

EMERGING ADULTS' IDENTITIES, ATTITUDES, AND ORIENTATIONS CONCERNING
CONSENSUAL NON-MONOGRAMY

By

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Abstract

This study considered the connection among aspects of emerging adults' identities and their relational and sociosexual orientations as well as their attitudes toward consensual non-monogamy (CNM). Results indicated significant relationships among individuals' collective and social identity aspects, as dictated in the AIQ-IV, and how emerging adults label their relational orientations (e.g., strictly monogamous, monogamish, open, and polyamorous). Additionally, findings demonstrated that the salience/importance of social categories, roles, and reputations in one's identity influences how they choose to label their relational orientation, their attitudes toward non-monogamy, and their orientation toward uncommitted sex (sociosexual orientation). Discussion, implications and future directions follow.

Keywords: consensual non-monogamy, identity, sexuality, romantic relationships, gender, emerging adults

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Dedication

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Introduction

Awareness, Acceptance, and Participation

Emerging from the initial social and sexual revolutions of the 1960s and 70s (see Cohen, 2012; Gilmore, 2019; Lowbrow, 2015), recent generations are experiencing an increasing acceptance of, and participation in, alternative gender identities (Leguizamon & Griggs, 2018; White, Moeller, Ivcevic, & Brackett, 2018), sexual orientations (White et al., 2018), and romantic/sexual configurations/practices (Barker & Langdrige, 2010; Conley, Ziegler, Moors, Matsick, & Valentine, 2013; Rubin, 2001). Increased access to the Internet, along with the advent of social media and dating apps equip individuals with myriad platforms through which they are able to explore and instantly connect with diverse others (Goodyear, 2014; Wright, 2017). Greater exposure to and knowledge of alternative lifestyles have aided in increasing social acceptance as well providing a source of reference regarding the different identities, roles, and expectations that culturally exist within Western society (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Increasing social awareness and strides toward gender and relational equality (e.g., efforts toward equitable compensation and representation in the workforce and the legalization of same-sex marriage) have begun to influence intimate relational configurations in the direction of adopting more egalitarian beliefs and expectations about partners and relationships (Barker & Langdrige, 2010). These changes allow modern romantic relationships the possibility of considering and accepting alternative approaches to love, companionship, and shared goals (Barker, 2011; Coontz, 2005; Seidman, 2013). The instinct to pair off for the sole purpose of procreation and economic security as an innate necessity for human survival no longer seems to be the driving force for modern relationships. Indeed, today's emerging adults (i.e., individuals between the ages of 18-29, see Arnett, 2000; 2015) are customizing their relationships in order to

best fulfill their specific desires, needs, and goals in manners perhaps considered to be nontraditional in days past (Barker, 2011; Barker & Langdrige, 2010; Seidman, 2013).

For example, research suggests that fewer individuals maintain traditional romantic archetypes regarding a “one true love” belief or the notion of having a singular “soulmate”—ideologies that have been socially indoctrinated by previous generations (Coontz, 2005). The notions of dating, committing to, and even developing significant feelings for multiple individuals are becoming more and more accepted and adopted into modern culture (Ferguson, 2018). An increasing presence of popular television shows, in the form of dating competitions and lifestyle documentaries, for example, portray the representation and normalization of alternative romantic configurations in mainstream media (Ritchie, 2010). Television programs such as *The Bachelor* demonstrate the ability to develop seemingly deep and meaningful romantic connections with multiple individuals simultaneously (Bonos, 2016). Reality lifestyle documentaries, such as *Big Love*, *Sister Wives*, and *Polyamory: Married & Dating*, as well as a plethora of non-monogamy podcasts (PlayerFM, 2019), provide insight into the day to day activities, communications, and routines of alternative relationships and partners who consensually participate in meaningful, yet non-traditional and non-monogamous relationships.

Additionally, various big-name celebrities, such as Will and Jada Pinkett Smith (Johnson, 2018), Hugh Hefner, Mo’Nique and Sidney Hicks, and Tilda Swinton (Rose, 2015), to name a few, have helped to publicize the practice of consensual non-monogamy (CNM; i.e., relationships consisting of two or more partners who have negotiated that extradyadic romantic and/or sexual relations may occur; e.g., Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017) by publicly discussing their configurations (e.g., Bernhardt, 2009; Rose, 2015). This increased attraction surrounding CNM lead to the development of various dating applications and sites specifically geared toward non-

monogamous couples and singles (e.g., Feeld, PolyMatchMaker, FetLife, and numerous local polyamorous (polyam) groups; see Albo, 2017; Andersson, 2018). Additionally, growing participation and acceptance of non-monogamous relationships has motivated traditional dating sites, such as OkCupid, to modify their user preferences to be more accommodating to individuals searching for multiple partners (Albo, 2017; Bonos, 2016). While not all-encompassing of all relational configurations, social media sites such as Facebook also allow users to indicate alternative relationships statuses, such as “it’s complicated” and “open relationship” (Chin, 2017). Although, popular dating apps such as Tinder and Bumble do not [at the time of this writing] ask users to indicate their preferred relational configuration (e.g., monogamy, open, swinging, polyamory), many non-monogamous individuals still use these platforms and choose to indicate their preferences in their bios (Foskett, 2018).

CNM is an umbrella term that houses a variety of open relationship configurations (Barker & Langdridge, 2010; Cohen & Wilson, 2017; Frank & DeLamater, 2010; Pitagora, 2016). The three styles discussed most consistently in the literature are open relationships, swinging and polyamory (Barker & Langdridge, 2010; Matsick, Conley, Ziegler, Moors, & Rubin, 2014; Rubel & Bogaert, 2014). Although definitions regarding these three configurations are open to deliberation (e.g., see Barker, 2005; Barker & Langdridge, 2010; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017), the following definitions are chosen due to their affluence in the literature, and as such, they provide guidance as the definitional and conceptual frameworks for the purpose of this investigation. Open relationships are typically defined as dyadic relationships that allow for partners to independently pursue and engage in extradyadic sexual activities, sans romantic feelings or intentions for the extradyadic partner or emotional attachment (Grunt-Mejer & Campbell, 2016; Matsick et al., 2014; Thompson, Bagley, & Moore, 2018). Swinging

relationships, also referred to as “the lifestyle” or “wife swapping” (Kimberly, 2015; p. 57), are a form of CNM in which emotionally committed romantic partners agree to engage in sexual relations with others separately, but most commonly, in the presence of one’s partner (Wilt, Harrison, & Michael, 2018). Similar to open relationships, swinging relationships permit recreational sex but discourage or establish parameters around developing emotional feelings for extradyadic others (Matsick et al., 2014).

Unlike the aforementioned variations of CNM, within polyamorous relationships partners might maintain multiple emotional, romantic, and/or sexually intimate, and long term (Frederick & Fales, 2016; Klesse, 2014a), extradyadic partners (Matsick et al., 2014). Polyamorous relationships can take on various configurations with varying primary and secondary partnerships (i.e., primary being main and others, ancillary; Barker & Langdridge, 2010; Frederick & Fales, 2016; Klesse, 2014b). The possibility of maintaining multiple unconstrained romantic relationships, potentially for long term, allows polyam relationship configurations can take various forms, such as of triads and quads (i.e., a three or four partner unit), V-structures (i.e., a relationship configuration in which one individual is equally involved with two partners who are not themselves involved), and broader polyamorous webs and families (Barker, 2005; Barker & Langdridge, 2010; Jamieson, 2004; Klesse, 2014b). Considerable nuances exist among these aforementioned configurations and, thus, further attention and explication will be addressed later in this manuscript among and within these three variations.

While increased media representations and more authentic expressions are increasing awareness surrounding the practice of CNM, those who participate remain largely stigmatized (Conley et al., 2013; Matsick et al., 2014) and dehumanized (i.e., perceived as belonging to a lesser class of humanity; Haslam, 2006; Rodrigues, Fasoli, Huic, & Lopes, 2018). In the United

States, the overarching, dominant discourse most often portrays healthy or “ideal” (Jordan, Grogan, Muruthi, & Bermúdez, 2017, p. 2) relationships as monogamous (i.e., a relationship configuration limited to two romantic partners who generally uphold strict obligations of fidelity with no extradyadic romantic or sexual partners; Anderson, 2010; Barnett, 2014). This innate hierarchical construct, coined mononormativity (Pieper & Bauer, 2005, as cited in Jordan et al., 2017) is analogous with heteronormativity (Berlant & Warner, 1998; Jackson, 2011), or the acceptance of certain sexual and gender configurations as right and normal. Modern ideals that inherently privilege heteronormative and monogamous relationships (e.g., Emens, 2004; Heckert, 2010; Jackson, 2011; Kean, 2015; Ritchie & Barker, 2006) are due in part to the “Judeo-Christian obsession with monogamy” (Haritaworn, Lin, & Klesse, 2006, p. 522) ingrained into the culture of western society.

These dominating western ideologies are commonly present within political, popular, and psychological discourses (Pieper & Bauer, 2005, as cited in Jordan et al., 2017), essentially subjugating those who chose to identify and practice in other ways to face stigmatization and social isolation (Jackson, 2011; Moors, Matsick, Ziegler, Rubin, & Conley, 2013).

