

PREDICTING EXPECTATIONS OF NON-MONOGAMY IN
LONG-TERM ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

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Doctor of Psychology

by

Michelle R. Sullivan

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PREDICTING EXPECTATIONS OF NON-MONOGRAMY IN
LONG-TERM ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Michelle R. Sullivan
The PGSP-Stanford Psy.D. Consortium, Palo Alto University, 2018

Positive romantic relationships and marriages offer a buffer against a host of physical and emotional difficulties. Conversely, poor relationship quality and marital discord can have deleterious consequences for individuals and families. Research has described non-monogamy, infidelity and consensual non-monogamy, as both consequential and causal of relationship difficulty, or as a unique way a couple strives to make a relationship work. Much research on consensual non-monogamy has built on feminist theory and critique. To date, no studies have examined the predictive relationship between individual and relationship characteristics and expectations of non-monogamy. The current longitudinal study: 1) estimated the prevalence of expectations of partner non-monogamy and 2) evaluated whether gender, sexual identity, age, education, how a couple met, and relationship quality were predictive expectations of partner non-monogamy.

This study utilized the publically available longitudinal dataset, How Couples Meet and Stay Together. Adults aged 18- to 98-years old (n=4002) were surveyed by phone over 5 waves from 2009-2014. Demographics and how a couple met were gathered through self-report in Wave 1, and relationship quality and expectations of partner non-monogamy were gathered through self-report in Waves 4 and 5 (n=1047).

The prevalence of expectations of partner non-monogamy (encompassing both infidelity and consensual non-monogamy) was 4.8%. Logistic regression models indicated that sexual identity, gender, education, and relationship quality were significantly predictive of expectations

of partner non-monogamy. Specifically, male gender, lower education, identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and a lower relationship quality scores were predictive of expectations of partner non-monogamy. Male gender was not predictive of expectations of partner non-monogamy in the follow up logistic regression model. Age and whether a couple met online were not associated with expectations of partner non-monogamy. Clinical implications include awareness of the increased likelihood of lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals to have an expectation of non-monogamy and the sequelae of relationship dissatisfaction that may be related. Future research directions could differentiate between non-monogamy subtypes and the person and relationship variables that lead to the likelihood of consensual non-monogamy and infidelity as separate constructs, as well as explore the relationship between predicting partner behavior and actual partner behavioral outcomes.

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This dissertation by Michelle R. Sullivan, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted and approved by the Faculty of The PGSP-Stanford Psy.D. Consortium, Palo

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Marital attachment is a hallmark of humanity (Fisher, 2000). In a large cross-sectional study (n=10,000), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) found that almost 80% of US citizens are married by the age 40 (Goodwin, McGill, & Chandra, 2009). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 56,290,438 heterosexual married couples and 425,357 same-sex spousal partnerships in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). This same-sex spousal partnerships number includes 201,779 male-male couples and 223,578 female-female couples. In terms of prevalence, issues related to marriage and civil partnerships impact nearly 114 million Americans.

Sexual fidelity is a central norm regulating and maintaining the institution of marriage (Nock, 1998). Infidelity, or non-consensual non-monogamy, is one of the most frequently cited reasons for marital breakdown and divorce (Amato & Previti, 2003). It is difficult to identify a causal relationship between infidelity and divorce – whether people are already dissatisfied with their relationship and want to divorce on some level and then engage in extramarital sexual relationships, or if the infidelity then increases the risk of divorce (Previti & Amato, 2004). Anderson (2011) positions that cheating remains the primary reason couples break up, and wonders that if one is truly concerned with protecting marriage, then monogamy, rather than cheating, needs to be critically examined.

The costs of divorce and unhappy marriages have devastating consequences, emotionally, financially, and systemically, on personal and nationwide levels (Goodwin, McGill, & Chandra, 2009). A number of studies have documented a robust relationship between depression and marital discord, although the causal direction is unclear (Rosand et al., 2012). The successes,

failures, disillusion, and every nuance in between of these marriages impact millions of Americans.

In addition to the negative outcomes of marital dissatisfaction and divorce, people may suffer from the absence of protective factors of positive romantic relationships. There are social, emotional, and economic benefits of marriage for many (Schone & Weinick, 1998). Marriage has been shown to extend life expectancy, and buffer against other emotionally taxing events such as an illness and job loss (Acevedo et al., 2012b). The health benefits of marriage include encouraging healthy behaviors such as exercise and regular doctors visits, especially for men (Umberson, 1987). Studies reveal there is an inverse relationship between marriage and mortality (Goldman, 1993). Married people are less likely than unmarried people to suffer from long-term illness or disability (Goodwin et al., 1987). Marriage benefits extend to mental health as well. Those who are currently married report they are happier with life in general than those who have never been married or who are no longer married (Waite, 2000). Recent studies have found that this “marriage benefit” extends to those in long-term same-sex relationships, though not to the same extent as heterosexual married individuals (Wienke & Hill, 2009).

Since the 1970's, the level of satisfaction reported by people in intact first marriages has declined (National Marriage Project, 1999; Rogers & Amato, 1997). Understanding how and why some couples grow to be dissatisfied (and may or may not eventually divorce) lead to a multitude of research on marital satisfaction, with dissatisfaction and divorce tending to be lumped together (Kelly & Conley, 1987; Gottman, 2014). Factors such as cohabitation, physiology, personality, cognition, affect, patterns, and social support have been identified as predictors of marital satisfaction (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2004).

Couples have long sought various strategies and agreements to make their long-term romantic relationships work, from counseling and psychotherapy, to unconventional marital structures. In the 1970s, in the peak of the “Swinging” era, research began to explore sexually open versus sexually exclusive marriages (Rubin, 2001). Recently, more attention has turned toward other non-normative relationship structures (Bergstrand & Williams, 2000). The past ten years have seen a surge in popular and research interest exploring consensually non-monogamous relationships, which include the ideas of swinging, polyamory, and the more all-encompassing label “open relationship” (Conley et al., 2013a). Other factors that may have impacted the types of relationships people form include technological advancements that may change how couples meet and increased legal rights for sexual minority individuals and couples. The advent of the Internet, and online dating as a related phenomenon, has led to people to be able to meet and contact others they would not otherwise meet. This has been especially helpful in the LGBTIAQ+ communities, who have historically experienced stigma and difficulty meeting partners (Rosenfeld, 2015). Though there has been recent political recognition of same-sex relationships and marriages, such as the 2015 Supreme Court ruling that same-sex couples had a constitutional right to marry throughout the United States (Gates, 2015), the surge of “alternative relationships” exists in contrast the dominant sexually exclusive heterosexual romantic discourse.

There is a paucity of information about couples that have expectations of non-monogamy, whether the expectation of non-monogamy is related to a consensual agreement or an expectation of infidelity (Conley et al., 2013a). Research exploring the prevalence of couples who are consensually non monogamous has been inconsistent (Rubin et al., 2014). Exploring

how couple's therapy treatment may differ for couples that are defining their relationship without the expectation of sexual monogamy is an emerging area of research interest (Weitzman, 2005).

It is important to note that marriage and long-term relationships do not have a finite menu of options: divorce, infidelity, or consensual non-monogamy. Most couples wax and wane in satisfaction, others remain monogamous for decades without much difficulty. There seem to be a lucky 10% of individuals that remain as blissfully in love as the first year of dating, but with the added bonus of a sense of increased stability (Acevedo et al., 2012a). How and why do some couples continue to nourish and thrive within their relationship and others struggle?

Understanding what individual and relationship factors lead to increased relationship satisfaction and which lead to behaviors associated with dissatisfaction is important and under researched.

Ultimately, a critical lens exploring the role of monogamy and non-monogamy in long-term romantic relationships should shed light on some of the common difficulties and processes all individuals and couples traverse as they co-create a life together. Universally, individuals and couples navigate the degree of shared and separate worlds. People must work to identify what makes the most sense for them as individuals in their relationship(s) at a moment in time. I propose that they must create and co-create their own subjective models of "*monogAME*" and "*monogamUS*."

Literature Review

Conceptual Models

Monogamy. Before exploring departures from monogamy, it is helpful to explore the current research and understanding on monogamy. Dictionary.com provides origin information: the root of the word *mono* – meaning one or single - and *gamos* – marriage – literally translate to one marriage. They define monogamy as “the habit of having only one mate at a time”

(Monogamy, n.d.). Monogamy may be used to define sexual exclusivity in a non-martial relationship, but the philosophical underpinnings are intricately tied to the institution of marriage (Overall, 1998). Monogamy, as it derives significance from heterosexual marriage, also carries heteronormative baggage (Barker, 2007).

Monogamy, in terms of sexual exclusivity, is the expectation of most Americans in couples and partnerships (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Monogamy and morality are synonymous in Western society (Barash & Lipton, 2001). Marriage is grounded within a moral and cultural code where sexual exclusivity is expected, if not required (Mileham, 2007). Historically, departures from monogamy date back to the creation of the Ten Commandments and identification of adultery as a sin (Fisher, 1992). There are still laws in about half of the U.S. against adultery, though they are rarely enforced (Siegel, 1992).

Attachment theories of monogamy. Pair-bonding is a hallmark of humanity (Roberts, 2012). Roberts cites attachment-based theory (Bowlby, 1969) as a neurobiological underpinning of the foundation of pair-bonded spouses, and the one-partner model of monogamy evolves from the infants pair-bonded attachment to its mother. Other psychologists such as Erikson (1964) state that forming a singular love relationship is essential for an individual's psychological developmental. Secure attachment is characterized by high levels of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and interdependence at the core of healthy *dyadic* relationships, which is exclusionary to non-dyadic relationships (Conley et al., 2013a).

Monogamy is often linked to attachment and love. Theories of monogamy pose it as natural, and there is “something about love in general that links it naturally and appropriately with feelings of exclusivity and possession” (Wasserstrom, 1984, p. 101). An fMRI study (n=17) found neural correlates in a group of women who remained passionately in love with

their partner of 10+ years, as identified both in self-report and clinician-administered measures, that were similar to neural regions implicated in early-stage romantic love, as well as regions implicated in maternal attachment, offering neurological support for attachment theory (Acevedo et al., 2012a). This study offers some support for Ainsworth's theory that adult attachment pair-bonds are the adult realization of attachment bonds in childhood (1991).

Psychoanalytic theory builds on an attachment framework (Sroufe, 1986). Psychoanalyst Stephen Mitchell (2003) discusses reciprocal monogamous commitment as the secure base, and that this base serves as a protective buffer against hardships of the world, and uses monogamous love as synonymous for security. Psychoanalytic perspectives discuss monogamy as hopeful reparation of the original attachment wound of the infant recognizing separateness from the mother. Chodorow (1978) summarizes psychoanalytic theory of monogamy succinctly: people want to return to the experience of primary love – the infantile stage of sense of oneness [with mother] and a tranquil sense of well-being in which all needs are satisfied, and there is no need for reality testing. Monogamy is thus an eroticized socially acceptable form of regression to an idealized oneness with another (that probably never existed in the first place) in which one is finally safe and whole again.

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et al., 2012a). This study offers some support for attachment theory that adult romantic pair-bonds are the adult realization of attachment bonds in childhood (Ainsworth, 1991).

There is little doubt that attachment contributes to love, marriage, and procreation. There is some debate about how long romantic attachment can last, and what, if any, other underlying mechanisms are at play in terms of love and sexual fidelity. Sue Johnson (2008) states love is designed so that the offspring of a romance can survive with two guardian parents. She builds on Helen Fisher's evolutionary argument, that ancestral females needed a mate to protect them while they carried and nursed, and ancestral males could only provide for and defend a single female and their offspring at a time. Natural selection would favor the females and males with the genetic propensity to form pair-bonds as their young survived disproportionately (Fisher, 2000). Fisher (1998) earlier identified different emotion-motivation neural systems associated with attachment in adult male-female dyads. She explained this attachment circuitry evolved primarily to motivate individuals to sustain affiliative connections long enough to complete species-specific parental duties. Fisher furthers that there are other neural systems that may exist independently of the innate attachment system. Her theory, based on fMRI research identifying disparate systems of lust, attraction, and attachment, illustrates attachment theory is at the core of life-long pair-bonds, while also explaining departures of monogamy (Fisher et al., 2002). Even in theoretical models of monogamy, research reflects and reality necessitates the introduction of explanations of non-monogamy as well.

Monogamy as the norm: Mononormativity. Despite anecdotal and research evidence to indicate otherwise, there is a dominant version of relationships available in Western culture in which there is life-long or serial monogamy with “The One” perfect partner. Monogamy is a position of dominance, and researchers have coined “mononormativity” to define this dominant

discourse (Ritchie & Barker, 2006). Mononormativity describes the dominant assumptions of normalcy and naturalness of monogamy, analogous to assumptions around heterosexuality. Anderson (2011) describes the “monogacentric” culture that uses monogamy as the litmus test of a relationship, which places an unreasonable ultimatum. Anderson further expands on “monogamism” and the privileged social position monogamy holds. The mythology of “happily ever after” is embedded within sexual exclusivity of monogamous couples. The ideology of monogamy and the ways it may limit us are described succinctly: “The logic of the preference our culture gives the principle of exclusivity is that it is better to abandon a person with whom one has built up an intimate relationship than it is to have and express feelings of love and erotic attachment to two persons” (Gregory, 1984, p. 267-268).

Other theorists examine monogamy and the expectation of sexual exclusivity as a consequence of cultural beliefs and conventions (Overall, 1998). Moreover, even the languages people use to describe departures from monogamy include terms like “cheating,” which points to a violation in rules and further reinforces Monogamy as The Rule. The economic metaphor that love is a zero-sum game and there is a finite amount of love, sexual activity, and commitment, is consistent with a capitalist culture (Overall, 1998). Anderson (2011) further states monogamy is the product of salaried labor, modernity, and organized monotheism – all variables that are political or religious attempts to control human nature.

Current models do not adequately explain why, given the expectation of monogamy, many people do not remain monogamous, and many rational decision-making analysts have found that infidelity is only partially accounted for by rational assumptions about sexual behavior (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Mitchell (2003) explains that monogamy provides emotional security, yet acknowledges that sexual desire could collapse under the weight of the co-

constructed secure base. He introduces the complication and contradiction within attachment theories of monogamy. His work begs the titular question of his book “Can Love Last?”

Non-monogamy. Non-monogamy is distinctive from monogamy. Overall defines non-monogamy as “a pattern by an individual of sexual interactions with more than one person during a given period within the individual's life” (1998, p.4). This definition encompasses non-monogamies in which both partners agree and negotiate the choice of non-monogamy as well as the situation when a monogamous person who wants and believes their partner to be monogamous discovers the partner is not (infidelity).

Evolutionary theories of non-monogamy. Herlihy (1995) summarizes current evolutionary theory as individuals have evolved to maximize their genetic representation in descendent generations. The evolutionary argument suggests that unconscious biological payoffs of non-monogamy for men and women have existed since prehistory, and there remain biological underpinnings that gear humans towards non-monogamy in both sexes today (Tsapelas, Fisher, & Aron, 2011). Many authors highlight the rarity of true pair-bonding amongst animals and human cultures (Ryan & Jetha, 2012). That *Homo sapiens* are the only group-living primates in which the most frequent system is monogamy furthers the evolutionary argument of human's natural non-monogamy (Benshoof & Thornhill, 1979). Barash and Lipton (2001) state that the desire for multiple sexual partners is more natural than monogamy. Helen Fisher (1992) argues that humans have adopted a dual reproductive strategy of social monogamy and clandestine adultery as a way to maximize their reproductive success.

