blogs. This is in contrast to the blogs authored by men, which lean towards short verses and are dominated by links found around the internet such as news content. While women, like men, do seek out information on the internet, they are also concerned with socializing and building a community.

The cyber-theorist Lisa Nakamura, argues that often many think “women’s” social networking and online communities are frivolous. Yet, this is where women are participating online and it is worth studying (FemTechNet, 2013). Jessie Daniels illustrates that studies show that women have faster rates of participation online and girls and teens are forming their identities somewhat through their online participation. Furthermore, she states that some people of color and LGBT people affirm and negotiate their identities online (Daniels, 2009).

A key element of identity is one’s sexuality. The discussion of sexuality related to one’s identity is often, and inevitably, discussed in the feminist community. Scholars Stavrositu and Sundar, in their study on female blogging, found that women gain empowerment from the sense of community on blogs (Stavrositu & Sundar, 2008). Bearing in mind that empowerment means something different for different people in different contexts, in general empowerment leads to the sense of control over oneself and identity (Page & Czuba, 1999). Therefore, if one is reading

1 Nakamura directly references Pinterest.
blogs to negotiate and affirm their sexuality and identity they will have a better awareness of that identity through their growing sense of power.

Radhika Gajjalla names the way we build communities online as “imagining.” We imagine the audience who is reading the blog posts and who constitutes the members of the community (Gajjala, 2004). For those reading and writing on feminist blogs they construct the community based on communications and a shared understanding of feminism. One cannot easily define this shared understanding, but it begins with a very broad notion that feminism is the striving for social, economic, and political equality between people. It becomes more nuanced with an understanding that this can only be accomplished/gained by fighting for complete social justice and a breakdown of hegemonic structures, including the meaning of what it is to be “a man” or “a woman”.

While many feminist blogs hope to deconstruct the language given to us, they are often still confined by hegemonic language. Language is the medium we use to construct our society. We establish what words mean within our society to communicate effectively; therefore words that convey desire, emotion and relationships must be defined to be significant. If we have decided that the definition of romantic relationships is a relationship between two people who are monogamous or that romantic commitment means indefinite monogamy, this is established as the norm. Often, how we define a word is associated with how we decide what is natural or “right.” Growing up with this language surrounding relationships and monogamy, people who feel monogamy does not fit their lives and identity face internal and external barriers to being understood and seen.
As Margaret Robinson notes having a visible identity not only requires a clear message, but an audience capable of understanding the message (Robinson, 2013). For those who are nonmonogamous to have authority and legitimacy over their own emotions, desires and relationships, others in society have to disassociate themselves from their preconceived notions of relationships and monogamy.

Nakamura indicates that the internet today is a place of great commercialization and commercialization shies away from overt forms of prejudice (Nakamura, video dialogues, 2013). As Jessie Daniels discusses in the chapter “Blogher and Blogalicious: Gender, Race + The Political Economy of Women’s Blogging Conferences”, the flow of money and investments represent societal prejudice. Daniels explains that white women and mothers writing “Mommy Blogs” have funds and resources for their blogs that are not afforded to black women and mothers. Companies investing in white mothers do not see themselves as investing because of race, but because these mothers are seen as a better investment with brands that will reach greater audiences. Yet, the investments catalyze a larger audience. When the white mothers’ blogs grow, yet fail to address concerns across varying races and classes, other women continue to be shut out from those online communities. For example, if the mommy blog promotes its investors expensive products and fails to discuss affordable options, low-income women are excluded from the discussion of what products are best for them.
Contrary to beliefs in the early days of the internet, digital space is not an arena devoid of race, age, gender and sexuality. As authors like Lisa Nakamura and Michelle Wright argue, identities are reinforced through the use of language and the cyber medium mimics the language used offline. With this in mind, we can study blogs in cyberspace understanding that the participants are working around compatible offline identities. This identity might be one they inhabit in the real world, one they hope to become, one they want to role-play, or one they wish to explore privately. The assuming of identity that is not one’s own online is sometimes referred to as “identity tourism” (Nakamura, 2000). With identity tourism, one can momentarily appropriate another’s race or gender to explore much like a tourist.

However, Jessie Daniels declares that research today suggests more people use the internet to affirm identities rather than masquerade as others (Daniels, 2012). It can be as simple as reading news sources one knows will have the angle and information you are seeking to affirm your political identity. This is in direct correlation to the filters Nakamura describes. With the overwhelming amount of data online, we will often seek out information within the narrow confines of our already established knowledge. Meaning, for example, I will seek out feminist blogs in my spare time or update myself on current events. I would not seek out or read anti-feminist blogs unless it was for the purpose of comparing ideology to confirm my feminist stance.

We see that there are various reasons to enter a feminist online community. Some seek to construct, affirm or negotiate their identity searching for a sense of belonging. Others would not define themselves as feminist, but explore these communities to see what they offer for a variety
of reasons: to explore ideology contrary to their own, to explore a community they do not feel comfortable participating in offline in their live communities, or to play at an identity they may embrace permanently but wish to play momentarily.

**Nonmonogamy**

Nonmonogamy is often viewed as on the fringes of sexuality and particularly threatening to Western norms. The invisibility of nonmonogamous communities in mainstream discourse forces nonmonogamous people into online arenas. Internet forums, blogs, and listservs are where nonmonogamous people build their communities (Ritchie & Baker 2006). Many blogs exist specifically for nonmonogamous communities, yet these blogs do not illustrate how nonmonogamy is portrayed in outside communities.