One's' identity (i.e., a set of “meanings” which defines an individual by their roles, social categories/groups, and unique individual characteristics; Stets & Burke, 2014, p. 412) is reflexive of the social environment in which they are situated and acquires self-meaning through social interactions (Burke & Reitzes, 1991). Although the self serves as an "active creator of social behavior" (Stryker, 1980, p. 385), it is important to consider the relationship between self and social structures, as society provides roles that are the basis of identity and self (Burke & Reitzes, 1991). As such, identity is considered to be a pivotal concept that links social structure and individual action (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). Due to the varying stigmatizations associated

with forms of non-monogamy, some individuals choose to not to identify themselves by a CNM label, even though they might participate in such configurations (see Barker & Langdrige, 2010). Alternatively, many individuals label their practices of CNM under various terms oftentimes asserting multiple, sometimes conflicting, definitions to one term (Barker & Langdrige, 2010). For example, the terms polyamory, as well as open, are often used interchangeably within the literal as blanket terms to encompass multiple CNM variations (Barker & Langdrige, 2010). Likewise, some individuals might choose to label themselves as monogamous, while their practices might not be far off from someone who identifies as polyam (Barker & Langdrige, 2010).

The purpose of this study is to explore the associations among aspects of one's identity and their relational orientation, sociosexual orientation (i.e., their orientation toward uncommitted sex; see Penke & Asendorpf, 2008), and their attitudes toward non-monogamy. As there is a scarcity in theoretically grounded research regarding non-monogamous relational orientations and identity (Brewster et al., 2017; Conley et al., 2013), this study uses Identity Theory (Stryker, 1980; Burke & Stets, 2009) as a guiding theoretical framework to examine how additional aspects of one's identity influences the way they choose to identify and communicate their relational orientation. Identity theory provides a perspective on “the dynamic mediation of the socially constructed self between individual behavior and social structure” (Hogg et al., 1995, p. 255). As such, this study considers key components of identity theory in order to shed light on the association among identity, relational orientation label, attitudes toward non-monogamy, and sociosexual orientation.

The Significance of the Study

Despite increasing evidence indicating a growing portion of the population has or currently participates in some variation of CNM, whether secretly, openly, or in under other terms, research examining these practices is lacking (Barker, 2011; Barker & Langdrige, 2010; Rubin, 2001). After examining the extant literature regarding CNM, Barker and Langdrige, (2010) suggest that the need exists for scholarly works to consider the important nuances among and within relational orientations or configurations which may be potentially influencing how individuals choose to identify and practice. With a few noted exceptions (Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017), there has been little research regarding forms of non-monogamy, (i.e., both non-negotiated extradyadic involvements) such as cheating or simply not committing to one partner, as well as the forms of CNM such as open, swinging and polyamory (Lavie-Ajayi, Jones, & Russell, 2010).

While other studies have considered participants' attitudes regarding CNM individuals (Cohen 2016; Grunt-Mejer & Campbell, 2016; Se'guin, 2017), personal willingness to engage in CNM (Moors et al., 2015), as well as the connection between sociosexuality and attitudes toward non-monogamy (Cohen & Wilson, 2017), to date, little to no research has considered the association among identity factors and how individuals choose to identify and label their romantic practices (i.e., monogamous, open, swinging, polyam, etc) in relation to their orientation toward uncommitted/promiscuous sex and attitudes toward non-monogamy.

Study Overview

Chapter one introduces identity theory and some of its key components. This chapter also presents the role one's identity plays within predominant forms of CNM; i.e., open, swinging, and polyamory. More specifically, chapter one discusses previous literature suggesting an

association between one's gender identity, sexuality, and relational behaviors and how an individual defines/labels their relational identity (e.g., open, swinger, and polyam).

Chapter two delves into emerging adulthood as a key period of identity and sexual exploration, as well as the current research regarding emerging adults' experiences and attitudes regarding monogamy (i.e., relationship consisting of only one sexual/emotional partner at a time) and consensual non-monogamy (i.e., multiple simultaneous sexual/emotional partners). Finally, this chapter uses previous literature in order to provide comparisons and critics that have been made of CNM in relation to monogamy.

Chapter three will delineate the methodology and procedures used to conduct this study whereas Chapter four will report the results of the analyses. Finally, Chapter five will conclude this thesis by providing a discussion of the findings and their significance to the extant literature as well as implications and directions for future research regarding identity and CNM.

Chapter 1: Identity & CNM

Identity Theory

Principally a micro-sociological theory, identity theory sets out to explain individuals' role-related behaviors and the salience and commitment of the multiple identities they maintain (Stryker, 1980; Burke & Stets, 2009). This theory describes social behavior in terms of the reciprocal relations between self and society and views the self as a multifaceted social construct which emerges from the various role individuals maintain within society. According to Burke and Stets (2009), the self is an “organized set of processes within us” with the ability to analyze itself, plan accordingly, and to “manipulate itself as an object in order to bring about future states” (p. 9). The self can take itself as an object or subject and can sort, systematize, and label itself in particular ways according to external social categories or classifications (Stets & Burke, 2000). It is through this reflective process, known as identification, that identity is formed (Stets & Burke, 2000).

Although the interests of this study primarily rest with the individual, it is important to acknowledge that individuals exist within the context of their social structures. The self, which characterizes the consciousness of an individual's being or identity, is extremely reflexive, emerging from social interaction within the “context of a complex differentiated society” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 10). According to Mead (1934, as cited by Burke & Stets, 2009), the self is developed from the interactions between an individual's mind and their external environment.

It is ultimately through social interaction that identities acquire self-meaning (Burke & Reitzes, 1981). Overall self-identity is constructed of multiple “smaller selves” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 10) developed via the various contrasting roles and positions an individual fills. Additionally, individuals communicate with world differently according to the identity role(s)

they are maintaining. For example, an individual likely contorts themselves quite differently throughout the day depending on who they encounter and what is anticipated/appropriate communication/behavior from that identity role. As such, identity is a pivotal concept linking social structures and individual action. An “analysis of the relationship between self and social structure” is needed for researchers to better understand and predict behavior (Hogg et al., 1995, p.257).

Being and doing are both considered to be central features of one's identity (Stets & Burke, 2000), as one's identity (i.e., who they are) is connected to one's identity processes (i.e., actions, behaviors, communicative practices, etc.) within the various roles that individuals maintain (Hogg et al., 1995). Identifying certain identities in relation to certain roles invokes expectations regarding the behaviors of the role occupants (Stryker, 1980). Hogg et al. (1995) assert that variation in self-concepts (i.e., the compilation of an individual's various identities) can be attributed to the different roles that they occupy.

Each of the various roles that an individual occupies in society forms distinct components of the self (i.e., role identities; Stryker, 1980; see also Burke & Stets, 2009). According to identity theory, a role is a set of established behavioral expectations that is deemed applicable by others (Simon, 1992). Individuals are responded to in terms of the role identities they occupy, and these responses, in turn, serve as a foundation for developing a sense of self-meaning and self-definition (Hogg et al., 1995). An individual's satisfactory enactment of a role not only confirms and validates one's status as a role member (Callero, 1985, as cited by Hogg et al., 1995) but also positively influences self-evaluation (Hogg et al., 1995). Role identities are the self-conceptions, self-referent cognitions, labels and definitions that individuals apply to themselves as a consequence of the structural role positions they occupy (Hogg et al., 1995).

Some identities have more self-relevance than others within an individual's life and thus are called upon more often. As such, an individual's role identities are organized hierarchically with regard to the probability that they will be called into action. Role identities positioned closer to the top of the hierarchy are tied more closely to an individual's behavior and have a greater likelihood of being put into effect in a particular situation, and thus are more self-defining than those located near the bottom (Hogg et al., 1995; Stryker, 1980). For example, an individual who has only played golf twice is not likely to consider themselves a golfer, whereas an individual who plays golf avidly is likely to consider their identity as a golfer more prominently.

Identity salience and commitment are used to account for the impact that an individual's role identity has on their social behavior. Identity salience is the likelihood that the identity will be invoked in divergent situations. Identity theory proposes that the salience of a particular identity will be determined by the person's commitment (i.e., "the degree to which the individual's relationships with significant others are dependent upon being a certain kind of person," Stryker & Stratham, 1985, p. 345) to that role. Individuals with identical role identities might enact different behaviors in a given context due to variations in identity salience (e.g., Thoits, 1991).

Commitment to a particular role identity is high if people perceive that many of their important social relationships are predicated on their occupancy of that role. For example, if the majority of one's social connections are through their involvement with their church, they might be more committed to their identity as a religious person. Additionally, commitment reflects the extent to which the individual assumes occupying a particular role position is expected from significant others. For example, an individual who primarily maintains monogamous relationships, while engaging in extradyadic sex only occasionally, is likely to regard themselves

as monogamous as this is most often reflective of how they practice and see themselves.

Considering non-monogamy, it could be posited that the more non-monogamous relations that one participates in, such as open, swinging, or polyamorous, and the more social connections they make through these encounters the more salient that identity will become. An individual who primarily practices CNM might be more likely to consider the practice as a primary part of their identity the more relationships they develop with multiple partners.

There are two types of commitment described by Burke and Reitzes (1991): interactional and affective commitment. Affective commitment concerns the importance of the relationships associated with the identity as well as the potential loss of these social relationships (i.e., the intensity of commitment; see Burke & Reitzes, 1991). The more fully a person's important social relationships are based on maintaining a particular identity, in comparison with other identities, the more salient that identity will be (Stryker & Serpe, 1982). Interactional commitment reflects the number of roles associated with a particular identity (i.e., their extent of commitment; see Burke & Reitzes, 1991). The more strongly committed a person is to an identity in term of both interactional and affective commitment, the higher their level of identity salience will be (Burke & Reitzes, 1991).