The evolutionary argument is that non-monogamy and infidelity has contributed to reproductive success of the species. Often cited are as evidence for this are the sex differences in parental investment in offspring, including gestation and nursing for women, and that men

historically have had more time and resources to devote to mating and therefore more opportunities to engage in extra-dyadic sex (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Buss (2000) later hypothesized infidelity is also adaptive for women to have a “back-up” mate to serve various functions when their primary mate is not around, and affairs could be a social tool to “trade up” and find a more desirable partner. The jealousy differences between men and women are cited as further indication of evolutionary incentive that men and women have adapted different styles of sexual behavior and attitudes based on biology (Schmookler & Bursik, 2007). The evolutionary argument also supports the theory and findings that men may be more naturally geared toward non-monogamy than women.

Cognitive dissonance theory. Theories of monogamy hinge upon the idea(l) that sexual expectations and sex are the glue that holds the relationship together. The high stakes exist in that the entire relationship could fall apart if the “special glue” of monogamy fails even for a moment in the course of a life-long relationship (Jackson & Scott, 2004). Anderson (2011) identified a monogamy gap that may lead to cognitive dissonance: a desire for both wanting monogamy and non-monogamy simultaneously. He builds on Festinger’s (1962) cognitive dissonance theory that it is human nature to try to reduce any dissonance about two beliefs or a belief and behavior that are inconsistent. Anderson (2011) offers *dyadic dissonance theory* in his book “The Monogamy Gap.” He explains that heterosexual men rectify the tension of their loss of sexual freedom with increased emotional intimacy in their primary long-term relationship, but will eventually begin to desire sex with someone else. Because many men fear the prospect of telling their partner about their desire, they end up cheating, either in spontaneous ways that are usually accompanied by guilt, or premeditatedly. Further, cheating reinforces that they can both love their partner and meet their desire. Anderson offers cheating as a rational response to an

irrational situation and the internal cognitive dissonance monogamy invites. Ester Perel (2015) discusses cognitive dissonance in her TED talk “Rethinking infidelity.” She describes patients who are deeply monogamous in their beliefs, but find themselves in a conflict between their values and a behavior, and the internal cognitive struggle to reconcile this.

Feminist theory. A more recent conceptual model of non-monogamy builds on feminist theory. Feminist theory as it applies to monogamy emphasizes antiquated differences in gender roles in a marriage. The feminist critique of monogamy is that the marriage contract is more binding on women than men as it relates to an institution of coupledness that presumes (at least partial) ownership of another individual (Jackson & Scott, 2004). The 1970s resistance to monogamy was more critical of couple’s expectation of exclusivity as it relates to possessiveness and infringing on another’s (usually the woman’s) freedom (Comer, 1974). Kate Millet and Juliet Mitchell (1971), key figures in the Feminist movement, discuss the ideology of love and romance as manipulating women into a trap of subordination and reproduction, and that the power dynamics in a heterosexual monogamous marriage were more strictly enforced on women than men. Recently women’s increased economic independence, new conceptualizations of identity, and growing emphasis of ownership of sexual pleasure and self-fulfillment have further impacted gender roles and thus the construct of monogamy. These changes in women’s roles have arguably influenced the meaning of love, sex, and marriage in heterosexual relationships and may have led to a reconfiguration of traditional models of intimacy for some (Frank & DeLamater, 2010). The authors argue that this context has led to increased autonomy and choice and the ability to negotiate previously assumed elements of a committed relationship, including, but not limited to, sexual exclusivity.

The theory of feminist critique on monogamy can be summarized in the following quote from Comer:

. . . monogamy has come to be the definition of love, the yardstick by which we measure the rest of our emotions . . . Like so much butter, romantic love must be spread thickly on one slice of bread; to spread it over several is too spread it 'thinly'. (1974: 219)

Two feminist writers have stated even the language around monogamy is off-putting to feminist discourse, stating "Having a sexual relationship seems to entail being treated as one of a pair, indeed as half a person. It is common for one's partner to be referred to as one's 'other half' or a couple as 'an item' – linguistic practices that make us rather queasy" (Jackson & Scott, 2004, p. 155).

Academic theory and research that acknowledges the existence of openly non-monogamous relationships without pathologizing them is relatively recent and builds on feminist, queer, and flexible family systems theory (Barker & Langdrige, 2010a). Inclusion of other groups in the feminist argument, including cisgender and transgender individuals, as well as lesbian, bisexual, asexual, and heterosexual individuals, has led to an expanded understanding of deviations from the script of sexually exclusive relationships. Consensual non-monogamies are presented as a feminist ideal: liberating, cooperative, and empowering alternatives to ownership, possession, and potential violence in traditional monogamy (Barker & Langdrige, 2010a).

Non-monogamy as a feminist alternative is not without critiques. In a possible model with primary and secondary partners, critics have pointed out that the arrangement resembles an age-old pattern of wife and mistress, albeit with the exception that everyone knows what's going on and technically consents (Kassoff, 1989). The couple as hallmark of closeness, whether

implicitly directed by a patriarchal society or an inherent dialectic of love and intimacy, is rooted in complexity.

Modern theories of non-monogamy. A recent New York Times article “Is an open marriage a happier marriage?” noted the arrival of the “new monogamy” (Dominus, 2017). The article states “honesty and transparency, rather than fidelity, were the guiding principles underlying the healthiest of these kinds of [open] marriages” (2017). Mint (2004) argues it is a false duality to either be faithful or unfaithful; and notes non-monogamy is not reserved for only fringe communities. Today’s couples, ever aware that divorce numbers and marital dissatisfaction are high, are more likely to think about negotiating how they define and live monogamy in their own relationship (Nelson, 2010).

Dan Savage, popular author of relationship column “Savage Love,” LGBT community activist, and popular media presence, discusses monogamy as being more difficult than we’ve been lead to believe. As a gay-man in a self-described “monogamish” relationship, he expands on the values of monogamy, infidelity, and honesty in his columns. Savage (As told to Oppenheimer, 2011) states “Creating non-monogamy that strengthens rather than corrodes a marriage is surely as much work as monogamy. Couples should make vows and honor them. Not all good relationships require monogamy, but they all require integrity.” Ester Perel (2006) discusses the push and pull of security and desire, stating desire requires distance, while intimacy requires closeness, and it is this inherent dialectic many couples struggle with. She provides the metaphor of the anchor and the wave, that eroticism and sexual excitement requires both an anchor (secure attachment) and a wave (perhaps someone or something new). She offers explanatory mechanisms based on evolutionary theory that provide a framework for couples to understand their dueling desires. Her recent book *The State of Affairs: Rethinking Infidelity*

(2017) discusses infidelity and non-monogamy in the lens of this new “monogamishness.” She neither advocates nor denounces departures from monogamy, but offers a validating reality-based compassionate understanding of the inherent challenges of long-term monogamy.

Researchers, modern writers, and philosophers alike agree that while monogamy is difficult to define, it may be even more difficult to live. The attitudes and expectations of monogamy are understood to vary across a range; there is even a Monogamy Attitudes Scale (MAS), a Likert scale designed to assess the degree that an individual views monogamy as enhancing a relationship, as well as the degree to which monogamy represents a sacrifice (Schmookler & Bursik, 2007).

Paradigms of Non-Monogamy

There are two paradigms for understanding non-monogamy with different definitions, history, and prevalence: consensual non-monogamy and non-consensual non-monogamy. I will first describe non-consensual non-monogamy, which is synonymous with infidelity, and the literature that covers infidelity, cheating, and affairs as one concept, offering definitions and exploring prevalence numbers. I will then discuss consensual non-monogamy, and the literature on swinging, polyamory, and open relationships, offering definitions and exploring prevalence numbers. I will refer to consensual non-monogamy as CNM. Research on infidelity has primarily focused on three factors: couple’s relationship factors, the personal individual factors of the individual who engages in extramarital sex, and the opportunities for extramarital sex (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Based on current frameworks of research exploring infidelity as a subtype of non-monogamy, it is understood there are individual or person characteristics and relationship characteristics may be related to both types of non-monogamy. I will explore person characteristics of demographics and sexual identity, and how they relate to infidelity and CNM,

both taken together and as separate constructs. Finally, I will examine relationship characteristics of how couples met and relationship satisfaction as it relates to infidelity and CNM, both together as one concept of non-monogamy and as separate constructs, as the research indicates.

Infidelity. Infidelity is defined as sexual intercourse as a married person with someone other than one's spouse (Tsapelas, Fisher, & Aron, 2010). Infidelity may include both sexual and emotional infidelity. According to Leeker and Carlozzi (2014) sexual infidelity is defined as the occurrence of sexual involvement with a third party that violates the ground rules established by the couple and could include kissing, fondling, oral sex, vaginal sex, and anal sex. Emotional infidelity is defined as the occurrence of emotional involvement with a third party that violates the ground rules established by the couple which might include trusting another, sharing your deepest thoughts with another, falling in love with another, being vulnerable with another, being more committed to another, or spending more money on another (Leeker & Carlozzi, 2014). In terms of research, there is considerable variability in terms of defining what constitutes infidelity. Definitions of cheating, used interchangeably with infidelity, may include non-sexual betrayals such as pornography use, cybersex, and emotional infidelity (Neuman, 2001). Allen (2005) introduces the idea of a continuum of extramarital behavior, recognizing both the sexual and nonsexual aspects and what is considered crossing the line may vary from person to person and even within a person's lifetime.

Estimating the prevalence of infidelity is difficult, as there is a stigma associated with sexual infidelity and a potential reporting bias (Treas & Giesen, 2000). In one online survey (n=556), estimates of infidelity are that approximately 25% of monogamous partners reported sex outside of their primary relationship, and most participants in their study indicate their primary partner did not know about infidelity (Lehmiller, 2015). Laumann and team (2004) also

report that 25% of married men have at least one extramarital affair, and that 1.5-3.6% of people surveyed had cheated on their married partners within the previous year. Other studies report higher prevalence numbers, the highest report is that hidden infidelity in marriage anywhere from 60 to 70 % (Vangelisti & Gernstenberger, 2004; Robinson, 1997). In their guide for working with non-monogamous couples, Berry and Barker (2014) invite sharing the statistics that *most* people aren't monogamous, that one-half to two-thirds of those who are in a committed relationship have affairs (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Vangelisti & Gerstenberger, 2004). A meta-analysis of 50 studies found 34% of men and 24% of women engaged in extramarital sexual activities (Tafoya & Spitzberg, 2007).

Historical data on infidelity also reflects a wide-range in prevalence, but a consistent presence in marriage (Fisher, 1992). Research in the 1920s indicates 24% and 28% of American women and men, respectively, were adulterous at some point after their wedding (Lawrence, 1989). In the 1940s and 1950s, Kinsey and his team similarly found 26% and 33% of American women and men, respectively, reported infidelity (1948; 1953). The 1970s data indicates 25% and 41% of American women and men, respectively, report infidelity; the data from the 1980s reflects an increase to 54% and 72% of American women and men, respectively, who stated they were unfaithful at some point during marriage (Hunt, 1974; Tsapelas, Fisher & Aron, 1992).

In certain groups, such as college students, the prevalence of infidelity is even higher. Wiederman & Hurd (1999) reported that 68% of undergraduate heterosexual men had cheated by kissing someone outside their dyad, and 49% had cheated with intercourse. Anderson (2011) reports the rate of college men who had "cheated" as performing any sexual activity that would lead one's partner to feel he had violated an implicit or explicit monogamous rule as 78%. Collegiate sexual culture is an interesting playground for the dynamics of relationship politics to

be seen: there is a simultaneous condemnation of cheating and ordinariness of it that allows cheating to be a socially accepted way many heterosexual young adults end relationships (Wilkins & Dalessandro, 2013). However, alternatively, college students also talk about non-committed relationships including “friends with benefits” and “fuck buddies” as part of a wave of “new monogamy” (Frank & DeLamater, 2010). Perhaps no place better embodies the dual experience of exploring evolutions of monogamy and reconciling the dominant discourse of pressures of monogamy with sexual urges outside of a committed relationship as a college campus.

The 2004 *State of Affairs* book describing infidelities and the inclusion of consensual non-monogamies was groundbreaking, and shortly thereafter conferences, journals, theses, and books have been published on the topic (Duncombe, Harrison, Allan & Marsden, 2004). In the most recent academic research and theory addressing infidelities, authors have included chapters about open and polyamorous relationships, thus reflecting a blurred line between infidelity and consensual non-monogamy (Duncombe et al., 2004).

Consensual non-monogamy. The broad all-encompassing term “consensual non-monogamy” has been coined to describe “an agreed-upon, sexually nonexclusive relationship” (Rubel & Bogaert, 2014). CNM is a distinct *relationship style* and has many configurations based on the communication of needs and agreements of individuals and is not inherently related to sexual or gender identity (Johnson, 2013). CNM encompasses the identities, practices, and behaviors of polyamory, swinging, and other “open relationships.” Rubel and Bogaert (2014) break down the distinctions as follows:

- swinging – extradyadic sex with members of another couple

- polyamory – practice of, belief in, willingness to engage in consensual non-monogamy in long term and/or loving relationships
- open relationships – partners agree they can have extradyadic sex

The swinging literature also encompasses ‘co-marital sex,’ ‘mate swapping,’ ‘wife swapping,’ and ‘the liberated lifestyle’ (Visser & McDonald, 2007). Swingers commonly establish rules designed to protect the primary relationship and create a distinction between extradyadic sex and extradyadic love. Other terms commonly used by individuals and couples outside of swinging, open relationships, and polyamory that would be encompassed by consensual non-monogamy include: swaps (swinging), intimate friendships, orgy, play, playmates/playcouples, same room, and threesomes (Visser & McDonald, 2007). There are infinite possibilities in explicitly and implicitly negotiated terms of couples and individuals in consensually non-monogamous relationships.

Polyamory is a form of non-monogamy grounded in the belief in “people’s capacity to share and multiply their love in honest and consensual ways” (Anderlini-D’Onofrio, 2004, p. 165). Polyamory is a relationship structure that allows for multiple partners. It is committed non-monogamy, encompasses many styles of partner relating; it is not infidelity, polygamy, or swinging, necessarily (Weitzman, 2006). Polyamory has been defined as the practice of having multiple relationships in a form of “responsible non-monogamy” (Black, 2006, p. 1), wherein all parties abide “within an ethical, consensual, agreement-based context” (Davidson, 2002, p. 3). Some polyamorous, or poly, relationships, include a primary partner and one or more secondary partners. Much of the current research on consensual non-monogamy has included participants who use the label polyamorous. Polyamorous relationships may include a primary couple dyad and secondary partners, or a group marriage, triad, quad, web, and other non-dyadic models

(Klesse, 2006). Polyamory builds on the counter-normative theory and discourse on sex and relationships, though many individuals and couples are relatively apolitical in terms of motivation (Jamieson, 2004).

The most heavily researched subset of consensual non-monogamy is polyamory. The popular novel *The Ethical Slut* (Easton & Litszt, 1997) brought polyamory to the forefront of popular and academic culture. Written as a “how-to” guide to polyamorous relationships, the authors define the construct as “the ethics of a good slut not by the number of his partners, but by the respect and care with which he treats them” (p. 19). The book calls for the ethical discussion of open sexual parameters in a relationship, written in a playful tongue-in-cheek manner, it has served as a useful framework for those exploring or involved in polyamory.

The third type of CNM, the broad, purposely vague “open relationship,” is a catch-all to encompass those in CNMs who would not fit into other categories. Much of the research underscores that any understanding of a group of non-monogamous people may not be representative of other groups of non-monogamous people. The practices, and ideologies between and within groups and individuals practicing openly non-monogamous relationships may be as unique in motivation, structure, and satisfaction as the individuals that encompass that open relationship (Barker & Langdrige, 2010).