What does nonmonogamy mean? Nonmonogamy applies to people whose intimate romantic relationship may be with more than one person, whether it is of a purely sexual nature or not, and who in some way do not consider themselves monogamous. All parties in the relationship(s) are consenting adults who have a nonmonogamous identity and are not participating in infidelity.

**Different Forms**

Most of the academic literature surrounding nonmonogamy focuses on three categories: polyamory, swinging, and gay open relationships (Baker and Langdridge, 2010). While these are the three categories most often referenced and studied, they are rarely fixed categories and identities for people. There are always exceptions. The post-modern view of fluid sexuality is not solely reserved for the gender one is attracted to. Like those who resist, bend and adopt the labels
of gay, straight and bisexual etc. there are those who do the same with labels of nonmonogamy. The table on the next page created by writer and polyamory activist Frank Veau gives us an idea of how complicated labels and relationships can be.
For many people, the first association with nonmonogamy is its reference to polygamy. Polygamy’s prominence in public discourse rests on its negative connotations with religious organizations, a view based on paternalistic hierarchical organization (Smiler, 2011). Often these religious fractions do not have the same standards of self-realization and equality many deem are necessary for true polyamory as defined previously. This leads to most academic literature and/or progressive groups dealing with polyamory in the United States steering away from discussing polygamy within the confines of polyamory. The reason given that first and foremost nonmonogamy is seen as a consensual independent decision between adults.

Polyamory is frequently used as a synonym for nonmonogamy especially in colloquial online discussions. I use these terms interchangeably later in this paper when discussing direct content on blogs. I do this because the authors of the blog article do so and polyamory is the type of nonmonogamy most often discussed. Often the distinction between the two is important to those who only participate in external sexual relationships and want to distance themselves from the “amory” aspect of polyamory. However, there are always exceptions for those within purely sexual relationships who prefer to identify as polyamorous rather than nonmonogamous. As mentioned, the relationship models of nonmonogamous, polyamorous, swinger and open are rarely fixed identities for a whole community. Internal pressure, external pressure and societal connotation influence how one may want to identify. For example, it is hard for many to distinguish infidelity from nonmonogamy—if you are not monogamous, you are cheating on a partner. This implication would lead one to desire distancing themselves from the term nonmonogamy. Furthermore, the term nonmonogamy reinforces monogamy as the norm of which one is not.
The research and theories on polyamory have many trends, but no exact definition. Polyamory can be between a couple that seeks out relationships outside of their primary relationship, together or separately. It can be the inclusion of more than one person into a closed relationship, polyfidelity, meaning three or more people who do not seek out relationships outside of that primary multi-person relationship. There is no single way to be polyamorous. However, often in the literature, polyamory is quick to distinguish itself from other nonmonogamous categories like swinging.

Swinging is often defined as the practice of couples seeking solely sexual relationships outside of the primary couple, drawing boundaries at having an emotional attachment. Even so, there is also the argument that swinging can challenge what we recognize as love or commitment (Baker and Langdridge 2010). For many polyamorous people the sole purpose of the multiple relationships is for emotional bonding and attachment.

Like heterosexual relationships, queer relationships can take various forms. Since queer people were already forced to establish relationships outside the norm there is often greater acceptance and practice of nonmonogamy. A recurrent focus in academic literature is on bisexuals in nonmonogamous relationships. This is concurrent to the broader societal associations with bisexuality. Christian Klesse notes that western cultures view sexual orientation as a dichotomy between heterosexuality and homosexuality. Bisexuality is not seen as its own orientation; therefore is viewed as a combination of heterosexuality and homosexuality. Consequently for some, they feel they cannot actively identify as a bisexual unless they are in a nonmonogamous
relationship with at least one man and one woman. Many of the bisexual interviewees in Klasse’s study rejected this notion and yet proclaimed that the hegemonic view of bisexuals does affect their own sense of identity. They found that monogamous relationships with one gender undermined their bisexual identity (Klasse, 2005). The western dichotomies of heterosexuality and homosexuality as well as monogamy and infidelity lend itself well to studies of those who live in between.

**Debates**

There is a debate over whether or not nonmonogamy is natural for human relationships and the argument relies on historical context. There are numerous academic articles that give historical archival support to nonmonogamous/monogamous forms of relationships. However, I often find the debates relying on historical evidence insubstantial. Offering past human behavior to support how we should behave now is rarely a substantive argument for those wishing to move towards progress. There are countless historical actions and ideals that our society no longer deems relevant; relationships should be held to the same standard. Given the ebbs and flows of societal norms, I want to structure an argument based solely on restructuring the current climate.

Another common argument surrounding nonmonogamy is that it is a biological and therefore naturally fixed state, meaning one is born with genes for a nonmonogamous sexual orientation. This forms the stance that polyamory should be labeled a sexual orientation afforded the same rights given to gays and lesbians (Robinson, 2013). However as Margaret Robinson argues, stating an identity as immutable is at risk if one changes that fixed characteristic. Many of the bisexual women in Robinson’s study chose monogamy and/or polyamory at different strategic
moments (Robinson, 2013). For some women currently in a perceived monogamous relationship they were open to a nonmonogamous relationship or had been in one previously. Therefore, if polyamory is a fixed characteristic, does practicing monogamy render one’s nonmonogamous sexual orientation null? Why must one’s identity be unchanging to be authentic? Robinson argues for framing polyamory as a strategic identity. Robinson uses Reicher, Spears, and Haslam’s description of “identity as one that serves a political, social or interpersonal function and are adopted by in-groups living under the surveillance of powerful out-groups” (Robinson, 2013). Nonmonogamy as a strategic identity allows for a fuller view of sexuality and its mutable categories.