Identity Politics and CNM

In an analysis of CNM research, Barker and Langdridge (2010) identified several themes within the literature, such as a tendency for research to polarize monogamy and CNM as either overtly positive or negative. For example, research in this area often critiques monogamy as inherently patriarchal and capitalist, or natural and healthy while presenting CNM as a display of agency and liberty, or alternatively as an act of infidelity or deviance (Barker & Langdridge,

2010; De Visser & McDonald, 2007; Heaphy, Donovan, & Weeks 2004; Jackson & Scott, 2004; Mint, 2010; Munson & Stelboun, 1999; Phillips 2010).

Other studies have attempted to emphasize the normality or everydayness of CNM by suggesting it as “not that different” from monogamy and that both are “about the same things” such as “fun, friendship, sex” and consider themselves to be “just a family” (Barker, 2005, p. 82). A major theme uncovered by Barker and Langdridge (2010) in an analysis of CNM literature is the tendency to distance or separate the three predominant subsections of CNM, swinging, open, and polyamorous relationships from each other and present them as distinctly separate categories with little overlap. The dividing lines seem to revolve most often around gender identity, sexual orientation, and rules regarding how the relationship is practiced, specifically around issues such as sex and emotional intimacy.

Literature regarding CNM suggests several key distinctions between the various relational orientations (i.e., strictly monogamous, monogamish, open, swinging, and polyamory). Research conducted by Manley et al. (2015) indicated that participants in their study, who indicated having a nontraditional sexual identity, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, etc. were more likely to also report participating in CNM. Similarly, a 2017 study by Cohen and Wilson found gender identity differences in which individuals identifying as transgender, genderqueer, etc., were more accepting of CNM than individuals who identify as male or female. The same study found a less rigid gender identity was indicative of more accepting sexual attitudes and orientations (Cohen & Wilson, 2017).

Sexual orientation and preferences seem to bear some weight in regard to relational fidelity and non-monogamy. In consideration of sexual/emotional infidelity, Frederick and Fales (2016) found that across all demographics (i.e., age, income, and relational history), except

sexual orientation, heterosexual men were more likely to be upset by sexual infidelity while heterosexual women tended to be more upset by emotional infidelity, while LGB men and women did not differ significantly from each other in upset over sexual infidelity. These expectations regarding fidelity seem to trend within with variations of CNM. Swingers are most predominantly defined as majority heterosexual with some women identifying as bisexual or bi-curious, and from a higher SES (McDonald, 2010). Specific to this line of inquiry, this form of CNM often involves heterosexual (i.e., opposite sex couples having extradyadic sexual relationships with others in a social context), and couples can participate in both joint and individual sexual relationships (Barker, 2011; McDonald, 2010). Open relationships are considered to be the most common form of CNM being practiced by gay men and consists of a relationship that is open to partners having sex with others (Adam, 2006; LaSala, 2004, 2005; Worth, Reid, & McMillan, 2002). Although heterosexual individuals do practice polyamory, several studies looking at the practice have indicated samples of predominantly bisexual or sexually fluid folks (Barker, 2005; Wosick-Correa, 2010). Polyamorous, bisexual, and other fluid identities are even sometimes marginalized within lesbian and gay populations (see Callis, 2014; Klesse, 2018).

Although not necessarily connotative of CNM intrinsically, sociosexuality is a related construct which represents an individual's orientation toward sex and sexual behaviors. Sociosexuality, coined by Simpson and Gangestad (1991), encompasses an individual's practices/desires associated with casual sex, their motivations/desires for novel sex, and their desire to attract/retain partners (Marelich & Lundquist, 2008). According to Penke and Asendorpf (2008), sociosexuality is a measure of individual differences in human mating strategies and is used to describe individual differences in willingness to engage in uncommitted

sexual relationships (i.e., their orientation toward uncommitted sex). According to Kinsey, differences in sociosexuality can help indicate why some people have uncommitted sex on a regular basis, while others engage only rarely, and some never at all (as cited in Penke & Asendorpf, 2008).

Those who participate in multi-partner relationships have been found to be more welcoming of promiscuity or uncommitted sex. Mogilski, Memering, Welling, and Shackelford (2017) found that CNM participants indicated less restricted sociosexuality as compared to monogamous participants. Specifically, polyamorous men in their sample indicated higher sociosexuality scores than monogamous individuals and polyamorous women (Klesse, 2018; Morrison, Beaulieu, Brockman, & Beaglaioichl, 2013). Additionally, Morrison et al. (2013) compared responses from self-identified polyamorous and monogamous individuals, finding that polyamorous participants reported greater intimacy in their relationships, more favorable attitudes toward casual sexual activity, and more casual sexual partners than reported by monogamous participants. These findings indicate that those who identify as non-monogamous are more likely to have less restricted sociosexualities and that those who are monogamous, but have less restricted views regarding promiscuous/uncommitted sex, also have more positive views regarding CNM (Cohen & Wilson, 2017).

Research indicates that swingers and those in open relationships often prefer restricting love and emotional attachment only to each other, while still allowing for outside sexual relationships with other individuals either together or separately, or both (Adam, 2006; Hickson et al., 1992; Hosking, 2013; Matsick et al., 2014; McDonald, 2010; Phillips, 2010). In many cases, swingers and those in open relationships emphasize “emotional monogamy,” (i.e., emotional intimacy restricted between partners; see Grunt-Mejer & Campbell, 2016, p. 46) and

attempt to keep extra-relational experiences directly related to sex, as a way to limit potential emotional or romantic connections with new partners (Bergstrand & Williams, 2000).

Commonly, individuals in open and swinging relationships negotiate rules regarding extra-relational encounters, such as no sex in the mutual home or sleeping over, limiting the number of sexual encounters with external partners, and retaining certain forms of sex as sacred (Barker, 2011; Barker & Langdridge, 2010).

Additionally, research indicates extreme variation in how those in open and swinging relationships negotiate involvement and privacy in external sexual relations. For example, some partners attempt to maintain privacy or avoid potential jealousy, by employing a "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Other couples prefer open communication or direct involvement, such as "three-way or no way" (Adam, 2006, p. 18). Alternatively, the majority of individuals in polyamorous relationships consider it to be acceptable to maintain simultaneous emotional and/or sexual relationship partners, while a subset of polyam relationships employs similar rules regarding emotional intimacy as those participating in open and swinging relationships (Barker, 2011).

Considering attitudes toward CNM, Cohen and Wilson (2017) found that non-monogamous individuals had more favorable attitudes on the consensual non-monogamous attitudes scale (CNAS) than individuals practicing monogamy. Moreover, individuals who identified as heterosexual or by a traditional binary gender, such as man or woman, had significantly less favorable attitudes regarding CNM than those who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual (Cohen & Wilson, 2017). A study by Grunt-Mejer and Campbell (2016) found that individuals engaged in monogamous relationships are perceived more favorably than individuals in consensually non-monogamous relationships and those having non-consensual sexual affairs,

respectively. A study by Thompson et al. (2018) found that young adults demonstrated a strong implicit preference for the practice of monogamy over CNM.

Research indicates that individuals situated within each CNM style, open, swingers, and polyam, sometimes harbor negative views of the other configurations and are quick to dissociate themselves from each other (Barker, 2011; Barker & Langdridge, 2010). For example, swingers often disagree that emotional bonds should extend beyond the primary couple and criticize polyam individuals for their conservative attitudes that suggest the need for sex to be associated with emotional intimacy (Barker, 2011). Alternatively, polyamorist individuals often critique swinging and open relationships for their assumed focus on recreational sex and traditional gender displays (Barker, 2011). Frequently, polyam individuals present their practices of CNM as more meaningful than swinging and open relationships because in these relationships sexual intimacy is more often connected to feelings of love, rather than for casual sex (Barker, 2011; Ritchie, 2010). While these data seem to present some clear divisions regarding open, swinging, and polyam relationship expectations about sexual and emotional intimacy, there are also areas of significant overlap as well as evidence indicating that each subsection offers complex and varied styles of maintaining lasting and satisfying relationships (Barker & Langdridge, 2010).

Chapter 2: Emerging Adulthood

Emerging Adults and CNM

Exploration is considered to be a key process in emerging adults' identity development (Berman, Schwartz, Kurtines, & Berman, 2001). According to developmental psychologist Jeffrey Arnett (2000), emerging adulthood is a rich period of opportunity for significant identity explorations in areas of love, work, and worldviews. During emerging adulthood individuals try out different identities, practices, and various life possibilities in order to gradually move toward making enduring decisions regarding their identity formation (Arnett, 2015; Schwartz, Zamboanga, Weisskirch, & Rodriguez, 2009). This period of exploration is for its own sake; allowing emerging adults to obtain a broad range of life experiences before taking on enduring-- and limiting-- adult responsibilities (Arnett, 2000). Experiences of identity exploration and development during emerging adulthood are qualitatively distinct from other life stages such as adolescence because emerging adults are more often free from constraints, such as compulsory education, parental rules/expectations, allowing for greater autonomy (Arnett, 2000). The absence of enduring role commitments, e.g., familial and professional, during this time period allows for a level of experimentation and exploration that is not likely to be as possible during one's thirties and beyond.