Behaviors versus agreements are important distinctions among consensual non-monogamists. Some couples have an agreement to be open and rarely, if ever, act or engage in sexual behaviors with someone outside the dyad (Rubel & Bogaert, 2014). Others may have acted in the past, but no longer feel the desire. The inherently dynamic, messy, complex nature of romantic relationships, labels, and behaviors that may or may contradict intentions and labels, makes generalizing results from any one study to another difficult. For example, some data on

CNM individuals includes participants who are single and would like to be in a consensual non-monogamous relationship (Hauptert et al., 2016), other data includes people who are in a relationship and have the expectation of non-monogamy, but it unclear whether this expectation is consensual or not (Rosenfeld, Thomas, & Falcon, 2015). Furthermore, one partner may define the relationship as consensually non-monogamous, and the other may have a different understanding. Even if both partners agree, there is research on subtleties and nuances of consent, there are potential elements of coercion where one partner wants extradyadic sex and the other agrees out of fear of losing the partner (Taormino, 2008).

The prevalence of couples who engage in consensual non-monogamy is imprecise, both due to the lack of research on the subject, sampling bias, inconsistent use of terminology, and potential stigma and shame around disclosure of consensual non-monogamy status (Conley et al., 2013a). The rates for both more general consensual non-monogamy and polyamory are unclear because there is little empirical work on non-monogamy (Jamieson, 2004).

The current prevailing estimate of prevalence of consensual non-monogamous relationships among adults in the United States is about 4-5% (Rouse, 2013). In two separate studies, this number was approximately replicated. In a large online convenience survey (n=2,395) Rubin and colleagues (2014) identified 5.3% of participants were currently part of a CNM relationship. Conley and her research team (2013a) also estimate that consensually non-monogamous relationships, defined as “dating one or more people and your romantic partners agree/ know about; for example, open relationship, polyamorous relationship” are about 4-5% of the population.

In terms of prevalence of polyamory, Weitzman (2006) estimated openly polyamorous families to be more than half a million in the United States. Peluso (2007) estimates prevalence

numbers for swingers to be 15% of the married population or higher. Often, the prevalence numbers are exclusive to a specific group studied. Within exclusively heterosexual couples, Blumstein & Schwartz (1983) found that 15-28% of couples had an understanding that allows non-monogamy in some circumstances.

A more recent study found the number of adults to have engaged in a consensually non-monogamous relationship at one point in their lives, but were not currently in a CNM relationship, to be even higher. Hauptert and colleagues (2016), using two separate U.S. Census based quota samples of single adults in the United States (Study 1: $n = 3,905$; Study 2: $n = 4,813$) found that more than one in five adults said had an open sexual relationship at some point in their lifetime (21.9% in Study 1; 21.2% in Study 2). This study was sponsored in part by match.com, was exclusive to single adults, and asked a slightly different question than Conley and Rubin, which may contribute to the drastic difference in prevalence numbers.

In conclusion, we can gather from the existing literature, and consistent with the cross-cultural findings of Schmitt (2005), CNM does not seem to be as rare as some might expect: at a minimum approximately 4% of adults may be involved in a consensually non-monogamous relationship. Conley et al. estimate equitable numbers of people in consensually non-monogamous relationships as there are in same-sex relationships, which is somewhere around ~800,000 (2013a; U.S. Census, 2015).

The majority of research on CNM has been qualitative or targeted convenience samples (Barker & Langdrige, 2010b) and the knowledge gap is large. Recruitment techniques and inclusion/exclusion criteria are another major limitation of previous research on CNM relationships. Most studies rely on convenience sampling, and sample sizes are often small. The

social stigma surrounding CNM (Conley et al., 2013b) may also selectively deter certain people who engage in CNM from participating in studies that advertise such a focus, or from reporting their relationship status if they do participate. There is an explicit gap in the existence of longitudinal research focused on CNM couples (Rubel & Bogaert, 2015).

Longitudinal studies may be necessary to understand the correlates and sequelae of CNM. These issues have been obscured by debates about whether monogamy is “natural” or not, and that those who practice consensual non-monogamy are starting to be invoked in prominent political debates, which heightens the relevance of the current research. Whether the issues we address lead to solutions that are more focused on clinical issues (i.e., addressing problems related to consensual non-monogamy) or social justice issues (providing a liberatory framework for understanding consensual non-monogamy) remains to be seen (Conley et al., 2013b), but the importance of more information about antecedents, correlates, and sequelae of non-monogamous relationships is relevant and meaningful.

Person Characteristics and Non-Monogamy

Non-monogamy and demographics. Person characteristics associated with non-monogamy may include demographic characteristics, such age, education level, and gender, as well as personality characteristics and level of interest in sex and sexuality. Some person characteristics are associated with both infidelity and consensual non-monogamy, and may be predictive one type of non-monogamy over another, others may be related to both CNM and infidelity. Non-monogamy, both in terms of sexual infidelity and consensual non-monogamy, may be related to permissive sexual values (Treas & Giesen, 2000). In a meta-review, it was also found education was positively associated with non-monogamy, as defined as both related to infidelity and consensual non-monogamy (Allen et al., 2005).

Infidelity and person characteristics. Person characteristics as they relate to infidelity include age, level of education, sexual values, personality variables, gender, and even certain gene variations. Wiederman (1997) reported men and women below age 40 show no difference in infidelity, and there may be an interaction between age and gender. In a national random survey sample (n=4,118) Atkins, Baucom, and Jacobson (2001) found men ages 55-65 and women ages 40-45 were most likely to have engaged in infidelity, reflecting that age may be a factor, but again, there may be an interaction between age and gender. Other studies have found infidelity is negatively associated with age (Treas & Giesen, 2000), that is, younger people may be more likely to report infidelity than older people. Alter and Hershfield (2014) propose the interesting theory that behaviors of adults during a “9-ending age” (29, 39, 49) are unique: they may be more likely have a propensity for extramarital affairs, as they may be existentially preoccupied with aging. In a study looking at the ages of people on an online website for “illicit encounters,” the authors did find those in “9-ending ages” were over-represented; however, many people lie about their age to be within an age bracket. For example, someone who is 42 might say they are 39.

The relationship between education and infidelity specifically is not well understood. High levels of education were positively related to sexual infidelity in one study (Smith, 1994). Amato and Rogers (1997) also found education was positive associated with infidelity, though evidence has been mixed in terms of replicating findings (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Other person characteristics that may be linked to non-monogamy may include sexual interest, religiosity, and personality characteristics. Those who have engaged in infidelity have a greater personal interest in sex than those who do not, as measured by sexual interest levels (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Mark, Janssen, and Milhausen (2011) found that those who engaged in infidelity rate religion as

less important than those who did not engage in infidelity. Literature has explored personality factors, focusing on the Big Five, as they relate to infidelity. High extraversion, low agreeableness, high neuroticism, and low conscientiousness were all associated with extradyadic sex in one study (Barta & Kiene, 2005).

Some studies have found men are more likely to engage in extramarital sex than women (Smith, 1994), which has been replicated and hypothesized from an evolutionary psychology perspective (Ryan & Jetha, 2012). Historical studies have shown sex differences in infidelity that reflect the prevalence of men to engage in infidelity to be higher than women: it is estimated 26-70% of heterosexual married women and 33-75% of married men have engaged in infidelity (Johnson, 1972; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953; Shackelford & Buss, 1997). Others estimate the percentage is lower, approximately 20-25% of heterosexual men and 10-15% of heterosexual women engage in extramarital sex during their marriage (Wiederman, 1997), but still reflects a gender difference. Other studies have found a negligible gender difference in who is more likely to engage in infidelity (Treas & Giesen, 2000; Rubin et al., 2014). And when infidelity as defined as transgressions other than intercourse, such as kissing and emotional connections, women report as many acts of infidelity as men (Allen et al., 2005). Just as there may be an interaction between age and gender, other authors have described other interactions that may map on to the reported gender differences between men and women and acts of infidelity. In a large survey of professionals (n=1,561), Lammers and colleagues (2011) found power was a better predictor of infidelity than gender, and when controlled for economic power and prestige, men and women are equally likely to have intentions and to act on infidelity. This research suggests some of the gender-based differences in infidelity numbers may reflect differences in power in broader society.

Finally, there is some evidence that genes play a role in the likelihood one is likely to be unfaithful. A certain variation (at least one 7-repeat allele known as 7R+) on the dopamine D4 receptor gene (DRD4) has been correlated with promiscuity and infidelity in young adults (Garcia et al., 2010). The *New York Times* (2017) further reported that there is a genetic predisposition that may make people more inclined to non-monogamy.

Consensual non-monogamy and person characteristics. Less is known about demographic characteristics and consensual non-monogamy. Some person characteristics studied include religiosity, demographics, personality factors, and attachment style. Some research has found that those who engage in CNM are less likely to be religious, with about 2/3 of swingers to have no religious affiliation (Jenks, 1998). Moors, Edelstein, and Conley (2012) found individuals in CNM relationships are more likely to exhibit secure attachment style. They hypothesizes individuals who chose to be in CMN relationships are more likely to be extraverted and more “curious and adventuresome (open to experience) than those who prefer the more conventional lifestyle of monogamy” (2012, p. 12).

Some research suggested those who engage in CNM are predominantly white, middle-to-upper class (Sheff & Hammers, 2011). In their large online convenience sample, Rubin and colleagues (2014) also found their sample of CNM individuals was predominantly white, educated, middle class, and over-represented in ages 28-45. Others did not find statistically significant ethnic and economics differences between those who are currently engaged in CNM and the U.S. population (Hauptert et al., 2016).

Age has also not shown to be a predictor of desire to be a consensually non-monogamous relationship (Hauptert et al., 2016). In another study, age was shown to be a significant predictor of willingness to engage in CNM, as in older individuals were less likely to engage in CNM, but

later analyses negated this initial result (Moors et al., 2014). Other experts in the field suggest partners may crave the excitement of a new relationship after a long-term relationship has been established, suggesting middle-age or older adults might be more likely to engage in a CNM relationship (Conley et al., 2013a). Because many CNM relationships are dynamic, negotiated and re-negotiated over time, it is difficult to state a relationship between CNM and age.

Beyond that higher levels of education are associated with general non-monogamy, in terms of both infidelity and CNM, there is mixed evidence that education is associated with specific types of CNM. Another study found “kinksters” and polyamorists to be highly educated, though they included the caveat that there may be other language used by others who have open relationships and the label “polyamory” may be self-selected by those with higher levels of education (Sheff & Hammers, 2011). Hauptert et al. (2016) did not find a significant effect for level of education and willingness to engage in a CNM relationship.

Gender as it relates to CNM is complicated by the interrelationship between gender and sexual identity. There are gender differences between individuals who are engaged in CNM relationships: men are slightly more likely to engage in a consensual non-monogamy than women. 28% of straight men and 78% of gay men had open-relationship agreements, and 25% of straight women and 37% of lesbian women had open-relationship agreements (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983). Hauptert et al. (2016) in their studies (n=3,905) found the main effects of both gender and sexual identity were both significant, but the interaction term was not. Their research supports the prevailing literature that men are more likely to have engaged in a CNM relationship. Moors, Conley, Edelstein, and Chopik (2015) in a sample of heterosexual monogamous respondents (n=1,281) found gender was correlated with positive attitudes towards and willingness to engage in CNM relationships, with men being more likely than women to

report a desire to engage in a consensually non-monogamous relationship. Two notable researchers in the field, Conley and Rubin, and their research teams, did not find gender to be a significant predictor of engagement in CNM (2013a; 2014).

Sexual identity and non-monogamy. Monogamy is the acceptable standard to be practiced among heterosexual individuals; however, social norms do not exist regarding whether or not extradyadic involvement should be accepted or tolerated in the gay community (Heaphy, Donovan, & Weeks, 2004). Due to the fact that many lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals have had to struggle with keeping their sexual identity secret, there is more freedom to derive their own rules within their relationships (Leeker & Carlozzi, 2014). With a lack of clear rules and definition of monogamy, infidelity also becomes more difficult to define.

The social, political, and public health history around non-monogamy of LGBTIAQ+ individuals is important to unpack before further exploring the relationship between sexual identity and both consensual and non-consensual non-monogamy (infidelity). There has been a large amount of research in terms of non-monogamy and sexual identity. Much of the research in the 1970s and 1980s focused on “aberrant” sexual behaviors after the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which focused on exploring the sexual behavior of gay men (Klesse, 2007). There were concerns around any deviation from heterosexual monogamist relationships and research reflected a desire for increased understanding of “other” types of sexual relationships outside the mononormative marriage scripts (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983). HIV risk awareness created an environment in which both sexual identity and models of romantic relationship (non-monogamous) designated gay men as high risk (Worth, Reid, & McMillan, 2002). The response of many gay men to return to monogamy is discussed as part of a replication of heterosexual myths. It is conceptualized that the return to monogamy may be related to monogamous love as symbolic safety against the

terror of death the AIDS crisis brought (Weeks, 1995).

The 1980s also showed a marked increase in research on gay men and their potential non-monogamous relationship structure without political undertones as well. Margaret Nichols describes an idealized non-monogamous gay male relationships, assumed to be casual and brief, as the separation of romantic love from the love appropriate to a committed primary relationship and is defined as “extramarital sexuality [that] is almost always casual (even anonymous), brief, and recreational rather than emotionally intense” (Nichols 1987, p. 118-119). However, it is not clear in the research whether these non-monogamous encounters described are closer to consensual non-monogamy or infidelity.

Sexual identity and non-monogamy are intricately tied. In fact, APA Guidelines for practitioners working with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients include a statement about non-monogamy. They describe:

The relationship structures of lesbian, gay, and bisexual couples vary and may present unique concerns. Non-monogamous or polyamorous relationships may be more common and more acceptable among gay men and bisexual individuals than is typical for lesbians or heterosexuals (Herek, 1991; McWhirter & Mattison, 1984; Peplau, 1991).

Sexual identity and infidelity. Research exploring infidelity in LGBTIAQ+ population is complicated by a number of factors. Despite common preconceptions that gay men are incapable of maintaining steady relationships, research indicates many gay men engage in long-lasting stable relationships with the intent to remain monogamous (Crawford & Solliday, 1996; Parsons et al., 2012). Infidelity could be defined as a violation of the ground rules established by the couple regarding social and emotional involvement, regardless of whether monogamous, non-

monogamous, or partially non-monogamous (Leeker & Carlozzi, 2014). Discrepant agreements involve one partner perceiving they are in a monogamous relationship, and the other perceiving they are in an open relationship, these may seem more related to infidelity in the traditional sense than consensual non-monogamy (Hoff & Beougher, 2010) and occur in same-sex partnerships. Another study found that gay men in monogamous relationships later changed agreements to be non-monogamous after infidelity, making classification of the type of non-monogamy difficult, if not impossible (LaSala, 2001). It is further complicated and nuanced: some gay male couples in LaSala's study who had explicit agreements around sexual non-monogamy considered a partner's relationship to be infidelity only once it had crossed into romantic territory. Adam (2006) found that 50% of partnered gay men had sexual partners outside of their relationship, but the distinction between consensually and non-consensually non-monogamous was not made.

Sexual identity and consensual non-monogamy. The intersection of sexual identity and subtypes of consensually non-monogamy bears distinguishing. Consensually non-monogamous relationships were originally researched, understood, and described as a correlate of the LGBTIAQ+ population and much of the current research reflects this overlap (Johnson, 2013). Research on open relationships and polyamorous relationships and families may be more likely to include participants who identify as gay, lesbian, and bisexual (Weitzman, 2006). Most research on swinging couples is exclusively on heterosexual swinging couples (Rubel & Bogaert, 2014).