Legislative arguments, like biological ones, for nonmonogamy often follow discussion of gay and lesbian rights. Legislative rights for gays and lesbians in the United States, including marriage and child rearing laws, are granted on a human rights basis—that one is born gay and therefore this is a fixed characteristic. Some advocating for nonmonogamy and polyamory see it as a sexual orientation. Advancing polyamory with a “born this way” argument leaves a lot of those practicing nonmonogamy, in its various ways and forms that may not be written in the law, out of the discussion. One does not have to currently be practicing polyamory to consider themselves polyamorous. Sexual orientation is written in the law as immutable. In reality, for some, sexual orientation can shift and transform like any characteristic. The state and legislation should recognize the flexibility of sexual orientation, among other things like gender, but legislation is rarely a place for nuance. Whether or not one’s nonmonogamous identity is fixed or chosen the associated basic rights should exist.
Establishing nonmonogamy as a basic right requires an audience that understands the problematic nature of traditional relationships in addition to an acceptance of gay relationships. Nowhere is this seen more than in discussions surrounding the passing of gay marriage laws. The foundation of gay marriage laws rested on the notion that it was just like heterosexual marriage just with couples of the same sex. They were still two people who are in love who want to commit the rest of their lives to one another. Not a lot of room is left for one who may want to love, commit and receive tax benefits with two other people for the rest of their lives. Opponents of gay marriage cited fear of resulting polyamory as a reason gay marriage laws should not pass (Charen, 2013). While gay marriage laws would not have gotten very far with polyamorist agendas attached some believe it should be the next fight in marriage law for equality (Nelson, 2013).

The state legitimizes what we consider marriage and family. Beyond direct consequences like lack of financial rewards from the state, society can easily condemn your relationship and family model without that authoritative backing. As Martha Fineman notes in “The Autonomy Myth: A Theory of Dependency” the United States government has a vested interested in keeping the nuclear family. With a government that provides minimal support when it comes to living standards such as health care, it is the family that provides assistance. When relationships are complicated by not being legally-recognized two-person marriages, people start to question the structure of society and who should provide support for whom. Yet the state should form its laws from the structure the citizens give it. If society is progressing and changing, the state and its laws should bend to fit the new mold. As Fineman argues, the state must change with the changing norms and not force new norms into old molds (Fineman, 2005).
Research Method

Within the framework of feminist blogs I have chosen to study the blogs and material directed at young women. Authors and commenters of articles on feminist blogs are generally in their twenties and thirties. Commonly, young women are more open with using these online communities and these blogs are geared towards younger women.

In choosing to focus on young women I also hope to substantiate my own claims and partial reasoning for completing a thesis on this topic. Many of the young women I know, in and out of those who study gender theory and feminist groups, peruse and participate in these feminist blogs. In addition to being young, these women are of varying backgrounds, races, classes, and sexual orientation. I want to know what these blogs are actually offering us in terms of understanding monogamy and begin to critically analyze the information that is being absorbed. Even if one assumes that the majority of women reading the blogs participate in monogamy, it heeds the dismantling of patriarchal values to analyze compulsory monogamy. One of the best ways to do this is to examine the way those not participating in the institution of monogamy are represented.

I set up the following parameters in my selection of feminist blogs to study. The blogs must somewhere indicate that they are a feminist blog, either through their “About” section, mission, description of editors/contributors/staff or posts. With no definitive answer to the question “What is a feminist”, I strive for blogs that meet the definition cited earlier of the social, economic and political equality of peoples. In addition, the blogs I have chosen are not representative of all blogs that may be considered feminist. With varying definition of feminism
there will certainly be varying opinion on what a feminist blog is and which of them uphold feminist standards the best. However, to study what is reaching the feminist blog-reading community I chose to study mostly popular feminist blogs. I define popular feminist blogs as the feminist blogs with the highest readership and that are routinely referenced, mentioned, and cross-listed on other feminist blogs. Finding the most popular blogs came from other blogs and articles linking to these feminist blogs, such as Emily Nussbaum’s list of feminist sites in her article “The Rebirth of the Feminist Manifesto”, Forbes’ “The 100 Best Websites for Women” (Casserly, 2013), and Google searches. In addition, the site Alexa was used to note a site’s popularity. Alexa ranks all websites based on daily visitors and page views in a three-month period.

The blogs with the highest readership are often geared towards white middle-class heterosexual women, evidenced by the authors, advertising and content. Therefore, I also included some blogs with lower readership that are geared towards other groups of women such as queer women and women of color. There was greater difficulty in trying to find blogs directly oriented to queer and/or women of color when using the previously mentioned methods. Rarely do these blogs show up on searches, lists, or cross-links and references to women/ feminist blogs. For example, the site AfterEllen only shows up when searching directly for lesbian or queer women blogs, not feminist blogs. Therefore, I often relied on established knowledge of blogs for queer women and/or women of color and searched directly for these categories.

Included in this study are fifteen feminist blogs all based within the United States, but not regional or city-specific. All the blogs have more than one contributor, in an effort to explore
community spaces. They all have a place for community discussions, i.e. enabled commenting, although commenting is sometimes monitored. The blogs must be comprised of mostly text, meaning visual blogs like Tumblr were not considered for the study. I elected not to study comments on the articles as they are numerous and it is questionable whether they provide a valuable representation of what the article is offering. While the comments could offer an example of how readers digest the article, there are too many factors making this information unreliable. For example, commentators can comment anonymously and on discussion topics unrelated to said article.