Due to decreased parental surveillance and less pressure to enter marriage during one's early twenties, emerging adulthood is also a period marked by intense romantic and sexual exploration (Arnett, 2015; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017). According to Arnett (2000), explorations in love during emerging adulthood often have an implicit identity focus, in which individuals consider "Given the kind of person I am, what kind of partner and relationship do I wish to have?" (p. 473). During this stage of development, individuals begin to consider what

they look for in potential partners as well as how they would prefer their romantic/sexual encounters be conducted (Barry, Madsen, Nelson, Carroll, & Badger, 2009). For individuals between the ages of 18-29, explorations in love become more intimate and serious and tend to involve a deeper level of intimacy as the focus of dating is less on recreation and more on exploring the potential for emotional and physical intimacy (Arnett, 2000). Additionally, romantic relationships in emerging adulthood often last longer than in adolescence, are more likely to include sexual intercourse, and have the potential for cohabitation (Arnett, 2000).

Experimenting with various relational configurations serves as an outlet for sexual exploration, allowing emerging adults to determine their specific romantic needs/wants (Conley et al., 2013). Current research suggests that 54–67% of today's emerging adults endorse and engage in forms of sexual and relational non-monogamy, such as casual hookups (i.e., non-committed sexual encounter) and 'friends with benefits' (i.e., a friendship which has negotiated sexual but not romantic involvement; Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013; Lyons, Manning, Longmore, & Giordano, 2014).

Popular picture based dating sites, such as Tinder, often referred to as a "hookup app," have been suspect in the changing dating dynamics on college campuses (Matthews, 2015). Additionally, according to Tinder's co-founder and Chief marketing officer Justin Mateen, in its early days over 90% of Tinder users were between the ages of 18 and 24 (Dredge, 2014). In 2014 about 52 percent of Tinder users are between 18 and 24, and 33 percent are between 25 and 34 (Matthews, 2015). Botnen, Bendixen, Grøntvedt, and Kennair (2018) found that Tinder users reported being less restricted in their sociosexual orientation. These findings indicate that today's emerging adults are open to, and potentially seeking out, casual sexual relationships and experiences (e.g., Claxton & Dulmen, 2013) as well as other possible configurations. Although

these types of non-negotiated, non-monogamous practices are not entirely comparable to CNM, scholars suggest that the hookup culture displayed by today's emerging adults can influence the structure of future relationships (Woik, 2015), increasing preferences for future committed relationships to allow for multiple sexual and romantic partners (Woik, 2015).

Additionally, CNM during emerging adulthood is timely and worthy of exploration as more of today's emerging adults are openly communicating their unique identities, experiences, and practices, than previously reported (Barker & Langdrige, 2010). Dating apps such as Tinder provide their users with thirty-seven different gender identity options (Clarke-Billings, 2016). Recent data suggest that higher numbers of today's youth are not only identifying as a non-traditional gender, such as queer or trans (Leguizamon & Griggs, 2018), but are also more accepting of and willing to participate in CNM relationships than previous generations (Moore, 2016). In fact, research indicates that anywhere from 4% to 5% of adults report current involvement in a CNM relationship (Conley et al., 2013) and between 21.2% and 21.9% of single adults report having engaged in CNM at some point in their lives (Hauptert, Gesselman, Moors, Fisher, & Garcia, 2017; Thompson et al., 2018). In assessing the prevalence of CNM as practiced by adults, Hauptert and colleagues found that one in five adults has participated in CNM and that men and LGBTQ folks were more likely to report previous engagement in CNM relationships (Hauptert et al., 2017) than women or non-LGBTQ individuals.

Today's emerging adults are considered to be more likely to participate in and, perhaps more significantly, openly communicate participation in CNM practices than previous generations (Arnett, 2015; Dugan, 2017; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017). According to a 2016 YouGov poll, one-fifth of individuals under the age of 30 reports having participated in extra-relational sexual activity with a priori consent from their partners, and. Thus, studying these

phenomena among emerging adults is particularly important considering the rising prevalence in CNM engagement and its potential to be the “the next moral and legal debate about sexuality and relationships” (Conley et al., 2013, p. 7).

Conceivably, societal interest in CNM is growing as a result of recent legalization of same-sex marriage (Barker & Langdrige, 2010), thereby increasing awareness of non-hetero-monogamy alternatives and effectively providing a platform for a much broader discussion regarding which relationships should be legally recognized (Rubel & Bogaert, 2014; Rubin, 2001). According to previous research, only 43 out of 238 societies consider monogamy to be the “ideal” romantic configuration (Murdock, 1949, as cited in Rubin, 2001, p. 723). These relational ideals are still echoed a decade later in a 2016 YouGov poll which reported thirty-one percent of women and thirty-eight percent of men indicated their ideal relationship would involve some variation of CNM (e.g., Druckerman, 2007; Moore, 2016). Although CNM might be the ideal for many, when it comes to legalities, monogamy is still the only official option, at either State or Federal level (HG.org, n.d.; Legality of polygamy, n.d.).

Distinct from polyamory, polygamy, i.e., marriage consisting of more than two individuals, is currently illegal in the US (HG.org, n.d.), and some states, such as Utah, have implemented laws with harsh punishments to prevent individuals from practicing multiple partner relationships and common law marriages with multiple partners (CBS News, 2017). These are not new infractions, as many US states employed laws against fornication, adultery or cohabitation well into the mid-20th century (Infidelity Recovery Institute, n.d.). Although prosecutions are rare, 21 states currently maintain laws criminalize adultery (i.e., sexual intercourse between a married person and anyone other than their spouse; Infidelity Recovery Institute, n.d.; Tribe, 2018). Penalties vary somewhat wildly between states as some, such as

Massachusetts, Idaho, Oklahoma, Michigan, and Wisconsin classify adultery as a felony, and in some cases adulterers potentially face a life sentence (Michigan), while other states consider adultery a misdemeanor, and adulterers face potential fines (Maryland) and are denied alimony (South Carolina; Infidelity Recovery Institute, n.d.). Some states charge both individuals involved in the extramarital affair as adulterers while other states only charge married women (Infidelity Recovery Institute, n.d.).

Perhaps due in part to societal preferences regarding traditional relationships, there is little consideration of alternative relationship configurations, such as CNM, within mainstream psychology (e.g., Moors et al., 2013) and relationship therapy (e.g. Barker & Langdrige, 2010; Dodd & Tolman, 2017). Researchers suggest a need for better understanding and awareness regarding CNM relationship practices, particularly in relational therapy and counseling (Jordan et al., 2017), as issues of monogamism (i.e., ingrained preferential attitudes toward monogamy; see Blumer, Haym, Zimmerman, & Prouty, 2014) can bias therapist assessment of a CNM clients issues and needs (Blumer, Hertlein, & VandenBosch, 2015; Twist, 2018). The need for a knowledgeable and impartial therapist is particularly important considering the harsh stigmatizations which deem participation in CNM as immoral, deviant, unethical, or lewd (Dodd & Tolman, 2017; Moors et al., 2013). In efforts to protect themselves from stigma many who practice CNM do so in secret (Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2010), choosing to not to communicate their relationships from their families, friends (Barker & Langdrige, 2010; Sheff, 2011; Young, 2014) and workplace associates due to fear of exclusion (Sheff, 2011) or rejection (Moors et al., 2013). The strain of maintaining secrecy as well as experiencing discrimination can also have deleterious effects on those who practice CNM and their relationships (Sheff, 2011). A greater understanding of the power and privilege associated with monogamy and the stigmatization of

CNM (Blumer et al., 2015), as well as the divergent and unique dynamics of the relationship (Klesse, 2014a) are essential for therapists to effectively work with CNM clients (Jordan et al., 2017).

Monogamous in Name but not Always in Practice

While monogamy might be displayed as the dominant romantic configuration within our own culture (Rubin, 1984), some researchers argue that it is not “really monogamy, but various forms of secret non-monogamy” (p. 283; i.e., multiple non-committed sexual partners as well as non-negotiated extradyadic encounters) and variations of “new monogamy” (p. 284; i.e., configurations in which partners are negotiating some openness) that is actually being practiced (Barker, 2011).

Rates of hidden infidelity (i.e., committed partners engaging in non-negotiated extradyadic relations) in marriages are estimated to be 60 or 70 percent (Vangelisti & Gerstenberger, 2004), suggesting that many relationships are monogamous in name but not necessarily in practice (Duncombe, Harrison, Allan, & Marsden, 2004; Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2006). The prevalence of non-monogamy becomes more apparent when coupled with additional statistics which indicate that 60% of men and 50% of women have had sexual encounters with someone other than their spouse while married (Vangelisti & Gerstenberger, 2004). In considering younger adults, a study specifically looking at extra-relational sexual involvement in a sample of undergraduates found that 20% of women and 27% of men admitted to infidelity (Vail-Smith, Whetstone, & Knox, 2010). A more recent study involving a sample of heterosexual college women found that 36% of the women reported experience with extradyadic involvement, and 23% reported that their partner had engaged in infidelity (Negash, Cui, Fincham, & Pasley, 2014). Some cases of infidelity might not be necessarily intentional.

Research by Warren, Harvey, and Agnew (2011) reveals that a considerable number of young couples do not know their partners' rules regarding monogamy as these can be sensitive and vulnerable conversations. Thus many individuals find themselves, or their partners, unintentionally violating relationship expectations regarding fidelity because rules have not been clearly communicated if communicated at all (Warren et al., 2011).