Broadly, people who identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual (compared to those who identify as heterosexual) are more likely to report previous engagement in CNM relationship (Hauptert et al., 2016). Prior research suggests men and sexual minority individuals engage in CNM at higher rates than women and heterosexual individuals. Blumstein and Swartz (1983) found that

more than half of gay men were consensually non-monogamous, and up to 65% of the gay male couples in their study were polyamorous. More recent research on the subset of gay men in open relationships estimates this number to be approximately 32-37% (Hauptert et al., 2016).

Moors, Rubin, Matisik, Ziegler, and Conley (2014), all prominent researchers in the field of consensual non-monogamy, go as far as to title an article “It’s Not Just a Gay Male Thing.” Another study found that all sexual minorities (regardless of specific sexual orientation—e.g., lesbian, gay, or bisexual) were equally likely to express willingness to engage in CNM relationships, which differs from some of the other data between subgroups (Moors et al., 2014). West (1996) found that 20-28% of lesbian respondents were polyamorous. Page (2004) found 33% of her bisexual sample was polyamorous.

There exists a cultural stereotype that bisexual people are inherently “promiscuous” and incapable of monogamy (Gustavson, 2009), but it is not supported by the literature, and most academic scholars have presented a more nuanced perspective. Relationships that fall outside the “coupled” arrangement tend to be delegitimized for many bisexual people who are consensually non-monogamous. Other research indicates that more than half of bisexual men and women indicate their relationship would fall into the broad category of “open,” with about ¼ of bisexual men and women a specific sample (n=60) defined their relationship as monogamous (McLean, 2004). Reconciling attraction to both men and women with a desire for committed relationships leads some bisexual individuals to explore some type of open relationship, and others to decide to be monogamous with one partner of one gender.

Higher numbers of individuals who identify as trans and asexual seem to embrace non-monogamous relationship forms (Richards, 2010; Scherrer, 2010). The heteronormative

relationship structure of monogamy may not allow for individuated sexuality or gender fluidity to coexist.

As LGBTIAQ+ individuals and those in non-heteronormative couples have gained increased legal rights, there is a reflection in the apparent growth numbers of same sex couples in the US, estimated to be approximately 415,000 in 2012 (Rubel & Thomas, 2012). A higher percentage of people who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual have reported previous behavior, interest, and engagement in consensually non-monogamous ways than heterosexual individuals. The argument for why this is the case is that people in non-heterosexual relationships are tasked with constructing their relationship from scratch, which may include creating of their own rules around monogamy (Heaphy, Donovan, & Weeks, 2004). The queer potential of non-monogamy allows space to break down or transcend dualities around sexuality and gender (Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1995). Some gay men believe that it is easier for them to enter those [non-monogamous] relationships than heterosexuals, because gay men have had no pre-existing model imposed on them (Dominus, 2007).

The lowest estimate, 20% of lesbian couples identify as part of a CNM relationship, underscores the importance of greater understanding of the needs of LGBTIAQ+ individuals and couples, and the need for increased research in terms of relationship structure. At minimal, one in five non-heteronormative couples structures their primary romantic relationship in a non-monogamous way. These non-heteronormative non-monogamous relationships may have different needs from couples and individual therapy to support these relationships.

Relationship Characteristics and Non-Monogamy

Beyond person characteristics related to non-monogamy, there are characteristics of relationships that are predictive of non-monogamy. The initiation of the relationship, whether it was meeting online or offline, may be related to expectations of non-monogamy. Relationship satisfaction is possibly related to non-monogamy, though it may differ depending on CNM versus infidelity, and the causal direction between the association of relationship satisfaction and non-monogamy may be unclear.

Non-monogamy and meeting online. How couples meet is included as a relationship characteristic, as it is the inception point of a relationship. Meeting online or use of internet-based dating has gained acceptance as a medium for American couples. In a nationally representative sample (n=19,131), Cacioppo and team (2013) found that nearly 1/3 of couples that married between 2002-2015 met online. The rise of the internet, internet chatrooms, and online dating have introduced unprecedented dynamics into marital relationships in terms of ability to interact with potential partners (Mileham, 2007). Most of the publishable research was conducted when meeting online meant using an internet-based website, such as match.com or eHarmony.com. Recently, there has been a rise in app-based phone dating (i.e. Grindr, Tinder, Bumble), and empirical research is in its nascent phase for exploring app-based meeting and relationships. For the purposes of this study, the phrase “meeting online” includes both meeting via a website or an app, with the understanding most research is related to web-based dating sites.

There may be some personal characteristics, such as age, sexual identity, and gender, that may interact with the relationship factor of how couples meet. Older individuals may not have had access to meet a partner online, unless they are entering the dating pool again at an older age

or after a divorce; therefore, there is a cohort effect on meeting online (Hogan & Dutton, 2011). Members of groups who have been marginalized, such as gay men, lesbians, and bisexual individuals, may benefit from personals sites which allow them to seek romantic while minimizing efforts and exposure to social scrutiny (Lever et al., 2008). For this reason, people who identify as gay, lesbian, and bisexual were more likely to have met a partner online than heterosexuals (Lever et al., 2008). Grindr, a location aware dating app specifically targeting men seeking to have sex with other men, has over 3.5 million users worldwide (Blackwell et al., 2015). Other characteristics, such as gender, may change how individuals interact with the online world and what they are looking for. Sumter (in press) found that men were more likely to use the dating app Tinder for “Casual Sex” than women were.

Infidelity and meeting online. A couple’s meeting online as it relates to infidelity can be understood in two ways. The first is examining the relationship between couple’s who meet online and those who later report infidelity. There is a paucity of research that has examined whether couples that met online were more or less likely to experience infidelity as opposed to couples that have met through other avenues. There is substantial research about the use of the Internet as a way to meet a potential extra-dyadic partner, and discussion of the Internet as a place to explore sexual relationships away from the face-to-face relationship with a partner (Wysocki & Childers, 2011). The topic of “online infidelity” and its boundaries is increasingly discussed, whether it includes cyber-sex, watching live pornography, or chatting online in a sexually provocative way (Cohen, 2008).

The Internet has introduced the idea of the “cyber-affair” which is defined as any chat room contact the individual feels must be kept hidden from a spouse due to its sexual and/or emotional nature (Mileham, 2007). It has been reported that one-third of divorce litigation is due

to online affairs (Infidelity check, 2002). There has even been a framework developed for counselors working with couples affected by online infidelity (Young et al, 2000). Mileham (2007) explored the expectation and intention of infidelity (offline and online) in participants in chat rooms targeted toward those who were married and flirting (n=86). She found 30% of married participants had sought a chat partner out in person to have a physical affair, 70% of the sample stated they were searching for and engaging in online-only liaisons. Another online survey of those who have used online platforms (n=8566), included sampling of heterosexual, gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals, and found that 16% of their sample were online looking for someone to have a discreet affair while they were in a committed relationship (Lever et al., 2008)

Consensual non-monogamy and meeting online. Groups that may have difficulty identifying potential partners in the offline world may use technology to find partners. Those who may be seeking a relationship without expectations of monogamy may find it easier to state their preference and actively seek those online that also have the expectation of non-monogamy from the outset, with the added benefit of a larger sample size. Technology has enabled individuals in committed relationships seeking other partners to do so with transparency and visibility, OkCupid has included a filter for those who label themselves “nonmonogamous” (Dominus, 2017). Data from OkCupid shows 16% of 40-50-yearolds who identify as non-monogamous are married (Dominus, 2017). Specific research has alluded to the fact that swingers are better able to find other like-minded couples online and the rise of the Internet as a venue for members of an “alternative community” to connect has paralleled the rise in prevalence of swingers (Peluso, 2007). Ritchie & Barker (2006a) found that the Internet also plays a prominent role in the polyamory community.

How couples meet may relate to other relationship characteristics, including sexual identity and marital satisfaction, as discussed in sections about the intersectionality of CNM and sexual identity and sexual identity and meeting online. Subjects who had met their spouses online reported higher marital satisfaction than married subjects who met their spouse offline (Cacioppo et al., 2013).

Non-monogamy and relationship satisfaction. Expectations are related to marriage satisfaction, and deviations from the expected are likely to impact marital satisfaction. In terms of the literature, research on consensual non-monogamy and infidelity seem to drastically differ as it relates to relationship satisfaction. Again, the casual nature of the relationship between non-monogamy and relationship satisfaction is complex, whether lower (or higher) relationship satisfaction leads to non-monogamy, or non-monogamy (consensual or non) lead to changes in relationship satisfaction.

Infidelity and relationship satisfaction. There has only recently been research on relationship characteristics and infidelity (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001). Relationship characteristics associated with infidelity include dissatisfaction with the marital relationship (Brown, 1991). Another study found the reverse causal pattern, that subjective marital dissatisfaction was associated with greater likelihood of recent infidelity (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Lower relationship happiness is associated with infidelity in both men and women (Mark, Janssen, & Milhausen, 2011). In a longitudinal study, Amato & Previti (2004) found infidelity was negatively correlated with marital happiness, and infidelity is also correlated with divorce proneness. Other studies have shown that the presence of infidelity alone does not necessarily equal marital dissatisfaction; Nelson (2010) shares that 35-55% of people having affairs reported they were happy in their marriage at the time of infidelity.

Consensual non-monogamy and relationship satisfaction. Within the small, but growing body of qualitative research on CNM relationships, research shows that those in CNM relationships report high degrees of honesty, closeness, happiness, and communication and low degrees of jealousy (Conley et al., 2013b). This has been replicated across many studies and according to many scales. People in CNM relationships are equally happy according to most measures of relationship satisfaction (Barker, 2005; Bonello & Cross, 2010; Klesse, 2006; Visser & McDonald, 2007). In meta-analyses of 32 studies, Rubel and Bogaert (2015) found those in CNM relationships had similar psychological well-being, happiness, and relationship quality as those in monogamous relationships and even greater psychological well being across the domains of excitement and feeling connected with society. Weitzman (2009) found that there was no difference in individuals who were part of a polyamorous couple, family, or those in open marriages as measured by general well-being measures and personality indexes such as the CPI or MMPI. Consensually non-monogamous couples did not differ from monogamous couples on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) a widely used measure that assesses general satisfaction with relationships (Rubel & Bogaert, 2015). Bergstrand and Williams (2010) found that swingers rated higher levels of marital happiness than married couples in the general population. However, in their meta-analysis, Rubel and Bogaert (2015) also found those in CNM relationships had higher rates of divorce than those in monogamous relationships, but the findings are unclear as the temporal order of the divorces and decision to open a relationship up are not detailed. In another longitudinal study (n=82), participants in open marriages were no more likely to have separated after 5 years than those in monogamous marriages (Rubin & Adams, 1986).

Predicting Partner Behavior

Whether there is an explicit agreement (consensual non-monogamy) or not (infidelity), individuals have expectations about their own behavior, as well as their partner's behavior, as relates to maintaining the sexual behavioral contract of a marriage. That is, how accurately individuals predict how they and their partners will behave across situations may vary. Individuals may hold expectations of their partner based on expectations of relationships in general, specific agreed upon parameters of the present relationship, historical factors such as presence of infidelity in past relationships, or projection of one's own wished behaviors onto one's partner, just to name a few. It is important to explore the research on both predicting partner's behavior in general as well as predicting partner's non-monogamous behavior.

Marital dissatisfaction is related to expectations of relationships (Kelley & Burgoon, 1991), especially related to unrealistic expectations and later disappointment (Epstein & Eidelson, 1981). In a book about families coping with stressful events, Demo and Ganong (1994) describe that an individual's unrealistic, idealistic, and overly romantic notions about marriage may be a factor that undermines marital satisfaction. Unrealistic beliefs could include expectations of mind reading, sexual perfection, and the notion that disagreement is destructive, and these expectations are negatively associated with the desire to maintain the marriage (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). One of the most often cited difficulties in a marriage is the fear, anxiety, and disappointment surrounding deviations from an explicit monogamous agreement (Anderson, 2011).

In terms of expectations of non-monogamy and reactions, it has been stated that expectations determine the strength of the "heartache" that adultery brings (Druckerman, 2007). Campbell and Wright (2008) asked newlyweds about their chances of experiencing infidelity and

eventual divorce and found 50% of newlyweds thought there was a chance of experiencing infidelity, and 72% believed there was some chance of experiencing divorce. Feminists who may embrace the “liberated” idea of non-monogamy may nonetheless feel hurt when they learn their partners are not monogamous (Overall, 1998). Thus, having an expectation of non-monogamy does not necessarily relate, or predict, to how a partner or person might react or behave when non-monogamy occurs.

The research is somewhat contradictory in terms of how confident and accurate are individuals at predicting their partners’ behavior. Some studies show partners are no more accurate at predicting their significant others’ behavior than a strangers, others show that partners are fairly accurate, and still others demonstrate partners are somewhat accurate at predicting their partners’ behavior in some circumstances. A study asking one member of a couple to predict how their partner might answer some questions (n=57 couples) suggests that people have a tendency to think they know more than they actually do about their partners. That is, there is dissociation between accuracy of person perceptions and confidence of making those perceptions (Swann & Gill, 1997). Swann and Gill state “People in long-term, committed relationships may be quite bullish about the accuracy of beliefs that are no more accurate than the beliefs of people who have just initiated their relationships” (Swann & Gill, 1997, p. 775). People are overconfident about predicting their partner’s answers, and this can create problematic situations when the lack of insight about accuracy could lead to base important decisions based on erroneous, but confidently held, beliefs.

Other research suggests romantic partners do have accurate perceptions of partners’ sexual needs. In an online survey of 300 couples, De Jong and Reis (2014) found that heterosexual couples were better at identifying partner sexual preferences than randomly

assigned “psuedo couples.” They hypothesize that couples use motivated cognition to over perceive partner preferences as an avenue to maintain and foster sexual satisfaction. They state partners are motivated to accurately perceive each other in order to increase sexual, and, thus, relationship satisfaction. Still other research suggests individuals might not be that accurate at inferring their partners’ thoughts and feelings only when the thoughts and feelings are not relationship-threatening, but when partner’s thoughts and feelings are relationship-threatening, they are more accurately perceived (Ickes & Simpson, 1997; 2001).

To further complicate how accurate individuals are at predicting partners’ behaviors, let’s introduce the idea that we project our own desires and beliefs onto our partners. That is, people project their own attraction to alternative romantic partners onto their romantic partners and this projection may shape anger and negative behavior toward their romantic partner (Neal & Lemay, 2017). A person might state that they believe their partner will have sex outside their dyad, when it is in fact them who has the desire and may act on that desire. It is plausible to deduce that when an individual states their partner is likely to be attracted and have sex outside the relationship, an individual is discussing their own attraction and desire to have sex outside the relationship. This hypothesis was confirmed in Neal and Lemays (2017) study of heterosexual romantic couples (n=96) in which participants’ self-reported attraction to alternatives was more predictive of the perception of a partners’ attraction to alternatives than their partner’s self-reported attraction.

In the face of threats, individuals may utilize relationship-enhancing cognitions to maintain a sense of safety and security (Murray et al., 2009; Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006). This suggests individuals would not be able to acknowledge that they expect their partner to have a sexual relationship outside the dyad because it is simply too threatening to imagine, and that

expectations of partner non-monogamy may be underreported due to the relationship maintenance mechanism (Rusbult et al., 2001). Conversely, some anxious individuals may catastrophize and imagine their partner will have sex with others outside the relationship despite reality-based indicators, such as lack of infidelity or lack of consensual non-monogamous agreement. Simpson, Ickes, & Grich (1999) found that those with anxious-ambivalent attachment styles had less confidence in their relationships and fidelity and may be “hypervigilant to sources of distress.” Thus, some anxious individuals may over-report the likelihood of partner non-monogamy.