For many of the blogs, especially older and more popular ones, the articles are endless. With limited time and ability to read all articles on a blog site, I searched within the blog for the keywords: polyamory, nonmonogamy, and non-monogamy. This limits the extent of content read that could potentially represent nonmonogamy or in some way correlate to nonmonogamy. For example, the article could discuss open relationships and/or swinging without using the identified keywords. However, the direct use of polyamory and nonmonogamy allowed me to understand if the blog communities directly reference the identities of nonmonogamy and polyamory, and to see how these identities are represented. However, this did not always indicate that the whole article discussed nonmonogamy. Being a qualitative study, the exact numbers in my discussion are less important. What the presence of these terms does indicate is the ability to recognize nonmonogamy and polyamory as an identity. For example, rather than discussing acts, using impersonal phrases such as “someone who has relationships with more than one person at a time or someone who is not monogamous”, one can discuss people, as in “that person is nonmonogamous.”
I decided on the following blogs:

**Blogs Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLOG</th>
<th>Alexa Ranking (March 2014)</th>
<th>FOCUSED COMMUNITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After Ellen</td>
<td>32,668</td>
<td>Queer/Lesbian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Straddle</td>
<td>36,510</td>
<td>Queer/Lesbian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitch Media</td>
<td>69,682</td>
<td>No Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crunk Feminist Collective</td>
<td>12,520,032</td>
<td>Women of Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feministe</td>
<td>181,067</td>
<td>No Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feministing</td>
<td>53,502</td>
<td>No Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hairpin</td>
<td>18,702</td>
<td>No Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jezebel</td>
<td>1,916</td>
<td>No Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Magazine Blog</td>
<td>121,417</td>
<td>No Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racialicious</td>
<td>253,796</td>
<td>Women of Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rookie</td>
<td>48,233</td>
<td>Teenage Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociological Images</td>
<td>37,003</td>
<td>No Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Transadvocate</td>
<td>779,942</td>
<td>Trans*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velvet Park</td>
<td>1,547,554</td>
<td>Queer/Lesbian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xoJane</td>
<td>6,414</td>
<td>No distinction</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 2- Blog Table

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2 www.alexa.com/siteinfo
## Findings Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLOG</th>
<th>Articles Mentioning Nonmonogamy or Polyamory</th>
<th>Advice Columns Featuring Nonmonogamy</th>
<th>Articles and Commentary Mentioning Monogamy</th>
<th>Articles Mentioning both Nonmonogamy Featuring Infidelity</th>
<th>Articles Mentioning both Nonmonogamy Featuring Jealousy</th>
<th>Articles Mentioning both Marriage and Nonmonogamy</th>
<th>Articles Mentioning both Queer People and Nonmonogamy</th>
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3 Stats from March 2014
Table 3 - Finding Table

Notes on the Table Above

As referenced earlier, in how I found articles, using keywords can limit and forgo contexts that would otherwise reference the word or idea. So, when noting the number of times categories above appear, such as jealousy or cheating, it is with the understanding that those words as concepts could have appeared in other forms. For example, one could use the word envious in place of jealous or describe jealousy in a phrase such as “He wished I was spending more time with him rather than John.” With more time, this study could have attempted to cast a wider net on context and ideas that may represent the categories above. However, for some categories I was able to include a wider range of words than those listed in the table. For infidelity I also noted when the word “cheating” was used. For marriage I also noted when “marry”, “wife” or “husband” were used. With queer I also noted when gay, lesbian, bisexual, homosexual, and LGBT were used. Furthermore every mark in a category does not mean that the whole article discussed that notion just when that word (or its equivalent) was used. This meant that some
articles did not offer much information to analyze how nonmonogamy was represented.

**Analysis**

Running through every discussion mentioning nonmonogamy on the select blogs is the underlying theme of how our culture views nonmonogamy from the lens of a society with patriarchal values that uphold compulsory monogamy. Therefore, discussions surround the questions: How do we navigate monogamy? What limitations and freedoms do we have? How do I approach monogamy as a feminist? In answering these questions, blogs held conversations in a variety of ways.

At the beginning of my research, the intent was to analyze each post within its own blog and compare it across all blogs noting the differences, similarities and what is lacking in each. However, the more articles I read the more I realized that there are not clear trends about nonmonogamy and polyamory on these blogs. The absence of discussion reinforces the notion that nonmonogamy is still something on the outskirts of societal acceptance. Yet, nonmonogamy is present on feminist blogs. While there are not a great number of articles there are a few subjects areas where it appears most often.

**Advice Articles**

Nonmonogamy was frequently discussed in these blogs within advice articles, where readers send in questions and “experts” or astute authors respond. The presence of nonmonogamy in advice columns on blogs outside the nonmonogamous community indicates that those identifying as or curious about nonmonogamy want a space beyond established confines to
discuss the identity. If nonmonogamy was more accepted, the identity could be discussed in varying spaces. Additionally, the number of advice articles discussing nonmonogamy indicates a lack of stories and news in regular articles of nonmonogamous experiences. For example, the reader Wavering-by-Worcester on Feministing wrote into the Ask Professor Foxy column wondering how to tell her parents about her polyamorous relationship. If there were more representations of polyamorous people, perhaps the advice in this article would have already been discussed in a polyamorous author’s story of their experience. Professor Foxy was able to relay advice, not based on personal experience, and offered a thoughtful answer on possible discussions with parents (Foxy, 2009). While not all advice columnist use personal experience as the base of his or her advice one can assume that it helps. A reader on the blog Bitch Media asked a similar question regarding telling coworkers and friends about her polyamorous status. While the unnamed reader was no longer afraid to come out as gay since it is gaining more acceptance in society, polyamory she felt was less understood and accepted. Again the advice columnist, Ms. Opinionated, responded with an astute answer urging the reader to do what was most comfortable and that she had a right to privacy (Opinionated, 2013).