While the rules regarding monogamy might seem black-and-white to some, variation exists regarding how individuals choose to participate in and label their monogamous relationships (Druckerman, 2007). Some partners revisit previously established rules regarding monogamy in attempts to maintain or increase relationship satisfaction, participating in what some researchers termed “new monogamy” (Nelson, 2010, as cited by Barker, 2011, p. 284). Some couples choose to label their practice as “monogamish” (Parsons, Starks, Gamarel, & Grov, 2012). In these types of relationships, partners have negotiated for the allowance of extradyadic sex (generally via group sex activities in which both partners are present; see Parsons et al., 2012). Many couples employ various types of negotiations and rules regarding what fidelity looks like within their relationship. In these relationships partners form agreements such that *it's not cheating if* there is no violation of some beforehand negotiation regarding the extra-relational exchange. For example, it is not cheating if both partners agree, or if the sexual encounter is paid for or with someone of the same gender (Druckerman, 2007; Hosking, 2013; Weiss, 2016).

These negotiations of monogamish (Parsons et al., 2012) and new monogamy (Barker, 2011, p. 284) have led some scholars to conclude that monogamy is equally as complex and varied as non-monogamy (Conley et al., 2013; Warren, Harvey, & Agnew, 2011). Additionally, these instances indicate that individuals are willing to participate in forms of negotiated or CNM

to facilitate their relational needs and/or increase relational satisfaction, even if they are not directly labeling their actions as such (Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2006). So, why are there various relational orientations with the same/similar definitions & rules?

The aforementioned leads to the following research questions and hypotheses:

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1: Is there a significant association between identity and emerging adults' attitudes toward non-monogamy?

RQ2: Is there a significant association between identity and sociosexual orientation?

H1: A significant relationship exists between emerging adults' relational orientation and aspects of their identity.

H2: A significant association exists between relational orientation and attitudes toward non-monogamy.

H3: A significant association exists between emerging adults' sociosexual orientation and their relational orientation.

H4: A significant relationship exists between emerging adults' sociosexual orientation and their attitudes toward non-monogamy.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Procedure

This study employs a quantitative survey method design. Whereas Arnett's original research regarding emerging adulthood consisted of qualitative in-depth interviews (e.g., Arnett, 2004), more recent research on identity development in emerging adults has focused more on the measurement and correlates of identity instruments (e.g., Luyckx, Goossens, Soenens, & Beyers, 2006). Additionally, to better ensure unbiased responses due to the nature of the content, participants responded as anonymously as possible, and no identifiable data were collected.

This study employs a convenience sampling methodology using the communication department's research pool site (SONA), from a diverse public university in the southwestern United States. The study received approval from the university IRB (Institutional Review Board; see Appendix B for permission materials). Students, enrolled in introductory communication courses and representing a variety of majors, had the opportunity to participate in this study. As this study is specifically focused on emerging adults, college students are an ideal sample for collecting such data. Final analyses are limited to those individuals who indicated that their age is between 18-29 as this is the predominant emerging adult age range indicated in the literature (Arnett, 2000; Arnett, Žukauskienė, & Sugimura, 2014). Additionally, to enhance sample diversity, an advertisement was also placed on Reddit, calling for participants who met the criteria of the study. Interested individuals via Reddit were taken to the study via a hyperlink in the advertisement, whereas university students who signed up to participate in the study received an email containing a link to the survey. Student participants received compensation in the form of course research credit. Individuals who answered the call for participants via Reddit did not receive compensation.

An informed consent form, provided prior to partaking in the survey, indicated that individuals must be at least 18 years of age to participate, that their data would be kept as confidential as possible, that they had the ability to skip any question that they chose not to answer and that they could cease participation at any time while taking the survey. The informed consent waiver also provided a 20-30 minute time estimation to complete the survey.

Participants

Data collection yielded 450 participants ($n = 450$) between the ages of 18-29 ($M_{age} = 22.34$; $SD = 3.419$) that met the emerging adult age range utilized for the purposes of this investigation. A descriptive profile of the sample and attendant variables is provided below.

Demographics

Participants indicated their religious background and/or current practice from the following selection: *Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, Spiritual but not religious, No religious or spiritual identity*, and *other - please specify*, which included an short open response. This question had a 100 percent response rate ($n = 450$). The majority of participants in this study indicated No religious or spiritual identity ($n = 201$, 44.7%) followed by: Christian ($n = 117$, 26%), Spiritual, but not religious ($n = 69$, 15.3%), other - please specify ($n = 32$, 7.1%), Jewish ($n = 15$, 3.3%), Muslim ($n = 10$, 2.2%), and Buddhist ($n = 6$, 1.3%).

To establish racial identity, participants were asked to indicate which identity they most closely typify from the following selection: *African American, Asian, European American/Caucasian, Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latinx, Multiracial (Two or more), Native American or Alaskan Native*, and *other - please specify*, along with a short open response (for survey specifics, please see survey in Appendix A). With a 100 percent response rate ($n = 450$), the majority of participants in this study identified as European American ($n =$

226, 50.2%), with the remaining identifying as other - please specify ($n = 79$, 17.6%), Hispanic/Latinx ($n = 62$, 13.8%), Asian ($n = 46$, 10.2%), African American ($n = 23$, 5.1%), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ($n = 8$, 1.8%), and Native American/Alaskan Native ($n = 6$, 1.3%).

Socioeconomic Status (SES).

In order to gauge the participants' potential SES, individuals were asked to indicate their household income over the last 12 months as well as their current living situation (for survey specifics, please see Appendix A). Ninety-eight percent ($n = 441$) of participants indicated their last 12 months' household income. The majority of participants indicated household earnings of *Less than \$10,000* ($n = 77$, 17.1%) and the remainder of the sample indicated the following a range of earnings of: *\$35,000 to \$49,999* ($n = 66$, 14.7%), *\$50,000 to \$74,999* ($n = 64$, 14.2%), *\$25,000 to \$34,999* ($n = 48$, 10.7%), *\$15,000 to \$24,999* ($n = 45$, 10.0%), *\$75,000 to \$99,999* ($n = 41$, 9.1%), *\$100,000 to \$149,999* ($n = 36$, 8.0%), *\$10,000 to \$14,999* ($n = 35$, 7.8%), *\$200,000 or more* ($n = 15$, 3.3%), and *\$150,000 to \$199,999* ($n = 14$, 3.1%). Current living situation received a response rate of 99.3% ($n = 447$) with the majority of participants indicating *Living with family* ($n = 217$, 48.2%), followed by *Cohabiting w/ partner(s)* ($n = 96$, 21.3%), *Living with roommate(s)* ($n = 87$, 19.3%), and *Living alone* ($n = 47$, 10.4%). The terms "family," "partner," or "roommate" were left to participant interpretation. For example, "family" was not specified by biological or chosen.

Gender Identity

This study used the two-question assessment of gender identity as suggested by (2QAGI; Tate et al., 2013). Specifically, this measure offers a first question asking participants to select the gender identity which best describes them currently: *female*; *male*; *trans female*; *trans male*; *genderqueer*; or *intersex*. Factor and Rothblum (2008) found that many individuals who identify

in these ways, particularly trans, prefer these terms. The second question asked participants to select the gender category they were assigned at birth: *female*; *male*; *intersex* as suggested by Tate et al. (2013). The two-question method provides a more precise and efficient estimate of cisgender and trans spectrum individuals within a sample because it allows the researcher to consider gender as an evolving identity.

In order to provide better clarification regarding the gender identity selection options definitions were provided to participants for the following terms trans, genderqueer, and intersex. The most commonly accepted definitions are used to avoid confusion regarding terms participants may have less knowledge about. As such, for the purposes of this study, trans individuals identify with, or express, a gender identity that differs from their assigned sex at birth (Clarke-Billings, 2016). Genderqueer individuals do not necessarily subscribe to conventional gender distinctions, choosing to identify as both, neither, or a combination of male and female gender (Clarke-Billings, 2016). Intersex includes individual born with any of several variations in sex characteristics (i.e., chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals) that do not fit the typical definition for a male or female body (Briffa, 2017) (for survey specifics, please see the survey in Appendix A). Current gender identity yielded a 99.8 percent ($n = 449$) response rate and a predominantly female ($n = 271$, 60.2%) sample. The remainder of the sample indicated their current gender identity as male ($n = 141$, 31.3%), genderqueer ($n = 25$, 5.6%), trans male ($n = 8$, 1.8%), and *trans female* ($n = 4$, 0.9%). Gender at birth had a 99.3 percent response rate ($n = 447$; female, $n = 294$, 65.3%; male, $n = 150$, 33.3%; intersex, $n = 3$, .7%).

Sexual Orientation

Participants indicate their sexual orientation from the following selection: *heterosexual*, *homosexual*, *bisexual*, *asexual*, *pansexual/anthroposexual*, and *other* followed by a short open

response. Similar to the gender identity selections, commonly accepted definitions were provided for participants to reduce confusion or misinterpretation. Heterosexuality is defined as the romantic and sexual attraction strictly toward the opposite gender, homosexuality is romantic and sexual attraction strictly toward the same sex gender, and bisexuality is romantic and sexual attraction toward both male and female genders. Asexual individuals often experience little to no romantic or sexual attraction or interest toward either gender, whereas pansexual/anthroposexual individuals' romantic and/or sexual attraction is unhindered by biological sex, gender, or gender identity. Participants were also provided with an 'other' option allowing for a short open response (for survey specifics, please see the survey in Appendix A). Sexual orientation received a 99.1 percent response rate ($n = 446$) with the majority of participants identifying as heterosexual ($n = 249, 55.3\%$), bisexual ($n = 93, 20.7\%$), pansexual ($n = 39, 8.7\%$), other ($n = 26, 5.8\%$), homosexual ($n = 24, 5.3\%$), and asexual ($n = 15, 3.3\%$).