The literature on predicting partner behavior, and sexual behavior specifically, is complicated. Individuals may hold expectations of their partner based on expectations of relationships in general, specific agreed upon parameters of the present relationship, historical factors such as presence of infidelity in past relationships, or projection of one’s own behaviors onto one’s partner. The goal of this paper is to investigate two choices individuals and couples make, infidelity and consensual non-monogamy, and explore the personal and relationship characteristics that may lead them to make that choice. Exploring definitions, prevalence numbers, and our understanding of monogamy and the alternatives will ultimately provide a framework for understanding how individuals and couples navigate the fragile, dynamic systems of long-term romantic relationships, marriages, and civil partnerships.

Specific Aims and Hypotheses

Based on the current literature on expectations of monogamy and non-monogamy, I seek to replicate findings of prevalence of non-monogamy, elucidate differences between individuals who expect non-monogamy and those that expect monogamy in terms of person characteristics and relationship characteristics, and, finally, follow up on the most significant predictors of both person and relationship factors as they relate to expectations of non-monogamy.

Aim 1: What are the odds of expectations of non-monogamy?

This study will estimate the prevalence of expectations of monogamy and non-monogamy among adults in committed relationships.

Hypothesis 1. It is hypothesized that the prevalence of expectations of non-monogamy will be comparable to national reported prevalence of non-monogamy as defined as consensual non-monogamy, approximately 5% of the population.

Aim 2: Which person factors are predictive of expectations of non-monogamy?

Characteristics of a person, including demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, and highest level of education attained, and sexual identity will be predictive of expectations of non-monogamy.

Hypothesis 2. It is hypothesized that some person characteristics will be predictive of expectations of non-monogamy. It is expected that age will not be a significant predictor of non-monogamy. It is expected that education will be a significant predictor of non-monogamy. It is hypothesized that men will be more likely than women to have the expectation of non-monogamy and gender will be a significant predictor. Based on the extensive literature exploring sexual minority identity and non-monogamy, it is expected that sexual identity will be a predictor of the expectation of non-monogamy.

Aim 3: Which relationship factors are predictive of expectations of non-monogamy?

Characteristics of a relationship, including meeting online and relationship quality, are predictive of expectations of non-monogamy.

Hypothesis 3. It is hypothesized that participants who met their partner online will be more likely to have expectation of non-monogamy in keeping with both the literature on meeting online and non-monogamy, as well as sexual identity and meeting online. In keeping with the current research on CNM relationship quality, we expect relationship quality to be rated equal or higher; however, in keeping with the current research on infidelity and relationship quality, we would expect relationship quality to be rated lower in the expectation of non-monogamy group. Therefore, we hypothesize the two types of non-monogamy in this sample may balance out. It is hypothesized that relationship quality will not be predictive of expectations of non-monogamy.

Aim 4: Which person and relationship factors are predictive of expectations of non-monogamy?

Characteristics of a both individuals and a relationship, including demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, and highest level of education attained, and sexual identity meeting online and relationship quality, are predictive of expectations of non-monogamy.

Hypothesis 4. It is hypothesized that factors that were predictive of person and relationship factors, highest level of education attained, gender, sexual identity, and meeting online will be predictive of expectations of non-monogamy in a follow up model.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Data Source

The current study utilized a publically available longitudinal data set entitled the How Couples Meet and Stay Together surveys, or “HCMST” (Rosenfeld, Michael J., Reuben J. Thomas, and Falcon, M. (2015). *How Couples Meet and Stay Together, Waves 1, 2, and 3: Public version 3.04, plus wave 4 supplement version 1.02 and wave 5 supplement version 1.0* [Computer files]. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Libraries). The HCMST surveys are a randomly selected and nationally representative survey of 3,009 individuals that were in romantic relationships at the time of the first wave of the survey (2009). Participants were recruited through a nationally representative random digit dialing telephone survey. Participants were followed longitudinally from 2009-2014. The HCMST surveys were implemented by Knowledge Networks/GfK. Participants who did not have Internet access were given Internet access for the purposes of the study. The first wave of HCMST was an Internet survey, and waves 2-5 included both Internet and phone surveys. The HCMT data set is nationally representative of U.S. adults and includes both formal and informal unions, co-resident and non-co-resident couples, and both same-sex and heterosexual couples. The follow-up waves asked about partners identified in Wave 1 to ensure the same relationships were followed over time.

Couples were excluded from the study in subsequent waves if they had broken up in the previous survey or if a partner was reported as deceased. However, as reported by Rosenfeld and Thomas (2012), the loss-to-follow-up did not bias estimates of relationship transitions, such as relationship duration or marriage: previous analyses of HCMST data have shown that the determinants of attrition in the survey data do not include factors that predict couple longevity,

and that results generated by the data remain robust to reweighting that accounts for the effects of attrition on the sample population (Rosenfeld, Thomas & Falcon, 2011).

Participants

Please see Table 1 for demographic characteristics of participants of the How Couples Meet and Stay Together survey broken down by the person variables examined and relationship variables. Participants' person variables included age, level of education, gender, and sexual identity. Relationship variables included relationship quality and whether a couple met online or offline.

Ages ranged from 18-99, with a mean age of 47.51. The frequency of the following age groups was as follows: ages 18-29: 723 participants (18.1% of respondents), ages 30-44: 1086 participants (27.1% of respondents), ages 45-59: 1246 participants (31.1% of respondents), and ages 60+: 947 participants (23.7% of respondents). In terms of highest level of education attained, 398 (9.9%) of participants had below a high school degree, 978 (24.7%) received a high school diploma, 1,210 (30.2%) completed some college or an associates degree, 864 (21.6%) completed a bachelor's degree, and 543 (13.6%) had a masters degree or higher. In terms of gender, 2034 (50.8%) of respondents identified as female and 1967 (49.2%) identify as male. In terms of sexual identity, 919 (23%) of respondents self-reported their identity as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, 3047 (76.1%) do not identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and 35 (.9%) refused to answer the question.

For relationship variables, in terms of the percentage of participants who met their partners online, 286 (7.1%) of total respondents reported they met their partner online. When controlling for cohort effects and the invention of online dating as a mode to meet, as reported by Rosenfeld and Thomas (2012), when controlled for age, the 286 respondents who met their

partner online is approximately 21.5% of those in an age group who had the possibility to meet online. The responses to the relationship questionnaire was broken down as follows on a 1-5 Likert scale (1 being worst relationship quality, 5 being best relationship quality): 9 (0.6%) of participants reported their relationship quality with a rating of 1; 24 (1.7%) of participants reported their relationship quality with a rating of 2; 101 (7.1%) of participants reported their relationship quality with a rating of 3; 496 (34.9%) of participants reported their relationship quality with a rating of 4; and 790 (55.6%) of participants reported their relationship quality with a rating of 5.

Table 1

Characteristics of “How Couples Meet and Stay Together” Participants (2009)

Variables	Frequency (%)	Mean	Range
Age	18-29: 723 (18.1%) 30-44: 1086 (27.1%) 45-59: 1246 (31.1%) 60+: 947 (23.7%)	47.51	18-99
Highest Level of Education Attained	Below H.S. Graduate: 398 (9.9%) H.S. Graduate: 987 (24.7%) Some College/ AD: 1,210 (30.2%) Bach Degree: 864 (21.6%) Masters +: 543 (13.6%)		
Gender	M: 1967 (49.2%) F: 2035 (50.8%)		
Sexual Identity	LGB: 919 (23%) Non LGB: 3047 (76.1%) Refused to answer: 35 (.9%)		
Met Online	286 (7.1%; 21.5% of poss)	--	
Relationship Satisfaction (1-5, 5 being best) (n=1420)	1: 9 (.6%) 2: 24 (1.7%) 3: 101 (7.1%) 4: 496 (34.9%) 5: 790 (55.6%)	4.43	1-5

Note. Citation: Rosenfeld, Michael J., Reuben J. Thomas, and Falcon, M. (2015). *How Couples Meet and Stay Together*, Waves 1, 2, and 3: Public version 3.04, plus wave 4 supplement version 1.02 and wave 5 supplement version 1.0 [Computer files]. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Libraries.

Questionnaire

Demographics

The survey instrument covered a range of additional demographic information examined in both the Knowledge Network prior demographic questionnaire and Wave 1 of the online survey. The demographic variables included age, gender, and years of education, among other variables. Participants self-reported age and gender. The measure for years of education was constructed based on the question “What is the highest level of schooling you received?” and ranges from 0 (none or preschool) to 20 (doctoral degree).

Sexual Identity

Respondents were asked about their sexual identity in a self-report measure. Participants were asked the following question in an online demographic questionnaire from the Knowledge Network Core Adult Profile prior to completing Wave 1 of the survey. Question 23 asked “Are you yourself gay, lesbian, or bisexual?” Participants respond by choosing “Yes,” “No,” or “I would prefer to not answer this question.”

Relationship Onset – How Couples Meet

The data set queried people regarding how they met. The original survey instrument included an open-end response to the wave 1 question 24 “Please write the story of how you and [Partner_Name] first met and got to know one another” and based on the response, coded those subjects as meeting the partner online. To capture those the long-form responses coders may have missed, participants were also asked question 32 from HCMT wave 1 “Did you use an internet service to meet [Partner_Name]?” Those that answered “yes” were additionally coded as meeting online. Because the data set includes couples of all ages, older couples would not have

had the opportunity to meet their partners online. Rosenfeld and Thomas (2012) operationalized 1995 or later as cut off years for the Internet era as an avenue to meet online. With that definition, only 1,341 subjects had the opportunity to meet their partners online, or 44.6% of the sample.

Relationship Quality

Relationship satisfaction was measured utilizing the relationship quality survey question from wave 4, “In general, how would you describe the quality of your relationship with [your partner]?” The possible responses included a 5-point scale (1 = Excellent, 5 = Poor) as defining relationship quality. This measure of relationship quality is based on face validity.

Non-Monogamy

Participants were queried regarding expectations of non-monogamy. The non-monogamy variable is obtained from responses to the survey question “Do you expect [partner’s name] to have sexual activity with only you?” during Wave 5 of the survey. Response choices were, “Yes, I expect that [partner’s name] will only have sex with me,” or “No, I expect [partner’s name] to have sex with other people besides me.” The variable was coded as 0 if the respondent had the expectation of monogamy, and 1 if the respondent answered no, they did not expect monogamy.

Procedure

Participants agreed to partake in the study after the initial phone screening and were surveyed online by Knowledge Network and committed to the study to be surveyed annually. Participants were asked if they were still together with the original partner they had included in the study at Wave 1 and were excluded from follow up questions or waves if they had broken up or the partner had deceased. Again, the key determinants of response to the HCMST follow-up

surveys were respondents' presence in KN panel and not any factor that predicts couple longevity (e.g., relationship duration or marriage) (Rosenfeld, 2014).

Participants were asked about different aspects of their relationship in various waves. The response and inclusion rate for each wave was as follows (Figure 1):

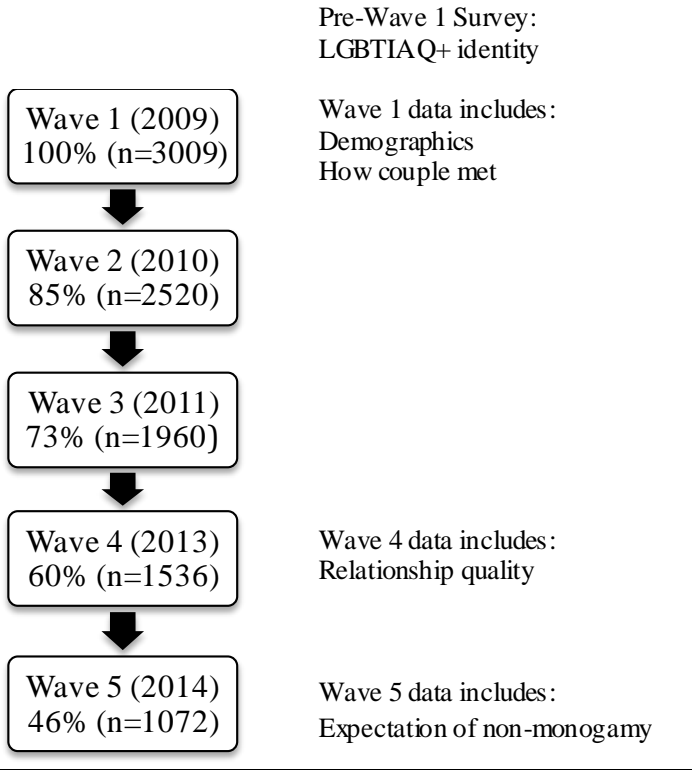


Figure 1. Participant flow and drop-off.

Data Analyses Plan

Using the sample of 1,047 participants with no missing from Wave 5, it is anticipated there will be significant power to detect associations with predictors and dependent variables.

Aim 1 Analysis

This study seeks to determine the odds of expectations of non-monogamy in this sample. Descriptive statistics will be utilized based on proportions of people who endorsed expectation of monogamy and expectation of non-monogamy (wave 5 survey, question 32).

Aim 2 Analysis

This study further seeks to explore characteristics of a person that correlate with expectations of non-monogamy, which include demographic characteristics and sexual identity. For the second aim, a logistic regression model will be utilized to determine person characteristics as predictors of expectations of non-monogamy. The dependent variable is the expectation of non-monogamy, and the predictors are age, gender, level of education, and sexual identity. Age, gender, and level of education will be based on the information provided at wave 1. Sexual identity will be based on the information provided in the KN prior demographic questionnaire. The dependent variable will be recoded: Expectations of Monogamy = 0, Expectations of Non-Monogamy = 1. Gender will be recoded: Male = 1, Female = 0. Highest level of education received will be recoded: Did not Complete High School = 1, Completed High School = 2, Completed College = 3, Completed Masters level education or above = 4. Sexual identity will be recoded: lesbian, gay, bisexual = 1, heterosexual = 0.

Aim 3 Analysis

This study seeks to explore characteristics of a relationship that correlate with expectations of non-monogamy, which include meeting online and relationship quality. For the

third aim, a logistic regression model will be utilized to determine person characteristics as predictors of expectations of non-monogamy. The dependent variable is the expectation of non-monogamy, and the predictors are meeting online (wave 1) and relationship satisfaction (wave 4).

Aim 4 Analysis

This study seeks to explore characteristics of a both individual and relationship characteristics with expectations of non-monogamy, including factors such as age, gender, highest level of education attained, sexual identity, meeting online, and relationship quality. A follow up logistic regression (Model 3) will be utilized to explore statistically significant predictors, both person and relationship characteristics, of age, gender, highest level of education attained, sexual identity, meeting online, and relationship quality to predict the dependent variable, the expectation of non-monogamy.

Odds ratios will be reported for effect sizes. Exploratory analyses will compare the groups expecting monogamy versus expecting non-monogamy on other personal and relationship characteristics, such as religiosity, subjective attractiveness of partner, and parental approval of the relationship. An alpha of .05 two-tailed will be the cutoff used to determine if the results are statistically significant at the conventional 5% threshold that is the conventional cutoff for statistical significance in the relevant psychology literature.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Participants

Demographics for the entire “How Couples Meet and Stay Together” study were reported in the Methods section. Demographic characteristics of the sample used for statistical analysis are shown in Table 2. Results for gender, age, highest level of education achieved, sexual identity, whether a couple met online or offline, and relationship satisfaction are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Sample

(n= 1047 Participants)

Variables	Frequency (%)	Mean	Range
Age	18-29: 167 (16%) 30-44: 332 (31.7%) 45-59: 348 (33.2%) 60+: 200 (19.1%)	45.03	19-85
Highest Level of Education Attained	Below H.S. Graduate: 74 (7.1%) H.S. Graduate: 234 (22.3%) Some College/ AD: 237 (22.7%) Bach Degree: 286 (27.3%) Masters +: 216 (20.6%)		
Gender	M: 557 (53.2%) F: 490 (46.8%)		
Sexual Identity	LGB: 229 (21.9%) Non LGB: 818 (78.1%)		
Met Online	Met online: 76 (7.3%) Did not: 968 (92.5%)	--	
Relationship Satisfaction (1-5, 5 being best)	1: 5 (.5%) 2: 13 (1.2%) 3: 70 (6.6%) 4: 341 (32.3%) 5: 545 (51.6%)	4.43	1-5

The current study sample, which was focused on Wave 5 participants with complete data (n=1047) who were asked the question about non-monogamy, differed from the original participants in the HCMST study (n=4002) in some ways. The sample analyzed has slight differences in terms of age, highest level of education achieved, gender, sexual identity, and whether they met online or not. The sample's mean age was 45.03, while the HCMST study mean age was 47.51. It is worth discussing some of the differences in highest level of education attained. The non-monogamy study included a higher proportion of participants with Masters degrees or higher as compared to the HCMST study (20.6% vs. 13.6%). Proportions of sexual minority identity individuals (21.9% in our sample and 23% overall) were comparable in both studies, as well percentage of individuals who met their partner online (7.3% vs. 7.1%).