Neither Ms. Opinionated nor Professor Foxy state if they are nonmonogamist, this may be for the same reason they use pseudonyms. A pseudonym for a regular column could allow for the most appropriate blog contributor to respond or perhaps they wish to professionalize themselves by remaining distant so they shy away from identifiers. The pseudonym also lessens unwanted personal attacks that sometimes accompany writing for blogs. While the way the author identifies can be irrelevant, it can also infringe, for better or worse, on the dialogue. This rings especially true for the authors who use their real names and identities, such as Anna Pulley who
writes an advice column on *AfterEllen* “The Hook Up”. Pulley has answered several questions on polyamory and nonmonogamy and has never directly stated if she is nonmonogamous or monogamous. However, when answering a reader’s question on how to deal with being attracted to women other than her girlfriend, she responds that monogamy is the sacrifice in being with someone long-term (Pulley, 2013). As opposed to the reader, the reader’s girlfriend is not interested in nonmonogamy. As contrast to Pulley’s answer, authors identifying as nonmonogamous do not often use the rhetoric of sacrifice.

Pulley’s dialogue with the advice seekers is very personal as she reveals experiences with her own girlfriend and revelations on online dating. She also makes her beliefs clear for instance when she states, “polyamory is a relationship model, not a sexual orientation” (Pulley, 2013). Pulley does indicate that this belief is debatable and orientation is a limiting term. Since she is offered by the blog as the expert to some degree her advice influences people's thought process. Her answers should allow for more openness for those who think differently. However, Pulley’s does offer some valuable advice on polyamory in other articles. For instance, without naming nonmonogamy or polyamory, Pulley helps a reader discover that “open relationships” can present itself in numerous ways.

Some advice columns featured on the blogs were unique in that there were guest authors brought on as experts and they were not part of an ongoing series. This allowed for additional perspectives to regular authors and greater insight than would normally be present. For example *The Hairpin* featured a nonmonogamous couple in a two-part article titled “Ask a Nonmonogamous Couple.” No other articles were found featuring two people in a
nonmonogamous relationship, perhaps due to the autonomous nature of nonmonogamy. The people in the couple are both the primary partners to the other, therefore their answers and approach gave insight into how a primary couple can communicate clearly about their needs in a nonmonogamous relationship (Non-monogamous couple, 2012). One reader asked how to approach talking to her boyfriend about nonmonogamy after giving him a book on the subject he in turn never read. They were each able to respond why this wouldn’t work if they were in the same situation. The nonmonogamous man responded that he would not read that book either and that the reader was avoiding direct and honest communication. While the nonmonogamous woman responded that even if the reader was able to get her boyfriend to read the book they could have widely different interpretations. The multi-person approach to advice allows for multiple answers with a greater probability of that advice helping the reader.

Marriage

Nonmonogamy is also routinely discussed within the topic of marriage. Even though there was an increase in discussion following the passing of gay marriage legislation in various states, many feel there is room for other non-traditional forms of marriage. Mandy Van Deven on Bitch Media proclaims that Proposition 8 in California provided a platform for nonmonogamous people to demand alternative family structures be seen as legitimate (Van Deven, 2009). Additionally, as Irene Monroe on Velvet Park reminds us same-sex marriage as a civil right was considered a ridiculous argument not so long ago (Monroe, 2013).

The polygamy most often thought of is polygyny, one man with multiple wives, and is confined to guarded communities where the women have less autonomy and consent in their marriage.
decisions. Sesali Bowen on *Feministing* discusses the problematic nature of the public most often being exposed to polyamory through television shows about religious fundamentalist polygamy, such as *Big Love*. She illustrates that this keeps nonmonogamous people as a caricature of an odd “other” (Bowen, 2013).

When not discussing polygamy, blogs often mention nonmonogamy within marriage in the confines of infidelity, open marriages, and monogamy. Examples range from questioning compulsory monogamy and what infidelity means for the institution of marriage to giving examples of open marriages.

A contributor to *Feministing*, Jenny Block, shares her experience in an open marriage. Block discusses how others view and judge her marriage without introspection into their own relationships. She also wonders how much easier navigating relationships for women would be if they were not brought up in a society that “makes it essential for women to find their Prince Charming” (Jessica, 2007). Sara Mirk at *Bitch Media* states something similar in a post with guest contributors. Mirk articulates that we take monogamy for granted as the goal of relationships. “Hooking up is fine but someday you’ll find one person you want to be with forever and you’ll have beautiful babies and there will be rainbows.” Aided by her guest Eric Berkowitz, a lawyer and author on civil rights and sex, Mirk explains why monogamy feels so expected. Monogamy is a concept that has been carefully shaped and policed throughout history, from the first death penalty being for adultery on the part of women in ancient Mesopotamia to some current U.S. states allowing impotence as grounds for divorce (Mirk, 2013).
Jealousy and Infidelity

Throughout the blogs studied the authors are repeatedly required to negotiate and describe ideas surrounding jealousy. Articles on nonmonogamy are more likely to discuss jealousy than not. For many, jealousy and its links to infidelity appears to be the largest obstacle between monogamy and nonmonogamy.