Relational Orientation

To determine relational orientation, participants are asked to indicate which most closely describes their relational orientation (regardless of their current romantic status) from the following selection: *strictly monogamous*; *monogamish*; *open*; *swinging*; *polyamorous*; *negotiable*; and *other*, including a short open response. Definitions are also provided for each of the relational orientations in order to maintain consistency regarding the interpretation of the terms.

Strictly monogamous relationships are defined as relationships limited to two romantic partners who maintain strict obligations of fidelity with no extradyadic romantic or sexual partners. Monogamish are relationships which in partners participate and/or allow limited extradyadic romantic or sexual encounters, but consider their relationship to be primarily

monogamous. Open relationships are defined as dyadic relationships in which partners have agreed to independently pursue and engage in extradyadic sexual activities (but not emotional). swinging relationships are those in which emotionally committed couples have agreed to engage in sexual relations (but not emotional) with extradyadic others, most commonly, in the presence of one's partner. Polyamorous relationships are those in which individuals are free to pursue and maintain multiple emotional and/or sexually intimate extradyadic partners. Negotiable was defined for participants as "*My orientation changes based on current relationship.*"

Current relational orientation, regardless of current relational status, had a 99.8 percent ($n = 449$) response rate, with an almost 50/50 split between individuals who labeled as strictly monogamous ($n = 233$, 51.9%) and various forms of non-monogamy such as, polyamorous ($n = 77$, 17.1%), monogamish ($n = 67$, 14.9%), negotiable ($n = 37$, 8.2%), open ($n = 23$, 5.1%), other - please specify ($n = 10$, 2.2%), and swinging ($n = 2$, 0.4%).

Additionally, participants were asked about their knowledge/experience with each of the relational orientations (i.e., strict monogamy, monogamish, open, swinging, polyamory), on a scale of one through four (1. *Never heard of this practice*; 2. *Heard of it but no previous experience*; 3. *I have experimented but this is not the primary way I conduct my relationships*; and 4. *This is the primary way I conduct my relationships*). 98.4 percent of participants ($n = 443$) indicated their knowledge/experience with each of the relational orientations. The majority of participants indicated strict monogamy as their primary practice ($n = 270$, 60%), followed by polyamory ($n = 71$, 15.8%), monogamish ($n = 37$, 8.2%), open relationships ($n = 17$, 3.8%), and swinging ($n = 3$, 0.7%). Some of these concepts are not widely known. Participants indicated having never heard of or encountered the following terms: monogamish ($n = 109$, 24.2%),

polyamory ($n = 51$, 11.3%), swinging ($n = 42$, 9.3%), open relationships ($n = 16$, 3.6%), and strict monogamy ($n = 14$, 3.1%).

Current relationship status is indicated using the following selection: *Single, not dating*; *Single, casually dating*; *In a committed relationship*; *Engaged*; *Married/married-like*; and *other - please specify*, which allows participants to provide a short open response, followed by questions which prompt them to indicate the corresponding relationship lengths. Current relational status had a response rate of 87.6 percent ($n = 394$). Thirty-four percent of responses indicated being In a committed relationship ($n = 153$, 34%) followed by Single, not dating ($n = 121$, 26.9%), Single and casually dating ($n = 53$, 11.8%), Married/married-like ($n = 46$ 10.2%), Engaged ($n = 15$, 3.3%), and other - please specify ($n = 6$, 1.3%).

Participants indicated their parental status and how many (if any) children they have currently (for survey specifics, please see the survey in Appendix A). Parental status received a response rate of 97.8 percent ($n = 440$) with 6.9 percent ($n = 31$) indicating having children.

Scales

Aspects of Identity Questionnaire-IV

In order to better understand various aspects of identity, the Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV; Cheek & Briggs, 2013) is used. The AIQ-IV measures an individual's identity orientation (i.e., the importance individuals ascribe to their own identity traits and characteristics when self-defining; see Cheek, Smith, & Tropp, 2002) on four identity aspects: personal (i.e., private), relational (i.e., intimate), social (i.e., interpersonal), and collective (i.e., communal) as well as a set of independent special items. This scale was selected because of its ability to conceptualize the self as a singular, yet multi-faceted, structure.

The personal identity aspect reflects an individual's private beliefs about their own psychological traits, values, abilities, and moral standards (Cheek et al., 2002). Individuals with strong personal identity are thought to be more self-reliant and less socially-conforming, as they often maintain confidence regarding their own sense of uniqueness (Mai, 2017). The relational identity aspect reflects how individuals see themselves in the context of their intimate relationships or with others whom they feel close to or have direct personal contact (Cheek et al., 2002). This identity facet is indicative of an individual's dependence on their relationships with others to make decisions (Cheek & Briggs, 2013). Individuals with strong relational identity often plan with consideration of their close relationships or define themselves based on the context of their relationships with others (Cheek & Briggs, 2013). The social identity aspect reflects how individuals see themselves more commonly in interpersonal situations and contexts, including their social roles, reputation, popularity, and physical appearance (Cheek et al., 2002). Individuals with strong social identity are considered to be shaped by the social categories to which they belong, as well as their roles and reputation in society (Cheek et al., 2002). The collective identity aspect reflects the various social group identities to which an individual belongs. Those with a strong collective identity are presumed to be particularly prideful and representative of their social group (e.g., nationality, family heritage, ethnicity, religion, etc.; see Cheek & Briggs, 2002).

The AIQ-IV contains forty-five total items split between the four identity aspects: 10 personal identity items, 7 social identity items, 8 collective identity items, 10 relational identity items, and 10 special items. Participants are asked to respond to the 45 items uses the following 5 point scale (i.e., 1. *not important to my sense of who I am*; 2. *slightly important to my sense of who I am*; 3. *somewhat important to my sense of who I am*; 4. *very important to my sense of who*

I am; and 5. *extremely important to my sense of who I am*) (for a breakdown of the AIQ-IV, please Appendix C). Cheek, Smith, and Tropp (2002) reported a Cronbach's α of .92. In the current study, reliability is an acceptable $\alpha = .917$ overall and $\alpha = .779$ PI, $\alpha = .851$ SI, $\alpha = .713$ CI, and $\alpha = .922$ for the RI items, respectively (Cronbach's α). For the purposes of this study, the independent special items were not analyzed (for survey specifics, please see Appendix A).

Sociosexual Orientation Inventory-Revised

The Sociosexual Orientation Inventory (SOI-R; Penke & Asendorpf, 2008) was used to examine participants' overall orientation toward uncommitted sex. The SOI-R is comprised of three facets, which create an overall global sociosexual orientation score (i.e., behaviors, attitudes, and desires). The SOI-R consists of nine total questions. Each facet is comprised of three questions and uses a 5-point scale.

The behavior facet reflects the individual's quantity of past short-term sexual encounters and includes questions such as, "*With how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse without having an interest in a long-term committed relationship with this person?*" with a response ranging from 1. *0* to 5. *8 or more*. The authors suggest that this component of the SOI-R shows strong and unique links regarding the diversity of individuals past romantic and sexual relationships, as well as the occurrence of sexual infidelity (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008). The attitude facet reflects participants' beliefs regarding uncommitted sex, such as "*Sex without love is OK.*" Response to the attitude facet range from 1. *Strongly disagree* to 5. *Strongly agree*. The third facet, desire, reflects one's desire for uncommitted sex and was found to be related to individuals' general sex drive, desire for sexual variety, and sensation seeking (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008). Questions within the desire facet such as, "*How often do you have fantasies*

about having sex with someone you are not in a committed romantic relationship with?” are responded to using a scale ranging from 1. *Never* to 5. *Nearly every day*.

High scores on the SOI-R indicate an unrestricted sociosexual orientation, while low scores indicate a restricted sociosexual orientation. Penke and Asendorpf (2008) reported an overall alpha score of .85; and scores of .83, .81, and .82 for the behavior, attitude, and desire facets, respectively. Reliability in the current study is an acceptable $\alpha = .877$ overall and $\alpha = .806$, $\alpha = .829$, and $\alpha = .859$ for the behavior, attitude, and desire items, respectively (Cronbach's α ; for survey specifics, please see Appendix A).

Consensual Non-Monogamy Attitude Scale

This study utilized the *Consensual Non-Monogamy Attitude Scale* (CNAS; Cohen & Wilson, 2017) in order to determine participants attitudes regarding CNM. The CNAS consists of 8 items on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 7 = *strongly agree*) to assess the participants' relationship beliefs. Sample items include; *“I can see myself entering into a non-monogamous relationship”* and, *“It is possible to have sexual relationships with other people while in a loving relationship with your partner.”* Previous studies using the CNAS measure indicate that alphas between .90 and .92 (Moors, Rubin, Matsick, Ziegler, & Conley, 2014, p. 228; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017). Reliability of the CNAS in the current study is an acceptable $\alpha = .930$ (Cronbach's α ; for survey specifics, please see Appendix A).