Hypothesis 1: Prevalence Results

H1: It is hypothesized that the prevalence of expectations of monogamy and non-monogamy among adults in committed relationships in this sample is comparable to the national reported prevalence of consensual non-monogamy, which is approximately 5% of the population.

Results

A frequency analysis based on the answer to the question in Wave 5 of the survey "Do you expect [partner's name] to have sexual activity with only you?" is shown in Table 3: Prevalence of Expectations of Non-Monogamy. 1007 (93.9%) of respondents answered "Yes, I expect [partner name] will only have sex with me." 50 (4.7%) of respondents answered "No, I expect [partner name] will have sex with other people besides me." 15 (1.4%) of respondents refused to answer. The 4.7% of respondents who expect their partner to have sex with other people is consistent with the hypothesis that the prevalence of expectations of non-monogamy is

comparable to the national reported prevalence of non-monogamy, approximately 5% of the population.

Table 3

Prevalence of Expectations of Non-Monogamy

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Yes, I expect [partner name] will only have sex with me	1007	93.9%
No, I expect [partner name] will have sex with other people besides me	50	4.7%
Refused to answer	15	1.4%
Total	1072	100%

For the purpose of further analysis, the following (Table 4) were the results when participants with missing data at any point of the survey were excluded.

Table 4

Prevalence of Expectations of Non-Monogamy in Sample

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Yes, I expect [partner name] will only have sex with me	997	95.2%
No, I expect [partner name] will have sex with other people besides me	50	4.8%
Total	1047	100%

Hypothesis 2: Person Factors Results

H2: It is hypothesized that some person characteristics will be predictive of expectations of non-monogamy. It is expected that age will not be a significant predictor of non-monogamy. It is expected that education will be a significant predictor of non-monogamy. It is hypothesized that gender will be a significant predictor, and men will be more likely than women to have the

expectation of non-monogamy. Finally, it is expected that sexual minority identity will be a predictor of the expectation of non-monogamy.

Results

For hypothesis 2, the following were entered as predictor variables: age, highest level of education attained, gender, and sexual identity. The dependent variable was the expectation of non-monogamy, defined as answering “no” to the non-monogamy item (question 32) on wave 5 of the survey. A logistic regression of person characteristics (age, level of education, gender, and sexual identity) as it relates to expectations of non-monogamy was run. Gender was coded as male = 1, female = 0, sexual identity was recoded as LGB=1, nonLGB=0; respondent age and self-reported highest level of education attained were input as reported. Participants who did not respond, refused to answer, or were missing data from any of the items were excluded from analysis. For results see Table 5 below.

Table 5

Person Factors Logistic Regression Results

	Estimate	Std. Error	Significance	Odds Ratio
Age	-.015	.012	.217	.985
Education	-.175	.082	.032*	.839
Gender M=1; F=0	.652	.318	.040*	1.920
Sexual Identity LGB = 1; non LGB=0	2.448	.347	<.001*	11.561
Constant	-1.814	1.496	.080	.163

Note. * Denotes significance at the 0.05 level.

Consistent with the hypothesis, age was not associated with expectations of non-monogamy ($B = -.015$, $p = .217$, $OR = 0.99$). Education was a predictor of expectations of non-monogamy ($B = -.175$, $p = .032$, $OR = 0.84$). In terms of directionality, persons with lower education were more likely to report of expectations of non-monogamy. Gender was a significant predictor of expectations of non-monogamy: specifically being male is statistically associated with higher odds of expecting of non-monogamy ($B = .652$, $p = .040$, $OR = 1.92$); that males were almost 2x as likely to endorse expectations of their partner's non-monogamy. Finally, sexual identity was a predictor of expectations of non-monogamy. Identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual is statistically associated with expectations of non-monogamy ($B = 2.448$, $p < .001$, $OR = 11.56$); those identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual were 11.5x more likely to endorse expecting their partner's non-monogamy.

Hypothesis 3: Relationship Factors Results

H3: It is hypothesized that participants who met their partner online will be more likely to have expectation of non-monogamy. It is hypothesized that relationship quality will not be predictive of expectations of non-monogamy.

Results

For hypothesis 3, the following were entered as predictor variables: relationship quality, and whether the couple met online or not. Meeting online was recoded as meeting online =1, not meeting online=0. The dependent variable was the expectation of non-monogamy, defined as answering “no” to non-monogamy item (question 32) on wave 5 of the survey. See results in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Relationship Factors Logistic Regression Results

	Estimate	Std. Error	Significance	Odds Ratio
Met online	-.520	.646	.420	.594
Relationship Quality	-.939	.157	<.001*	.391
Constant	.987	.635	.120	2.282

Note. * Denotes significance at the 0.05 level.

Contrary to the a priori hypothesis, meeting online was not a statistically significant predictor of expectations of non-monogamy (B=-.520 p=.420, OR=.59). Also contrary to the hypothesis, relationship quality was determined to be a statistically significant predictor of non-monogamy. That is, high relationship satisfaction reduced the probability of expecting non-monogamy (B=-.939, p<.001, OR=.39).

Hypothesis 4: Follow Up Analyses

A third follow up logistic regression model, combining person and relationship characteristics, was run. The following were entered as predictor variables: highest level of education received, gender, age at time of wave 1 survey, identification as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, relationship quality, and whether the couple met online or not. The dependent variable is the expectation of non-monogamy, defined as answering “no” to question non-monogamy item on wave 5 of the survey. Results can be seen in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Person + Relationship Factors Logistic Regression Results

	Estimate	Std. Error	Significance	Odds Ratio
Age	-.005	.014	.730	.995
Education	-.189	.089	.033*	.828
Gender M=1; F=0	.655	.346	.058	1.925
Sexual Identity LGB=1; no LGB=0	2.682	.388	<.001*	14.610
Met Online	-.956	.664	.150	.384
Relationship Quality	-1.193	.185	<.001*	.303
Constant	2.806	1.410	.045	16.547

Note. * Denotes significance at the 0.05 level.

Age was not associated with expectations of non-monogamy ($B=-.005$, $p=.730$, $OR=.99$)

Highest level of education was associated with expectations of non-monogamy ($B=-.189$, $p=.033$, $OR=.83$), that is, lower levels of education were associated with expectations of non-monogamy. Gender was not associated with expectations of non-monogamy ($B=.655$, $p=.058$, $OR=1.93$) in this model. Sexual minority identity was associated with expectations of non-monogamy, that is identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual is associated with expecting non-monogamy ($B=2.682$, $p<.001$, $OR=14.61$). Meeting online was not associated with expectations of non-monogamy ($B=-.956$, $p=.150$, $OR=.38$). Lower relationship quality was associated with expectations of non-monogamy ($B=-1.193$, $p<.001$, $OR=.30$). A correlation to check for collinearity was performed, and no variables were determined to be collinear.

The proportion of participants reporting varying levels of education, age, gender, sexual identity, how a couple met, and relationship satisfaction are shown in the tables below:

Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Age; Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Level of Education; Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Gender; Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Sexual Identity; Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Met Online; Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Relationship Quality; and Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Gender and Sexual Identity. Of note is Table 15, Crosstabulation of Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Gender and Sexual Identity, where one can see the proportion of each gender and whether they identified as LGB or non-LGB as it relates to expectations of non-monogamy. Within the non-LGB group, 361 females reported expectations of partner monogamy (96% of non-LGB women, 45% of non-LGB who expected monogamy), and 13 non-LGB females reported expectations of non-monogamy (4% of non-LGB women, 76% of non-LGB people who expected non-monogamy). Within the Non-LGB group, 440 males reported expectations of partner monogamy (99% of non-LGB men, 55% of non-LGB people who expected monogamy), and 4 non-LGB males reported expectations of non-monogamy (1% of non-LGB men, 24% of non-LGB people who expected non-monogamy). Within the LGB group, 111 females reported expectations of partner monogamy (96% of LGB women, 57% of LGB people who expected monogamy), and 5 LGB females reported expectations of non-monogamy (4% of LGB women, 15% of LGB people who expected non-monogamy). Within the LGB group, 85 males reported expectations of partner monogamy (75% of LGB men, 43% of LGB people who expected monogamy), and 28 LGB males reported expectations of non-monogamy (25% of LGB men, 85% of LGB people who expected non-monogamy). There was no statistically significant relationship between gender and sexual identity and expectations of non-monogamy at the $p < 0.05$ level.

Table 8

Crosstabulation of Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Age

Age	Monogamy	Non-Monogamy	χ^2	Φ
			4.363	.064
18-29	160	8		
	95% ^a	5%		
	16% ^b	16%		
30-44	324	11		
	97%	3%		
	32%	22%		
45-59	329	23		
	93%	7%		
	33%	46%		
60+	194	8		
	96%	4%		
	19%	16%		

Note. ^aWithin Age %

^b Within Expectations of Non-Monogamy.

Table 9

Crosstabulation of Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Level of Education

Education	Monogamy	Non-Monogamy	χ^2	Φ
			5.720	.074
< High School	84 99% ^a 8% ^b	1 1% 2%		
High School	242 96% 24%	9 4% 18%		
Some College	229 93% 23%	17 7% 34%		
Bach Degree +	452 95% 45%	23 5% 46%		

Note. ^aWithin Education %

^b Within Expectations of Non-Monogamy.

Table 10

Crosstabulation of Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Gender

Gender	Monogamy	Non-Monogamy	χ^2	Φ
			2.558	.049
Male	528	32		
	94% ^a	6%		
	52% ^b	64%		
Female	479	18		
	96%	4%		
	48%	36%		

Note.^a Within Gender %

^b Within Expectations of Non-Monogamy.

Table 11

Crosstabulation of Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Sexual Identity

Sexual Identity	Monogamy	Non-Monogamy	χ^2	Φ
			59.835*	.239
LGB	196	33		
	86% ^a	14%		
	20% ^b	66%		
Non-LGB	801	17		
	98%	2%		
	80%	34%		

Note.^a Within Sexual Identity %

*Denotes Significance at p<.001

^b Within Expectations of Non-Monogamy.

Table 12

Crosstabulation of Sexual Identity and Gender

Sexual Identity	Female	Male	χ^2	Φ
			4.343	.037
LGB	439 48% ^a 22% ^b	480 52% 24%		
Non-LGB	1575 52% 78%	1472 48% 76%		

Note. ^aWithin Sexual Identity %

^b Within Gender.

Table 13

Crosstabulation of Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Whether Couple Met Online

Met Online	Monogamy	Non-Monogamy	χ^2	Φ
			.016	.004
Met Online	75 95% ^a 8% ^b	4 5% 8%		
Did Not Meet Online	922 95% 92%	46 5% 92%		

Note. ^aWithin Met Online/ Not Meet Online %

^b Within Expectations of Non-Monogamy.

Table 14

Crosstabulation of Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Relationship Quality

Relationship Quality	Monogamy	Non-Monogamy	χ^2	Φ
			72.396*	.273
Rel. Quality Score=1	5 100% ^a 1% ^b	0 0% 0%		
Rel. Quality Score=2	7 54% 1%	6 46% 13%		
Rel. Quality Score=3	60 86% 7%	11 14% 21%		
Rel. Quality Score=4	321 94% 35%	21 6% 42%		
Rel. Quality Score=5	534 98% 57%	12 2% 23%		

Note. ^aWithin Relationship Quality Score %

* Denotes significance at p<.001

^b Within Expectations of Non-Monogamy.

Table 15

Crosstabulation of Expectations of Non-Monogamy and Gender and Sexual Identity

		Monogamy	Non-Monogamy	χ^2	Φ
Non-				2.460	.117
LGB	Female	361	13		
		96% ^a	4%		
		45% ^b	76%		
	Male	440	4		
		99%	1%		
		55%	24%		
LGB	Female	111	5		
		96% ^a	4%		
		57% ^b	15%		
	Male	85	28		
		75%	25%		
		43%	85%		

Note. ^a Within Gender %

^b Within Expectations of Non-Monogamy.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Major Findings

Major findings from the study include replication and support for some of the existing beliefs and data on non-monogamy, as well as some results that exist in contrast to and/or expand upon the current understanding of non-monogamy. The prevalence of expectations of partner non-monogamy in this study was comparable to known prevalence of consensual non-monogamy numbers, about 5%. The major findings from the regression models yielded a significant result that sexual identity, lower highest level of education attained, and lower relationship satisfaction were predictive of expectations of non-monogamy. The logistic regression focused on person factors (age, gender, highest level of education attained, and sexual identity) yielded the major result, consistent with the literature, that sexual identity, specifically identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, was predictive of expectations of non-monogamy. The person factors regression also yielded significant results that being male and lower levels of education were predictive of non-monogamy. The relationship factors (how a couple met and relationship quality) regression yielded the significant result that lower self-reported relationship quality was predictive of expectations of non-monogamy. The major findings from the follow up regression model which included both person and relationship factors (age, gender, highest level of education attained, sexual identity, how a couple met, and relationship quality) were somewhat consistent with the findings from the separate models. Only sexual identity, level of education, and relationship satisfaction were predictive of expectations of non-monogamy and gender was not found to be a predictive factor in the follow up regression. The results warrant further exploration, as well as explanation of possible confounding factors.

Hypothesis 1: Prevalence

In the current study sample of 1047 individuals, 50 stated the explicit expectation of non-monogamy from their partner, approximately 4.8% of the sample analyzed. This estimate is consistent with existing prevalence numbers of consensual non-monogamy, and this results is significantly lower than estimated prevalence numbers of infidelity. The current sample's prevalence number may be underestimated given stigma. As discussed, there may be a stigma and underreporting bias associated with reporting expectations of non-monogamy for individuals and couples that fall under both categories: infidelity and consensual non-monogamy (Treas & Giesen, 2000; Conley et al., 2013a). Most research either focuses on past behaviors of infidelity or current active participation in a consensually non-monogamous relationship – not future focused questions around expectations, which our sample covered.

The results of prevalence of expectations of non-monogamy in this sample are lower than the prevalence estimates of infidelity according to the literature. Some literature does not distinguish between consensual and non-consensual extramarital sex (Laumann et al, 1994; Greeley, 1991, 1994), and they report prevalence rates of 20-25% of their samples. Research specifically focused on past infidelity behaviors estimates the prevalence to be any where 25% to 60-70%, depending on the sample and specific question asked, with 20-35% reported in a meta-analysis (Lehmiller, 2015; Vangelisti & Gernstenberger, 2004; Robinson, 1997; Wiederman & Hurd, 1999; Anderson, 2011; Tafoya & Spitzberg, 2007).