Authors debate whether or not jealousy is an innate emotion we feel about our partners’ relationships with others. Some writers like Frau Sally Benz on Feministe argue this type of jealousy is about culturally-accepted possession (Benz, 2009). We consider our partners to “be mine” and “have only eyes for me;” their intimate and romantic notions belong to their partner. Relationships are a zero-sum game of emotions and if a partner “strays” their feelings aren’t genuine. More often though, authors do not attempt to dismantle their feelings of jealousy and accept them as natural. For example, Amy Rose’s article on Rookie describes her experience in open relationships she noted jealousy “as an intractable factable of life” (Rose, 2014). Most of us do not live in a societal vacuum where we can easily escape notions and feeling we are taught, so jealousy is a fact of life. Yet, Rose steered the discussion towards “issues with her own brain” rather than analyzing how these feelings were learned through the culture.

While giving examples of couples that successfully or unsuccessfully navigate open relationships can be done in a revealing and progressive way often discussions lead to the topic of infidelity and become blurred and confusing. One argument that frequently occurs for nonmonogamy, on blogs and off, is that humans are by nature nonmonogamous and cannot help the basic need to cheat. However, whether or not nonmonogamy is instinctual remains irrelevant to the fact the
infidelity is an action people are capable of not performing. There is a place in the discussion of nonmonogamy for why one might desire to cheat on their partner; however, relying on that as a core justification does a disservice to those who practice nonmonogamy. The people featured in many of the advice articles previously mentioned repeatedly state that their relationships are based on honesty and there is no room for infidelity. As the Non-Monogamous Couple of *The Hairpin* stresses an open relationship is “communication bootcamp” you must frequently and honestly communicate feelings (Non-monogamous couple, 2012). Or as Rebecca Hiles at *XO Jane* writes, polyamory is not a form of infidelity; at its core it is about openness and awareness. For most polyamorous people there is no need to cheat because there is an open way to communicate your desires (Hiles, 2013).

*Nonmonogamous Effects on Other Types of Relationships*

Within the limited range of articles directly addressing nonmonogamy there are some outliers that demonstrate the importance of various forms and models of relationships even if you are in heteronormative relationships. Mirk’s discussion on *Bitch Media* exemplified this well. One of the guests, Tristan Taormino, a sex educator who teaches a workshop on nonmonogamy, shared that most people in her workshops are interested in how to set up rules and boundaries in nonmonogamous relationships. From this she said something really valuable for why nonmonogamy exposure on feminist blogs is crucial (Mirk, 2013).

“I think people are looking for models and examples. Not that they want a carbon copy of what those are, but I feel like we have so few role models for people in nonmonogamous relationships that once you start navigating that territory, it’s not like you can look to your
parents, your aunt and uncle, that couple you babysat for five years ago. So, it feels like really uncharted territory. People are constantly being confronted with situations where they want to take responsibility for their own feelings but they also want to grow and learn and get past some of these pre-programmed ideas."

Even beyond the nonmonogamy angle of this statement, many people want ways to navigate relationships that differ from the traditional institutionalized prototypes. Providing relationships models that do not include heterosexuality or monogamy illustrate a whole world of possibilities from the norm. Given models, people who live their lives without a partner, not married, or in gay relationships will have the burden of feeling they are charting un navigated territory eased.

**Queer Relationships**

Queer and nonmonogamous communities were often discussed within the same article. This not only stemmed from discussions of gay marriage, but also from the greater cultural acceptance within queer communities of nonmonogamy indicated by the greater number of discussions of nonmonogamy on queer/lesbian blogs.

As mentioned previously, legislation has a direct effect on our cultural understanding of relationships. Concerns with this problematic structure have been voiced by many queer and non-queer bloggers alike. For instance, Zoya Bailey at *Crunk Feminist Collective* writes that regardless of intimacy level only legal partners and family are recognized as been able to make legal and social choices concerning you. “Our legal system actively limits who we can call on which reflects and exacerbates social beliefs about relationships” (Bailey, 2011).
As a result of laws influencing social beliefs those in non-normative relationships feel pressure to conform to the extent they can. Rose, in *Autostraddle*, confirms that queer people feel they must fit into the “marriage-and-kids formula”. Yet, Rose expands to reveal that the influence occurs in both directions. As heterosexuals become more aware of alternative models for relationships, common in gay relationships, they are embracing the non-normative models (Rose, 2011).

**Effects on Gender Dynamics**

Discussing nonmonogamy also has implications for how we view gender in relationships. On the blog *Sociological Images*, which has an admittedly academic bent as all the authors are professors of sociology, an article on compulsory monogamy was cross-listed on several other blogs such as *Jezebel*. This article was somewhat unique in that there are few articles in the blogosphere that discuss gender norms in relationships and how nonmonogamy can dismantle gender roles. The article by Mimi Schippers discussed how the character Katniss in *The Hunger Games* has two love interests. With one love interest she takes on the traditional masculine characteristics of protecting while with the other she nurtures and lets him lead, taking on the traditional feminine role. Schippers explains that in taking on both these roles Katniss exemplifies Candace West’s and Don Zimmerman’s theory of how one “does” gender rather than simply is a gender. They state that we play the part of our gender in relation to how others are doing gender. Schippers goes on to note that in making Katniss choose between the two love interests she is limiting her full-self and range of character. In heterosexual relationships, we are limited to play out feminine or masculine roles in juxtaposition to the other person of the opposite gender. However, if one is involved with multiple people, whether they are of the
opposite gender or not, they can perform that gender in different ways with different people (Schippers, 2013).