Chapter 4: Results

RQ1: Identity Influences Attitudes Toward CNM

Research question one asked, “Is there a significant association between aspects of identity and emerging adults’ attitudes toward CNM?” To test RQ1, a forced entry multiple regression was conducted, with the four identity facets (personal, social, relational and collective) entered as predictor variables and consensual non-monogamy (CNAS) serving as the criterion variable. To begin, predictor variables were examined for potential multicollinearity. Given the strongest correlation among the four variables was .457 (see Table 1 for the correlation matrix) and all VIFs were under 2, multicollinearity was not a concern and the analysis proceeded.

The overall model was significant ($R^2 = .111$, adjusted $R^2 = .103$, $F(4, 426) = 13.278$, $p < .0001$), with the four predictor variables explaining 11% of the variance in attitudes toward consensual non-monogamy. Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics and analysis results. Regarding specific facets, and as indicated in Table 2, relational identity positively and significantly relates to positive attitudes toward consensual non-monogamy whereas collective identity negatively and significantly relates to positive attitudes toward non-monogamy.

RQ2: Identity Influences Sociosexual Orientation

Research question two asked, “Is there a significant association among aspects of emerging adults’ identities and their sociosexual orientation?” To test RQ2, Pearson correlations were conducted among the four identify facets (personal, relational, social, collective) and the global SOI-R score as well as the three sociosexuality factors (attitude, behavior, desire) to gain a more detailed understanding of the various relationships. Data reveal a significant, negative, linear relationship exists between emerging adults’ collective identity and their global sociosexuality score ($r = -.151$, $p < .001$). A correlation matrix appears in Table 3 that

demonstrates the connections between the AIQ-IV and SOI-R subsets. As demonstrated in Table 3, a significant, negative, linear relationship exists between the personal identity facet and the sociosexual attitude orientation ($r = -.125, p < .009$) and a significant, positive, linear relationship exists between the social identity facet and the sociosexual desire orientation ($r = .132, p < .005$), as well as a significant, positive, linear relationship between relational identity and the behavior orientation ($r = .098, p < .039$).

H1: Relational Orientation is Associated With Identity

Hypothesis one, positing that a significant relationship exists between emerging adults' relational orientation and aspects of their identity, was supported. Specifically, a MANOVA was conducted, with relational orientation entered as the predictor variable and the AIQ-IV as well as each of the four AIQ facets entered as individual criterion variables. Overall model results indicate significant relationship between relational orientation and aspects of identity ($F(6, 424) = 5.849, p < .0001$). An examination of between-subjects' effects indicate significant relationships specifically for social identity ($F(6, 435) = 3.705, p < .001$) and collective identity ($F(6, 437) = 8.306, p < .0001$) and emerging adults' relational orientations. Post hoc Tukey tests reveal a statistically significant, negative, linear relationship between those who identify their relational orientation as polyamory ($n = 75, M = 3.16, SD = .446$) and strictly monogamous ($n = 223, M = 3.52, SD = .521$) ($p < .0001$). Specifically, mean scores on the social identity subset revealed a statistically significant, negative, linear relationships between those who identified their relational orientation as polyamory and those who identify as strictly monogamous ($p < .0001$) and monogamish ($n = 64, M = 3.36, SD = .424$) ($p = .029$). Additionally, mean scores on the collective identity subset revealed a statistically significant, negatively, linear relationships between those who identified their relational orientation as polyamory and those who identify as

strictly monogamous ($p < .0001$), monogamish ($p = .018$), and open ($n = 22$, $M = 3.50$, $SD = .592$) ($p < .0001$).

H2: Relational Orientation Influences Attitudes Toward CNM

Hypothesis two posited that a significant association exists between relational orientation and attitudes toward CNM, such that those who label their relational orientation as non-monogamous (i.e., monogamish, open, swinging, polyamory) hold more positive attitudes toward CNM in comparison to those individuals who label their relational orientation as strictly monogamous. Hypothesis two was supported. Specifically, results of a oneway ANOVA demonstrate a significant association between relational orientation and attitudes toward CNM ($F(6, 436) = 108.429$, $p < .0001$). Post hoc Tukey tests reveal three significant group mean differences among attitude and relational orientation. Specifically, and as demonstrated in Table 4, those participants that identify as strictly monogamous ($n = 229$, $M = 2.716$, $SD = 1.28$) hold significantly less favorable attitudes toward consensual non-monogamy than those participants who identify as swinging ($n = 2$, $M = 4.125$, $SD = 2.474$) or monogamish ($n = 66$, $M = 4.239$, $SD = 1.187$) and also significantly less favorably than those who identify as negotiable ($n = 37$, $M = 5.199$, $SD = 1.149$) and polyamorous ($n = 76$, $M = 6.482$, $SD = .530$) (the higher the mean, the more positive the attitude toward consensual non-monogamy). In addition, those who identify as strictly monogamous, swinging, monogamish, open ($n = 23$, $M = 4.582$, $SD = 1.394$) and other ($n = 10$, $M = 4.725$, $SD = 1.794$) hold significantly less favorable attitudes toward CNM than participants that identify as negotiable and polyamorous in their relational orientation.

H3: Relational Orientation Influences Sociosexual Orientation

Hypothesis three, positing that a significant association exists between emerging adults' sociosexual orientation and their relational orientation, was supported. Specifically, those identifying as non-monogamous (i.e., monogamish, open, swinging, polyamory) have a less

restricted global sociosexual orientation than those who identify as strictly monogamous. To test H3, a MANOVA was conducted, with relational orientation entered as the predictor variable and the SOI-R as well as each of the three SOI-R facets entered as individual criterion variables. Overall model results indicate significant relationship between relational orientation and global sociosexuality ($F(6, 424) = 19.628, p < .0001$). An examination of between-subjects effects indicates a statistically significant relationship between those who hold a strictly monogamous ($n = 232, M = 2.39, SD = .818$) and their global sociosexuality. Post hoc Tukey tests indicate statistically significant, negative, linear relationship between those who identify their relational orientation as strictly monogamous and global sociosexuality in comparison to individuals to ascribe to non-monogamous relational orientations such as monogamish ($n = 66, M = 3.06, SD = .804, p < .0001$), polyamorous ($n = 77, M = 3.23, SD = .806, p < .0001$), negotiable ($n = 37, M = 3.26, SD = .779, p < .0001$), and open ($n = 23, M = 3.54, SD = .778, p < .0001$). Additionally, regarding global sociosexuality, Post hoc Tukey tests indicate a statistically significant, negative, linear relationship between those who identify their relational orientation as open ($p = .019$) compared to individuals who identify as other ($n = 9, M = 2.48, SD = .917$).

Additional between-subjects effects indicate significant relationships for each of the three SOI facets, attitudes ($F(6, 435) = 5.673, p < .0001$), behaviors ($F(6, 437) = 9.736, p < .0001$), and desire ($F(6, 437) = 10.367, p < .0001$) and emerging adults sociosexual orientations. Post hoc Tukey HSD tests reveal that strictly monogamous individuals have significantly more negative sociosexual attitudes than monogamish ($p = .001$), polyamorous ($p = .001$), and negotiable ($p = .037$) relational orientations. Tukey post hoc tests also reveal that strictly monogamous individuals indicated significantly less sociosexual behaviors than individuals who identified as open ($p < .0001$), polyamorous ($p < .0001$), and negotiable ($p < .0001$).

Additionally, post hoc Tukey HSD tests revealed that strictly monogamous individuals indicated significantly less sociosexual desires than individuals who identified as monogamish ($p < .0001$), open ($p < .0001$), polyamorous ($p < .0001$), and negotiable ($p = .036$). Lastly, post hoc Tukey tests reveal that individuals who identified as other had significantly lower sociosexual desires than polyamorous ($p = .025$) and open ($p = .002$) individuals.

H4: Attitudes Toward CNM are Associated with Sociosexual Orientation

Hypothesis four, positing that a significant relationship exists between emerging adults' sociosexual orientation and their attitudes toward non-monogamy, such that those who have a less restricted global sociosexual score will have more positive attitudes toward non-monogamy, was supported. A Pearson correlation indicated a significant, positive relationship between emerging adults' attitudes toward non-monogamy and their sociosexuality. Specifically, positive scores on the CNAS (more positive attitudes toward non-monogamy) were indicative of a positive global score on the SOI-R (less restricted overall sociosexual score $r = .486, p < .01$).

Chapter 5: Discussion

Labels, Relationships, and Attitudes, They are A'changin'

This study proposed that associations exist among identity and relational orientation, sociosexual orientation, and attitudes toward non-monogamy. These premises were built on self-identity research which suggests social interactions and behaviors are influenced by how individuals define themselves in relation to others (Markus & Wurf, 1987; Oyserman, 2001; Johnson, 2010) as well as findings which indicate that emerging adults today are participating in and exposed to diverse sexual and relational practices. The data in this sample appear to represent the current cultural/social climate of emerging adults in the United States (e.g., Leguizamon & Griggs, 2018). Specifically, 7.8 percent of participants in this study identified by a non-binary gender. These results regarding gender identity are in line with recent data (Leguizamon & Griggs, 2018) which suggest that a growing portion of today's youth are choosing to identify by a non-binary gender.