The prevalence of expectations of non-monogamy in this sample is consistent with accepted prevalence of consensual non-monogamy. Research specifically focused on consensual non-monogamy estimate that the prevalence is approximately 4-5% of the population of the United States (Rouse, 2013; Rubin et al., 2014; Conley et al., 2013a), and within certain groups a

higher prevalence of 15% (Peluso, 2007; Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983). It is tempting to conclude that because the estimated prevalence of non-monogamy in the current study is consistent with the known prevalence of consensual non-monogamy, that the sample is capturing those who have the expectation of non-monogamy because they are individuals in consensually non-monogamous relationships. However, this conclusion cannot be drawn due to the nature of the research question.

In regards to the literature on predicting partner behavior, in terms of research implications of this finding, it is possible that the sample captures 50 individuals who may fall into the category of consensually non-monogamous. It is also possible some or all of these 50 individuals expect non-monogamy due to expected infidelity. Finally, there is some research that suggests that introducing the idea that a partner may be non-monogamous is simply too threatening, leading to the result that people may underreport expectations of non-monogamy (Rusbult et al., 2001). Others argue ambivalent-anxious individuals would over-report expectations of non-monogamy (Simpson, Ickes, & Grich, 1999). It is unclear where our sample might fall in terms of attachment and personality factors, and this is an area for future research directions. There is no existing research on how often individuals correctly predict or are surprised at a partner's infidelity, and the correlation between expectations of infidelity and actual reported infidelity behavior is unclear. Research implications of this finding elucidate the need to distinguish the relationship between past, current, and future expectations of non-monogamy, as well as to differentiate between infidelity and consensual non-monogamy.

Clinical implications of this finding are significant. Regardless of whether the expectation of non-monogamy is consensual or not, a significant portion of the population across age, gender, and sexual identity (4-5% of individuals) do not expect monogamy in their romantic

relationship. Defining a romantic relationship as monogamous, assuming it is, or including that as a goal of therapy for individuals or couples excludes as significant a portion of the population as those that identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual. Specific clinical attention should be paid to potential anxiety about the future of a partner's sexual relationship with another person, as well as focused questions or therapy around the contributing factors to one's expectation of non-monogamy. As discussed, this expectation of non-monogamy may be due to projections of one's own split off desires, past partner behavior, general anxious attachment style, or explicit consensual agreement based on shared values and desires (Neal & Lemay, 2017; Murray et al., 2009; Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006). Depending on the clinical presentation and reasons behind the expectation of non-monogamy, treatment might vastly differ.

Hypothesis 2: Person Factors

The logistic regression of Model 1 focused on person factors that may impact expectations of non-monogamy, specifically exploring age, highest level of education attained, gender and sexual identity. The results revealed that education, gender, and sexual identity were predictors of expectations of non-monogamy. The existing literature on age and the relationship to expectations of non-monogamy was inconclusive, both for infidelity and consensual non-monogamy (Wiederman, 1997; Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Hauptert et al., 2016; Moors et al., 2014; Conley et al., 2013a). Our results were consistent with the literature in that age was not a significant predictor of expectations of non-monogamy.

The results found that lower levels of education attained were predictive of expectations of non-monogamy, is inconsistent with the literature. The literature on consensual non-monogamy indicates either that higher levels of education are associated with CNM (Sheff & Hammers, 2011), or that there is no relationship between education and non-monogamy (Hauptert

et al., 2016). Existing literature on infidelity also seems to indicate higher levels of education are related to infidelity (Smith, 1994; Amato & Roger, 1997) or unrelated (Treas & Giesen, 2000). The current study results that lower levels of education are associated with non-monogamy exist in contrast to the current understanding of the relationship between education and non-monogamy. An interpretation can be made that because our sample is highly educated (20.6% with a Masters degree, 47.9% with a Bachelor's Degree or higher), they are not representative of the general population, and that the "lower levels of education" in this sample that are statistically significant and predictive of non-monogamy are actually capturing individuals of average levels of education. According to the U.S. Census (2016), 32.5% of Americans have a Bachelor's Degree or higher, and 12.0% with a Masters' Degree, which is significantly lower than our sample's level of education attained. It is also possible that lower levels of education are related to expectations of non-monogamy and this has not been captured or explored thoroughly.

Gender related results were somewhat consistent with the literature on non-monogamy. Being male was statistically associated with predicting expectations of partner non-monogamy. Some researchers (Conley et al., 2013a; Rubin et al., 2014) did not find gender was a predictor of consensual non-monogamy, while others found being male is related to consensual non-monogamy (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Hauptert et al., 2016; Moors et al., 2015). Most studies have found that men are more likely to engage in infidelity and extramarital sex than women (Smith, 1994; Johnson, 1972; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953; Shackelford & Buss, 1997; Wiederman, 1997). A few other studies found negligible differences in gender in terms of who engages in infidelity (Treas & Giesen, 2000; Rubin et al., 2014; Allen et al., 2005).

The current finding, that men are more likely than women to endorse expectations of non-monogamy, is broadly supportive of evolutionary theory hypotheses that men have an evolutionary instinct to be less monogamous than women (Tsape las, Fisher, & Aron, 2011; Schmookler & Bursik, 2007). However, due to the nature of the research question, the result that gender is predictive of expectations of the other partner is somewhat contradictory to the research of heterosexual couples and infidelity, which demonstrates that men are more likely to participate in infidelity, not expect their partners (women) to participate. With that in mind, one would expect that women would be more likely to expect their partners would engage in non-monogamy according to research on predictive behavior of heterosexual couples and extramarital affairs, and our results might be somewhat contradictory.

The study yielded significant sexual identity results, that identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual was predictive of expectations of non-monogamy, a finding consistent with the literature on sexual identity and expectations of sexual relationships outside of the dyad. Identifying as lesbian, gay, and bisexual as it is related to consensual non-monogamy has been repeatedly discussed and explored as a related and predictive factor (Heaphy, Donovan, & Weeks, 2004; Hauptert et al., 2016; Leeker & Carlozzi, 2014; Blumstein & Swartz, 1983; Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1995; Dominus, 2007). However, the literature also cautions against the oversimplification that extramarital sexual relationships are “not just a gay male thing” (Moors et al., 2014), and the researcher would like to echo that sentiment. Conclusions drawn about those who identify as LGB, an already stigmatized group, as causally related to those who practice non-monogamy (consensually or not), another stigmatized group, is potentially problematic. Additional caution interpreting this finding is warranted in the context of the complex sociopolitical history, specifically linking gay men and the expectation of non-monogamy, to

HIV/AIDS and other STIs. However, this finding is important, and can be interpreted within the context that those who do not conform or follow a heteronormative script have the (forced) freedom to “write their own rules” when it comes to all aspects of relationships, including monogamy as a compulsory facet.

Research implications of these findings, that lower levels of education, being male, and identifying as lesbian, gay, and bisexual, are predictive of expectations of non-monogamy, call for further exploration. In regards to the relationship between highest level of education attained and expectations of non-monogamy, which contradicted existing understanding of the relationship between education and non-monogamy; more granular research is needed to explore the relationship, if any, between education and non-monogamy, defined as both CNM and infidelity. Though this data did not reflect it, exploring any interaction effects between education, gender, sexual identity, and other factors may be interesting to see if the predictive power of level of education is better accounted for by another factor. The research implications around gender as predictive of non-monogamy are interesting. Research around gender differences and the temporal nature of non-monogamy is an interesting future direction, if men compared to women have a higher expectation of partner non-monogamous in CNM compared to infidelity, and how gender expectations of their own non-monogamy behavior may differ. Exploring interaction factors of gender and sexual identity is another interesting research implication to parse out: our research did not find an interaction effect between gender and sexual identity, which could indicate that gay men were not overwhelmingly impacting the sample such that it was difficult to disentangle the influence of gender from that of sexual identity. In the crosstabulation exploring interaction effects of gender and sexual identity as it relates to expectations of non-monogamy (Table 15), though there were different proportions of

gay men and gay women who expressed expectations of partner non-monogamy, only 25% of gay men reported expectations of non-monogamy, a number lower than the expected for both CNM and infidelity. Further research around specifically temporal expectations of consensual non-monogamy, at the outset of a relationship compared to after infidelity, is warranted to compare and contrast groups and see if differences in person and relationship factors may impact how and when and CNM decisions are made.

Clinical implications about these findings call for a more nuanced understanding of monogamy in relationships, specifically for clinicians working with sexual minority populations in individual and couple's work. Given that many individuals and couples feel stigmatized (even by their therapist) (Conley et al., 2013a) from disclosing their non-monogamy, it is important to ask open questions and used non-judgmental language around expectations of monogamy in light of these findings. Therapists working with those who identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual could further educate themselves on the nuances within culture of non-monogamy, the different definitions of CNM and each couple's explicit agreement, and common clinical issues that arise as a result of non-monogamy, to provide culturally competent care. Care and clinical judgment must be utilized differentiating between individuals and couples with expectations of non-monogamy due to other attachment and relational issues, and those who have evolved those expectations after some time and (perhaps trial and error) who have come to that conclusion.

Hypothesis 3: Relationship Factors

The relationship factors study results focused on meeting online and relationship satisfaction that may predict expectations of non-monogamy. The results of this study indicated that meeting online was not found to be predictive of expectations of non-monogamy, while relationship satisfaction was found to be predictive of expectations of non-monogamy. That is

lower self-reported relationship satisfaction was a significant predictor of expectations of partner non-monogamy.

The result that meeting online was not statistically associated with expectations of non-monogamy is surprising given the literature. Cohort effects (Hogan & Dutton, 2011) are often cited as a major factor for meeting online. The study sample included a relatively small percentage (7.3%) of individuals who meet their partner online, significantly lower than others have estimated, which is around 33% for couples who married between 2005-2015 (Cacioppo et al., 2013; Mileham, 2007). It is even more surprising given that the sample had a significant percentage of individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual, a group that is even more likely to meet a partner online (Lever et al., 2008). The paucity of research exploring how a couple met (online vs. offline) as it relates to infidelity makes it difficult to compare our results to the existing literature on infidelity and how a couple met. As discussed, much of the research on meeting online relates to using the internet as a place to meet potential extradyadic partners (Wysocki & Childers, 2011; Cohen, 2008; Infidelity check, 2002; Mileham, 2007; Lever et al., 2008). Research on consensual non-monogamy and the internet as a platform to connect members of this “alternative community” would lead one to conclude that those seeking CNM relationships with the expectation of partner non-monogamy are more likely to meet their partner online than offline (Dominus, 2017; Ritchie & Barker, 2006; Peluso, 2007). One possible explanation is perhaps the 50 individuals who identify as expecting their partner to have sex with someone besides them are impacted by cohort factors. When the longitudinal study began in 2009, online dating was in its early days. Since the research question focuses on expectations (future) and the construct of meeting partner online (past), a temporal factor could explain why these results do not fit with existing literature. Another possibility is that meeting offline or

online simply does not impact or affect an individual's expectation of partner non-monogamy and our understanding of the relationship between non-monogamy and meeting online warrants further research.

The result that lower relationship satisfaction was predictive of expectations of non-monogamy also exists (somewhat) in contrast to interpretations of the existing literature. The literature on infidelity and relationship satisfaction describes a relationship between low relationship satisfaction and infidelity (Brown, 1991; Mark, Janssen, & Milhausen, 2011; Amato & Previti, 2004), but that the causality of the relationship between satisfaction and infidelity was complex and perhaps bidirectional: infidelity leads to relationship dissatisfaction and relationship dissatisfaction leads to infidelity (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Others describe infidelity and marital satisfaction as unrelated, and that a percentage of people were satisfied and non-monogamous (Nelson, 2010). Research on relationship satisfaction and consensual non-monogamy indicates relationship satisfaction is as high, or higher, compared to those who are not in CNM relationships (Conley et al., 2013; Barker, 2005; Bonello & Cross, 2010; Klesse, 2006; Visser & McDonald, 2007; Rubel & Bogaert, 2015; Weitzman, 2009; Spanier, 1976; Berstrand & Williams, 2010). The results regarding relationship satisfaction are consistent within the literature on infidelity and relationship satisfaction, and not the literature on CNM and relationship satisfaction; however, our prevalence data seems to indicate this group is more similar in numbers to CNM than infidelity.

A factor that warrants further analysis is exploration of the relationship satisfaction question on the self-report survey. More than half (545, 51.6%) of respondents self-reported their relationship satisfaction was a perfect 5 out of 5 on a scale of 1-5. The mean score on this face-validity measure of relationship satisfaction was 4.43. It is apparent, based on rates of

divorce and dissatisfaction reported on more nuanced measures that 50% or more of people would seemingly not describe their relationships as perfect 5 out of 5s. It could be interpreted that the majority of individuals who were “mostly happy” circled 5, without giving the question further thought. It is also understood that those who identify as CNM and have the expectation of non-monogamy may be more critical, reflective and thoughtful about relationships in general. It is possible individuals in this group thought critically about this question and assigned a more “realistic” satisfaction score of 3 or 4. Again, the causality of the nature of the question relationship satisfaction and expectations of non-monogamy warrants attention. The current study shows a relationship between low satisfaction and expectations of non-monogamy. The current study calls raises questions such as, does the expectation of partner non-monogamy lead to a lower score of relationship satisfaction, or does the lower score of relationship satisfaction lead to the expectation of partner non-monogamy? Further, is this observation translatable given the distribution of the responses to the question? Theoretical implications and support for attachment theory is considered in the discussion of the follow up logistic regression results.

The research implications of the significant finding that lower relationship satisfaction was predictive that someone would expect non-monogamy from their partner deserves further research. Replicating this correlational study, and including a more discrete, sensitive measure of relationship satisfaction rather than a single item, would provide necessary information about the strength of the relationship between relationship satisfaction and expectations of non-monogamy, as well as some questions about directionality. There may be a third factor, such as trait perfectionism, that is an explanatory mechanism for both critical analysis of one’s own relationship, as well as seeking all available options, including consensual non-monogamy, for an “ideal relationship.” Studies specifically differentiating between types of non-monogamy,

infidelity compared and contrasted to consensual non-monogamy, as it relates to relationship satisfaction, are important when considering research implications of this finding.

Clinical implications that low relationship satisfaction and expectations of non-monogamy may be related are multifaceted. Whether expectations of non-monogamy are consensual or not, that there is existing relationship dissatisfaction leads individual and couples in this category to be increasingly vulnerable. Clinicians must reflect on and explore the nuances of relationship satisfaction to uncover areas are most concerning, and which areas may be sources of strength within the broader framework of relationship satisfaction. Questioning the goals of therapy, if a couple is presenting with expectations of non-monogamy as well as low relationship satisfaction, are important. Exploring all potential areas of coercion, where one partner agreed to a non-monogamous arrangement out of fear, distinguishing between choosing non-monogamy in theory and in practice, as well as other power dynamics, including gender, which may be impacting the individuals and couple should be considered. There is a wide range of clinical materials and responses to infidelity, less clinical materials for how to support an individual or couple after consensual non-monogamy and this is a growing area of clinical need.

Hypothesis 4: Person Factors + Relationship Factors

The follow up logistic regression included both person factors and relationship factors that may impact expectations of non-monogamy. The follow up regression model included predictor variables of age, level of education, gender, sexual identity, how a couple met, and relationship satisfaction. Age was not found to be a statistically significant predictor, consistent with the literature (Wiederman, 1997; Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Hauptert et al., 2016; Moors et al., 2014; Conley et al., 2013a). Level of education was found to be a statistically significant predictor, but not in the directionality consistent with the

literature which indicates higher levels of education may be related to both infidelity and consensual non-monogamy (Sheff & Hammers, 2011; Smith, 1994; Amato & Roger, 1997), or that there is no relationship between education and non-monogamy (Haupt et al., 2016; Treas & Giesen, 2000).