The blogger Frau Sally Benz also discusses gender dynamics for nonmonogamous relationships on Feministe. She notes that for monogamous relationships, especially heterosexual ones, we have assumptions about the actions and dynamics of the relationship, “and this often means that mono relationships aren’t explicitly negotiated; the power relations within in them are often not the subject of discussion” (Benz, 2009). Since monogamous relationships are the norm and there are examples everywhere we have standards set for how one performs in the relationship.
Discussion

Like nonmonogamy, cyberfeminism has no exact definition. Some consider cyberfeminism to be feminist political action online; others as feminists who work in technology; and, more often, as the struggle for feminists ideals within technology and/or the cyberworld. In general this categorizes people within cyberfeminism into two factions, those who have an idealist version of online engagement as the freeing safe space that leads to equality and a fractured patriarchy, and those who believe that the cyberworld leads to the same structural struggles online as offline. I stand somewhere in the grey border between these two notions. While the internet can create faster, larger and, increased engagement to merge theory, activism, and embodiment, it cannot be done without the understanding that the same hegemonic structure offline is mimicked on the internet. This is very apparent when studying the language surrounding nonmonogamy online.

At the base of our ideas about nonmonogamy and how we communicate these ideas are hegemonic views on gender and sexuality and expectations for how they should present in relationships. Beyond this, most articles present what Piper and Bauer have termed “mononormativity” (Ritchie & Barker, 2006). Much like how society displays heterosexual relationships as the norm with heteronormativity, society constructs monogamy as the norm with mononormativity. For instance, as Richie and Baker note “our ability to describe and experience an emotion can be enabled or constrained by our cultural vocabulary” (Richie and Baker, 2006). Much of the discussion concerning nonmonogamy stems from our feelings about culturally established emotions towards monogamy. The prime example is the repeated debate over jealousy and infidelity: whether or not these emotions are natural and, more importantly, how to navigate these unwanted emotions. Not only are those in nonmonogamous relationships building
relationships outside the norm, but they must also create emotions considered outside the norm.

With more time and a larger study, it would be valuable to study blogs based outside the United States and outside the realm of Western theory and norms. All the blogs used within this study are based in the United States. Therefore, the shared understanding of what it is to be a feminist stems from Western academic and media influences. This often means striving to uphold a post-colonial structure that seeks to include an intersectional view of women beyond simply their gender to include contexts such as race and class.

Those participating in these communities may construct or “play up” their language based on a perceived or desired rhetoric around what it is to be a modern feminist. Meaning there is often an attempt to be the best or fullest representation of what feminism is today. There exists an understanding of who does and doesn’t belong within feminist communities. Clear boundaries exist to keep out those who are misogynistic and use sexist language. What constitutes sexist language, or other categories like racism and classism, are less obvious.

The strive to be the best representation on a feminist leads to a community that, through writing articles and commenting, seeks to keep the discussion in line with their ideal version of feminism. If an author discusses the institution of marriage in the framework of race, but the author does not also reference class, commenters would remark on the absence. While this can lead to critical and more thoughtful discussions, it can also keep bloggers and readers dismantling each others’ comments rather than problematic social structures mentioned.
This occurrence is so pronounced in blogging that the term “call-out culture” has been established to identify it. As Flavia writes in an article on the blog *Tiger Beatdown*, the one doing the calling out does not say they disagree with what the author has written; rather, they call it problematic and portray the author’s statements as direct characterizations. “The intent behind it, more often than not, is just to make the one initiating the call out feel good, more righteous, more indignant, a ‘better person’. In the end, the call out is not done for the benefit of a collective goal, it is done for entertainment and shock value” (Dzodan, 2011). Sometimes, this is done within an article or in the comments section. However, other times it is between blog sites and the call-out is made to attract attention to another site or author.

Tremmell and Kesshelashvili can provide further insight into why call-out culture exists. It is noted that hyperlinking in one’s blog allows for some expression of identity. For instance, one can illustrate the ideas and people they prefer. “Furthermore, it is an effort to be perceived as skilled and qualified by self-promoting and providing evidence of competence in social justice/feminism. They also apply Goffman’s theory of self-presentation to the way we interact online (Tremmell & Kesshelashvili, 2005). Goffman believes we are all like actors on a stage attempting to manage how others perceive us. Online, this concept is even more apt with a greater ability to control how we appear to the public by only using text. When we examine feminist blogs, we see that the blogs provide us with a lens to access content with a feminist angle; yet we also willingly expose ourselves to the writers’ and content makers’ own self-presentation agenda.
A prime example of call-out culture comes from a recent controversial article appearing on the blog *Jezebel* concerning Lena Dunham on the cover of *Vogue* (Coen, 2014). A recurrent theme featured on the blog is the altered appearance of women’s bodies in the media, the focus often falling on women’s magazines that admittedly utilize Photoshop. The blog’s editor offered $10,000 dollars to anyone who handed over the unaltered “before” shots of Lena Dunham’s *Vogue* photos. Jezebel’s intent to show how *Vogue* manipulated photos of an actress who often and proudly displays her unaltered and realistic body was met with large criticism (Caperton, 2014). Dunham’s body was only minimally altered and still displayed a body type not typical to *Vogue*. Jezebel’s hardline approach to opposing the representation of women’s bodies by women’s magazines manifested itself as an attack on an individual woman and as an essential claim that she could not look glamorous without heavy Photoshop.

Certainly some criticism of Jezebel’s actions was warranted. Yet the Lena Dunham example illustrates how an inflexible feminist agenda without room for nuance is rarely ideal. However, the outrage manifested is a prime example of call-out culture. There were personal attacks toward the editor, Jessica Cohen, as well as enormous amounts of played-up outrage from competing blogs to draw readers to their sites. Numerous blogs, and some of the blogs I used for this study, also felt the need to comment on the Jezebel article without offering much new or valuable insight (Mason, 2014). However, once commentators, other blogs, and Dunham herself called out the offensiveness of the article, the editor of Jezebel did not apologize but repeated her original sentiments.”
Jezebel is one of the most well known feminist blogs and body image (as well as Lena Dunham) is one of their most discussed topics. Usually articles are not met with heavy criticism; commentators on articles can do so, but rarely will another blogger on the same site and or other feminist sites do so. Bloggers and readers need to be aware that while hardening agendas are not flagrant criticisms of people working toward equality, it will limit their own ability to see all women as people. If these blogs seek to represent a post-colonial feminist social justice, they must examine who does and does not belong, and which women are silenced in these communities, and why.

Language online also indicates that in discussions there is an assumed whiteness, middle classness, and heterosexuality (Daniels, 2009). With the growing use of offline identities used online, we can know the demographic of the authors. Yet the authors do not know the identities of their audience. Yes, there are assumptions on blogs geared towards a community; for instance, on queer blogs you are speaking to a queer community. However, with blogs that make no direct distinction, they do so through assumptive language and/or lack of consideration. When discussing the issue of nonmonogamy, rarely is age, class, or race mentioned. It seems strange that for a subject as intimate as romantic relationships other core aspects of identity such as class and race are not also discussed. Clearly other pillars of identity are ignored not because there is no need to address them, but they are left out of the discussion because authors fail to focus on concerns that might affect communities beyond white and middle-class ones.

Feminist blogs do often included queer people when discussing nonmonogamy since, as mentioned earlier, queer communities have been more open to other forms of relationships and
often have more room for nonmonogamous discussions. Therefore it is difficult to discuss nonmonogamy and ignore queer peoples. Yet, the lesbian and queer blogs included did not appear to have more articles on nonmonogamy that the larger and more mainstream blogs such as *Jezebel* and *xoJane*. This could be due to the smaller quantity of articles or the method employed to search for articles related to nonmonogamy.

The lack of acknowledgement of people of color in nonmonogamous relationships on mainstream feminist blogs is especially concerning when we look at the presence of nonmonogamy on blogs directed at feminists of color. Blogs like *Racialicious* and *Crunk Feminist Collective*, blogs geared towards women of color, had even more limited references to nonmonogamy. A cursory look at other blogs like *ReAppropriate*, a blog geared towards Asian-American women, did not have many references either. This could be for several reasons: for one, the other blogs are considered more mainstream and larger. The more popular a blog, the greater likelihood that they can pay their contributors who in turn will have more time to devote to writing and posting articles. So, the lack of nonmonogamous subject matter could just be a lack of time and ability to address varying subject matters. Another reason could be further constraints within minority communities to out themselves or others as nonmonogamous online. As Sesali Bowen writes, “among my communities--mostly young people of color--the idea of being in a polyamorous relationship is ludicrous” (Bowen, 2011). It is difficult to identify the reasons with little discussion of minority communities with a nonmonogamous identity.

The findings suggest that while dialogue concerning nonmonogamy is limited across feminist blogs, monogamy has a greater number of discussions. Unfortunately, without a further study
into the specifics of those monogamy articles it is difficult to state the effects and whether or not authors and readers are questioning compulsory monogamy. There are other ways to analyze monogamy beyond the confines of nonmonogamy discussion and practice, such as celibacy and singlehood. It would have been valuable for this study to dissect the possible ways in which monogamy and its alternatives are be represented on feminist blogs.

Like monogamy, the mention of marriage is frequent throughout discussions on nonmonogamy. This appears, also like monogamy, to be in correlation to the strong foundation that marriage as an institution has in our culture. While some of the articles that mention both marriage and nonmonogamy came up because it discussed the effects of gay marriage, others could be a result of the frequency in which people desire and ascribe to the institution.
Conclusion

A reader of a feminist blog will likely come across content related to nonmonogamous relationships. However, they may overlook the articles if they are not paying attention since nonmonogamous content is infrequent and usually appears alongside an extensive list of other content. We do not know if this small amount correlates to the number of people practicing nonmonogamy because it is difficult to know how many people use a nonmonogamous relationship model. As nonmonogamy displays itself in various forms and some may not wish to divulge their relationship status.

From reading hundreds of feminist blog articles, I believe that the feminist blog community is receptive to the nonmonogamous community, in at least understanding and valuing the relationship model. Nonmonogamy rarely appeared to be discussed in a dismissive or negative manner by authors. However the lack in quantity of discussions indicates that nonmonogamy is certainly not the next social movement for equality and rights.

Often, authors shared their personal experiences and explained how nonmonogamous relationships worked for them. For many, nonmonogamy was a choice that fit with their desires and needs. They considered the choice feminist and it allowed them autonomy. While certainly the people within a relationship determine whether or not the relationship is feminist, for the authors sharing their experiences, the sense of power and equality from their nonmonogamy equated to feminist relationships. As Frau Sally Benz mentions, being forced to openly discuss and negotiate her needs and desires in a polyamorous relationship lead to gender dynamics that were negotiated and feminist (Benz, 2009). So while nonmonogamous relationships are not for
everyone, presenting nonmonogamy as an option allows us to question culturally instituted ideas about relationships and monogamy.

Though feminist blogs are more accepting of differences in relationship structures, monogamy is such an inherent institution in our society that even the more accepting members still have difficulties viewing nonmonogamy without judgment, whether conscious or unconscious. As society progresses in its view of relationships, like it has to a certain degree with interracial and gay relationships, nonmonogamy will be interwoven through mainstream discourses. Feminist blogs are leading the way by having some discussion on the topic. Still, they still have room to grow to become as accepting of nonmonogamy as other relationships.
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