Gender was not found to be a statistically significant predictor in this follow up regression model. This is somewhat inconsistent with the literature, some of which describes a relationship between men and expectations of non-monogamy (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Haupt et al., 2016; Moors et al., 2015; Smith, 1994; Johnson, 1972; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953; Shackelford & Buss, 1997; Wiederman, 1997) and others that found negligible differences between gender and non-monogamy (Conley et al., 2013a; Rubin et al., 2014; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Rubin et al., 2014; Allen et al., 2005). That gender was statistically significant in one model with more degrees of freedom, and then in final model, fell slightly above the threshold for statistical significance, indicates that there may be some relationship between gender and expectations of non-monogamy, but that there may be a small effect size, and this discrepancy is likely due to differences in power. These inconsistencies observed might shed some light on why some authors found gender to be predictor of non-monogamy, while others did not. The finding that there was no statistically significant difference between men and women and expectations of non-monogamy in this model leads support to feminist theory (Millet & Mitchell, 1971; Comer, 1974; Jackson & Scott, 2004; Frank & DeLamater, 2010; Kassof, 1989) that women are egalitarian partners in relationships and the antiquated gender roles that men were “permitted” extradyadic sexual partners while women waited chastely at home were not supported by this research.

Sexual identity was found to be a significant predictor of expectations of partner non-monogamy in this follow up model. This is consistent with the literature on being gay, lesbian, and bisexual and the relationship between sexual identity and expectations of non-monogamy (Heaphy, Donovan, & Weeks, 2004; Hauptert et al., 2016; Leeker & Carlozzi, 2014; Blumstein & Swartz, 1983; Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1995; Dominus, 2007).

Meeting online was not found to be a significant predictor of expectations of partner non-monogamy in this follow up model. This is somewhat inconsistent with the literature (Wysocki & Childers, 2011; Cohen, 2008; Infidelity check, 2002; Mileham, 2007; Lever et al., 2008; Dominus, 2017; Ritchie & Barker, 2006; Peluso, 2007), especially given the higher (21.9%) percentage of participants who identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual in this sample and the increased likelihood that sexual minority individuals would meet a romantic partner online (Lever et al., 2008; Rosenfeld & Thomas, 2012). Again, there was a relatively small percentage of the sample (7.3%, 76 individuals) that met their partner online in general, and this may be related to many other factors, including cohort and generational. When the longitudinal study began with Wave 1 in 2009, meeting online was not nearly as popular as it is today, and the advent of the app-based mobile dating site Tinder was still three years away from invention!

Finally, relationship satisfaction was found to be a significant predictor of expectations of partner non-monogamy in this follow up model, specifically lower relationship satisfaction was related to the expectation of a partner to have a sexual relationship with someone outside the dyad. This is somewhat consistent with the literature on relationship (dis)satisfaction and infidelity (Brown, 1991; Mark, Janssen, & Milhausen, 2011; Amato & Previti, 2004), and very inconsistent with literature on relationship satisfaction and consensual non-monogamy (Conley et al., 2013; Barker, 2005; Bonello & Cross, 2010; Klesse, 2006; Visser & McDonald, 2007;

Rubel & Bogaert, 2015; Weitzman, 2009; Spanier, 1976; Berstrand & Williams, 2010). Again, the lack of empirical validity of the self-report 1-5 scale of relationship satisfaction may account for some of the results found given the distribution of the responses to the question.

The finding that relationship satisfaction is inversely related to expectations of monogamy is somewhat supportive of cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1962; Anderson 2011). Cognitive dissonance theory as it relates to monogamy suggests that when people become somewhat dissatisfied with their relationship overtime, they rectify their non-monogamous urges and desires by “doubling down” on their relationship, which may lead to the higher relationship satisfaction scores reported by those expecting monogamy from their partner. Conversely, others may adopt “creative solutions” or workarounds of non-monogamy that validate their relationship dissatisfaction, lending support to the 3s and 4s on the relationship satisfaction scale who expect partner non-monogamy.

The interplay between the results of relationship satisfaction as it relates to expectations of non-monogamy, feminist theory, modern theories of monogamy, and psychoanalytic and attachment-based theoretical understandings of monogamy warrants further discussion. Many “modern love” non-monogamy theorists (Savage, 2011; Perel, 2017; Mint, 2004; Nelson, 2010) build on feminist theory in the discussion the modern relationship dilemma of redrawing original terms and the various rules and roles people consciously and sub-consciously co-create. It may be only with some dissatisfaction with the status quo, both in theory and/or in practice, that the expectation of non-monogamy is introduced as an alternative, thus lending support to the finding of the relationship between relationship satisfaction and expectation of non-monogamy. And its no wonder dissatisfaction may be mounting, as Perel eloquently writes:

Never before have our expectations of marriage taken on such epic proportions. We still want everything the traditional family was meant to provide – security, children, property, and respectability – but now we also want our partners to love us, to desire us, to be interested in us. We should be best friends, trusted confidants, and passionate lovers to boot. The human imagination has conjured up a new Olympus: that love will remain unconditional, intimacy enthralling, and sex oh-so-exciting, for the long haul, with one person. And the long haul keeps getting longer.
(2017: 43)

With Perel's thoughts on the pressure placed on one primary partner in mind, the results that quite a feat that 56% of participants rated their relationship at 5/5! Psychoanalysts may cite defenses such as denial, but further attachment theory justification may also warrant some support. Granted that the phrasing of the non-monogamy item may include both infidelity and non-monogamy, but that only 23% of those who expected partner non-monogamy rated their relationship a 5/5 may state something significant. Perhaps this lends support to psychoanalytic and attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; Roberts, 2012; Chodorow, 1978; Mitchell, 2003) and the goal of single pair-bonding characterized by high levels of trust and commitment as existing between only two individuals, reminiscent of the early attachment bonds between (healthy) infant and caregiver dyads. The results support the link between attachment and evolutionary theory in that romance favors two guardian parents because childrearing favors two guardian parents (Fisher, 1998; 2000; Johnson, 2008).

Other Factors and Considerations

Caution must be considered especially when interpreting the dual findings that LGB identity and low relationship satisfaction are predictive of non-monogamy, especially in light of the theories of "Mononormativity" analogous to Heteronormativity (Ritchie & Barker, 2006;

Anderson, 2011; Gregory, 1984; Overall, 1998). The risk involves a causal leap that LGB identity leads to non-monogamy leads to lower relationship satisfaction, which the research simply does not support. The finding that sexual identity, non-monogamy and low relationship satisfaction are related is discouraging in that it may provide ammunition for groups “blaming” those, specifically marginalized populations like LGBTIAQ+, for their own unhappiness and relationship dissatisfaction. This study includes many factors, such the simplified measure of relationship satisfaction and the ambiguous phrasing of expectations of partner non-monogamy, to draw those conclusions.

That being said, the findings may warrant some analysis. If expectations of non-monogamy are in fact related to lower relationship satisfaction, this could be very informative for individuals, couples, clinicians, and researchers alike. Information about the risks, as well as the rewards, of embarking in a non-monogamous relationship (consensual and otherwise) is important for people and practitioners to consider when making decisions and setting goals. More information about which aspects are leading to relationship dissatisfaction, whether anxiety, jealousy, disregard for agreement between a couple, etc., can guide clinicians as they help couples and individuals set parameters for their relationship from the outset, reexamine them over time, and react to violations of boundaries. While many who practice and believe in consensual non-monogamy are a stigmatized group, with overlapping members of other vulnerable populations, such as sexual identity minorities, it also important to consider additional factors that may exacerbate difficulties, such as relationship dissatisfaction, and the negative implications of expectations of non-monogamy as a real consequence and possibility. If more nuanced research supports the finding that non-monogamy and relationship dissatisfaction are related, well-intentioned supporters of consensual non-monogamous arrangements must take

notice and genuinely query the impact of the choice of non-monogamy on mental health and happiness at an individual and relationship level.

Strengths and Limitations

This study has numerous strengths, as well as some significant limitations. The longitudinal nature of the study is a major strength, as being able to capture data over the same group of individuals over time in multiple waves is difficult. The participants were diverse across age, gender, geographic area, race, socioeconomic status, and sexual identity, which is representative of the general population of the U.S. The dataset is publically available, which is also a source of strength, as many students and researchers have access to the data, and could also point out any issues in the dataset. This study's strength also included its large sample size (n=4002) in the original sample, and those who participated in wave 5 for the purposes of our research question (n=1047) were still a significant number.

There are some significant limitations inherent in the design of the study. Results of this study are limited by the longitudinal study, the use of self-report measures, and self-selection of participants. Drop out as a consequence of the longitudinal design may have impacted the results. This study also relies on self-report, and the limitations to self-report are numerous, especially for on the measures of certain constructs. Self-report response bias factors may have impacted the data collected. Additionally, relationship satisfaction was only measured in a limited fashion, and other facets (partner relationship satisfaction) were not explored. The accuracy of relationship satisfaction may have been influenced by faulty memory or by reporting based on various characteristics. There are also specific limitations for the specific research question of expectations of non-monogamy. Utilizing an existing, publically available, large longitudinal dataset has its strengths, but also has the inherent limitation of using existing

phrasing of questions and survey instruments The phrasing of the key research question, “Do you expect [partner name] to have sex with only you?” may have biased some of the results found. Furthermore, the focal group of interest, those who expect partner non-monogamy, is relatively small (n=50) and the results may not be generalizable due to participant age and high education.

Future Research

Several areas for future study have already been mentioned in the discussion. This study included self-report measures that may have been limited due to the phrasing of existing questions. A major area for future research includes replicating the study utilizing more sensitive measure. Non-monogamy, the existing dependent variable, was captured in a way that was at least two degrees away from the construct by first asking about expectations, and second, that those expectations are of the *partner's* behavior, from capturing the construct of non-monogamy. Future research utilizing self-report on past behavior of sex outside the relationship, as well as asking about specific subtype of non-monogamy, whether due to a consensual agreement or infidelity, would better capture the nuances and leave less room for interpretation. A study design that involves both (or all) members of the relationship asking about past non-monogamy would also provide the opportunity to correlate partner responses to the same question about non-monogamy and point out any discrepancies within a relationship. Follow-up questions on the survey instrument around endorsement of non-monogamy may shed light on various subtypes (consensual non-monogamy and infidelity, specifically), as well as factors that lead to the decision, circumstances around behaviors, partner expectations, as well as self and partner responses to non-monogamous behaviors.

Although sexual identity was considered in the results and discussion, future studies could further explore differences within this group, and between specific sexual identities of gay,

lesbian, bisexual, and other, as it relates to consensual non-monogamy and infidelity to better understand how couples and individuals in these sub-groups differ. Similarly, other demographic factors such as religiosity, race, geography and socioeconomic status, among others, could be explored. Other relationship factors, such as having children, a first or second marriage, the age a couple met, and how long a couple has been together, warrant further investigation.

Furthermore, future research on non-monogamy and relationship satisfaction could utilize more sensitive relationship measures. Furthering the research question of relationship satisfaction as it relates to non-monogamy could include evidence-based measures, such as the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), Marital Adjustment Test (MAT; Locke & Wallace, 1959), or Quality of Marriage Index (QMI; Norton, 1983). Differentiating between relationship satisfaction and sexual satisfaction, which is often included as one facet of relationship satisfaction, is an avenue that warrants future attention in the field of understanding non-monogamies. Additionally, utilizing any of the aforementioned measures could be repeated over time in a longitudinal study, which may shed light on relationship quality over time, as well as differences between non-monogamous groups (consensual non-monogamy compared to infidelity). Exploring expectations of non-monogamy and relationship quality could also be further queried utilizing the intentions toward infidelity scale (ITIS; Jones et al., 2011), as well as designing a repeated measure survey exploring expectations and actual outcome and response to non-monogamy.

Future research exploring the relationship between meeting online, including through dating apps, and the other factors discussed, including, but not limited to, relationship quality, expectations of non-monogamy, and other demographic factors, is warranted. Dating apps are relatively recent phenomena that relationship research is only beginning to examine. Comparing

and contrasting person and relationship factors between individuals and couples who met online versus offline could offer a plethora of information and have real clinical implications. Specific to the research question of non-monogamy, there is opportunity to query individuals who use dating apps and state they are interested in a consensually non-monogamous relationship and tracking that group over time. There is also opportunity to explore the prevalence of infidelity in couples that met online versus offline, and contribute to the literature of infidelity and meeting online beyond just cyber affairs.

Future directions could also include focused research in specific communities, such as the polyamory community, or in support groups for couples who have gone through infidelity. This could be a question of recruitment and exploration around recruiting individuals and partners who identify specifically with a subtype of non-monogamy. One possible recruitment strategy might include a clinical focus, working with those who are actively seeking counseling after the experience of infidelity, as well as couples who are actively seeking counseling to navigate their consensually non-monogamous relationship. Asking clinicians who work with individuals and couples in non-monogamous relationships their clinical impressions on relationship quality would reduce bias from self-report measures, as well as provide the outside expertise of a trained clinician. This area of future research would also augment clinical understanding of the specific presentations, as well as provide guidance for treatment for individuals and couples dealing with issues related to non-monogamy.

Expectations of monogamy and non-monogamy can be extremely emotional and loaded concepts, with rich historical, social, political, cultural, religious, and gendered roots, for both clinicians and patients alike. Research and clinical contributions to the knowledge base with true equipoise is limited. Future research examining inherent biases of clinicians, exploring whether

factors such as theoretical orientation, geography, age, experience, and clinician personal experience, is an interesting area to continue to explore stigma and biases around non-monogamy.

Summary

The study sought to replicate the prevalence findings of expectations of partner non-monogamy in this sample and found comparable results to existing prevalence of consensual non-monogamy of about 5%. This study also examined which person and relationship factors predict expectations of non-monogamies. The individual factors may impact how one understands *monogaME* while the relationship factors may impact the shared *monogamUS*.

As expected, identifying as lesbian, gay, and bisexual was predictive of expectations of partner non-monogamy. Somewhat unexpectedly, lower levels of highest-level education attained was predictive of expectations of partner non-monogamy. Being male was shown to be predictive of expectations of partner non-monogamy in a person factors only model, but not in a follow up logistic regression model with more statistical power that included relationship factors. Whether a couple met online or offline was not found to be predictive of expectations of partner non-monogamy. Lower levels of relationship quality were predictive of expectations of partner non-monogamy, leading one to re-examine the current magnanimous understanding of certain (consensual) non-monogamies. Perhaps even well-intentioned consensual non-monogamies are created only after acknowledging existing some relationship dissatisfaction. Alternatively, relationship dissatisfaction may be an important predictor of expected infidelity as another subtype of expectations of partner non-monogamy.

It would be *monoga(re)miss* to discuss the results without recognizing some of the limitations of this study to understand these results. The construction of the phrase used as a

proxy for both infidelity and consensual non-monogamy “expectations of partner non-monogamy” may capture a different dependent variable than the one originally sought out to explore. The key finding that lower levels of relationship quality was based on a single item measure of face validity for relationship quality, and positively-skewed sampling may have biased the results. Other relationship quality indexes could help better clarify these results in future studies.

Finally, distinguishing expected partner behavior from past behavior and distinguishing between infidelity and consensual non-monogamy is important to understand any underlying similarities and differences between non-monogamous subtypes for clinical and research purposes. These findings overall indicate some already vulnerable individuals and groups, those who identify as LGB, those who have lower levels of education, and those who are somewhat dissatisfied with their relationship, are also most likely to expect partner non-monogamy, another potentially vulnerable group, and one that may not be likely to seek services and support due to stigma. Further understanding these individual and relationship processes that lead to non-monogamies, the individual *monogaME* and the relationship *monagamUS* factors will help identify future targets for psychotherapeutic interventions.

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