This study generated a sexually diverse emerging adult sample, illustrative of the current emerging adult population at large (Dimock, 2019; McCarthy, 2018; Newport, 2018). Nearly forty-four percent (43.8%) of emerging adults in this sample indicated a non-heterosexual sexual orientation. These data are representative of current US Gallop poll trends which indicate a rise in LGBTQ+ identifying individuals, 4.5% in the US, with the greatest percentage coming from Millennials (those born between 1980-1996; Newport, 2018) and those on the cusp of Generation Z (individuals born between 1997-2012; Dimock, 2019). Additionally, two-thirds (67 percent), of Americans are now in support of LGBTQ+ marriages, which is an increase of almost 25 percent since 2008, and 40 percent since 1996 (McCarthy, 2018). These growing trends regarding positive attitudes toward LGBTQ+ partnerships and same-sex marriages (Dimock,

2019; McCarthy, 2018; Newport, 2018) indicate that the population of LGBTQ+ identifying individuals and partnerships is going to continue to increase. It is hoped that research, such as that conducted in the current investigation, increases awareness of such populations and can aid understanding and acceptance of the individuals composing them.

Additionally, emerging adults in this study indicated particularly diverse relational orientations. Specifically, 47.9 percent of individuals indicated a non-monogamous relational orientation. These findings are of particularly noteworthy as they relate to the association between an individual's relational orientation and their sociosexual orientations and attitudes toward non-monogamy. Individuals who identify their relational orientation as polyam and negotiable (i.e., changes based on the relationship) are found to have significantly more positive attitudes toward non-monogamy than other relational orientations (strictly monogamous, swinging, monogamish, open and other).

Individuals in polyam relationships would understandably have the most positive views regarding non-monogamy because individuals holding this relational orientation are generally accepting of both sexual and emotional intimacy (Frederick & Fales, 2016; Klesse, 2014a; Matsick et al., 2014). Additionally, those who consider their relational orientation as negotiable might have less commitment to a specific relational orientation (i.e., strictly monogamous, swinging, monogamish, open, and polyamory) as it is subject to change depending on their own intimate relationships and openness to participate in CNM. These data indicate that non-monogamous individuals (i.e., monogamish, open, swinging, and polyamory) have a more positive orientation toward uncommitted sex than those who identify as strictly monogamous, replicating previous findings (Klesse, 2018; Mogilski et al., 2017; Morrison et al., 2013) looking

at relational styles and sociosexuality. This finding is particularly important in light of the aforementioned reported finding that these populations are growing in number.

These data are particularly interesting because they reveal that strictly monogamous emerging adults did not indicate significantly different behaviors than those who identified as monogamish, but did, however, indicate reduced sociosexual desires and less positive attitudes toward uncommitted/promiscuous sex. These data imply that individuals who identify as strictly monogamous might be enacting the same behaviors as those who label as monogamish but have more negative views, and less likely to admit desires regarding the behavior. These findings align with previous research addressing monogamishness (e.g., Rubin, 1984; Barker, 2011). Future research might want to further tease out this potential relationship.

Data in this study reveal a significant, positive correlation between individuals' sociosexuality and their attitudes toward non-monogamy, as anticipated in hypothesis four. Additionally, results suggesting that a positive correlation between emerging adults' orientation toward uncommitted sex and their positive attitudes toward CNM confirm previous studies (Cohen & Wilson, 2017; Klesse, 2018). Specifically, these current findings confirm previous work conducted by Cohen and Wilson (2017), who found that those who identify with a non-heterosexual orientation, those as a non-binary gender (trans/queer), and those open accepting of sexual experimentation/promiscuity, had more positive attitudes toward non-monogamy. In all, these data suggest that a growing number of emerging adults are becoming more knowledgeable/accepting of various gender identities, sexual orientations (McCarthy, 2018) and relational practices (Dugan, 2017; Greenspan, 2018), while strictly monogamous identifying individuals hold significantly less positive non-monogamous attitudes and sociosexual orientations.

Identity Associations: Interpretation and Implications

One's relational orientation (strictly monogamous, monogamish, swinging, open, negotiable, and polyamory), is influenced by the salience of one's social (i.e., social roles, reputation, popularity, physical appearance, etc. being important to one's sense of self) and collective identity (i.e., nationality, family heritage, ethnicity, religion, etc. is important to their sense of self) aspects. Collective and social identity aspects are significantly strong in emerging adults who identify as strictly monogamous, monogamish, and open in comparison to those who identified as polyamorous. Polyamorous individuals within this sample did not consider social values and heritage are integral/salient in their sense of self. These findings are understandable given that polyamorous individuals would be less likely to define their sense of self in relation to things such as social status or heritage/community given that these are marginalized individuals generally excluded from these areas (e.g., Barker & Langdridge, 2010; Blumer & VandenBosch, 2015; Jordan et al., 2017; Moors et al., 2013). Thus, findings suggest that polyam individuals are less influenced by social scaffolding and labeling or, perhaps, simply rejecting it altogether (e.g., Averett, 2016; Pfeffer, 2014).

To that end, the findings that strictly monogamous individuals display stronger collective and social identities are also unsurprising given that concern for social appropriateness, social values, and heritage are considered to be integral/salient to one's sense of self within these two aspects (Cheek & Briggs, 2013; Cheek & Cheek, 2018; Mehri, Salari, Langroudi, & Baharamizadeh, 2011), and western culture overtly favors strict monogamy (Barker & Langdridge, 2010; Blumer & VandenBosch, 2015; Jordan et al., 2017; Moors et al., 2013). The same could be said regarding the terms monogamish and open as they also, to an extent, represent conventional terms that individuals are perhaps more comfortable assigning to

themselves. For example, the term monogamish could potentially be considered a ‘gateway’ term for individuals who are not fully comfortable establishing their relational practice as a non-monogamy.

Findings from this investigation indicate that strong/salient relational and collective identity aspects influence individuals’ attitudes toward non-monogamy and their sociosexual orientation. Several implications can be drawn from these findings as they relate to identity in the emerging adult population. To begin, these data reveal that those with a strong relational identity (i.e., close/intimate relationships with others are important to their sense of self) tend to have significantly more positive attitudes toward non-monogamy, while those with a strong collective identity had significantly more negative attitudes toward non-monogamy as well as global sociosexuality scores. The finding that those emerging adults who value a strong relational identity also hold more favorable attitudes toward non-monogamy makes sense theoretically because if close relationships are important to an individual’s sense of self; thus, such individuals may then be more willing to negotiate/discuss/consider the existence of various relational needs, even those outside of monogamy (e.g., follower–leader relations; see van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004).

Because individuals with a collective identity orientation view the social world through the lens of their group members and value the importance of their group membership in their self-concept (Cheek & Cheek, 2018), it is possible that these individuals are responding to the AIQ-IV items with consideration of their social values/heritage, which are traditionally conservative regarding sexuality and sexual practices (Cheek & Cheek, 2018; Mehri et al., 2011). Thus, the finding that individuals with strong collective identities hold negative attitudes toward non-monogamy and relational promiscuity makes sense given that a strong connection to

things such as religion or family heritage and tradition, also typically value conservative sexual attitudes and norms (e.g., Ahrold, Farmer, Trapnell, & Meston, 2011; Lefkowitz, Gillen, Shearer, & Boone, 2004). Indeed, identity theory argues that through reflective processes, known as identification, identity is formed (Stets & Burke, 2000). Thus, these data support statements made by Gaertner et al. (2012) that relational and collective identity aspects have “motivational potency due to their susceptibility to norms of interdependence, connectedness and the importance of others” (p. 999). Additionally, these data support work by Seta, Seta, and Hundt (2001) who found that an individual's' identity orientations can shape their social perceptions.

One's relational orientation (strictly monogamous, monogamish, swinging, open, negotiable, and polyamory), is influenced by the salience of one's social and collective identity aspects. Collective and social identity (i.e., social roles, reputation, popularity, physical appearance, etc. being important to one's sense of self) aspects are significantly strong in emerging adults who identified as strictly monogamous, monogamish, and open in comparison to those who identified as polyamorous. These findings are understandable given that polyamorous individuals would be less likely, as mentioned earlier, to define their sense of self in relation to things such as social status or heritage/community given that these are marginalized individuals generally excluded from these areas (e.g., Barker & Langdrige, 2010; Blumer & VandenBosch, 2015; Jackson, 2011; Jordan et al., 2017; Moors et al., 2013).

To sum, while the collective and social identity facets were the least salient/important to participants' overall sense of identity, these facets nevertheless appear to be playing a role in how non-monogamous relational practices are being labeled. Specifically, findings indicate that collective identity is associated with significantly less positive orientations toward uncommitted/promiscuous sex and less positive attitudes toward non-monogamy. Strictly

monogamous, monogamish, and open individuals all have significantly higher associations to collective and social identity facets than polyamorous individuals. However, looking more closely at the sociosexual desires and behaviors of these relational orientations reveal that monogamish and open individuals have similar sociosexual orientations to polyam folks, all of whom reported significantly more SOI behaviors and desires than strictly monogamish individuals. These data indicate that strong/salient associations to collective and social identity items are influential in individuals' decisions to choose a monogamish/open/or new relational orientation to represent their variation of non-monogamy instead of necessarily labeling themselves as polyamorous, even when the behaviors and desires are the same/similar. Future research should more thoroughly investigate the influence of these identity items on relational labeling.

Critiques of the AIQ-IV

While the AIQ-IV served well in enabling the demonstration of associations among identity, relational labeling, and orientations regarding uncommitted sex and non-monogamy, there are several critiques worthy of note. First, there are several grouping/organizational issues to recognize. Specifically, in its current state, the AIQ-IV includes 10 special item questions that are not scored into the four identity aspects (personal, relational, social, collective). Many of these special items, however, appear to fit within one of these four existing aspects. For example, items that reference sex (gender), physical/academic ability, and sexual orientation could be housed within the personal identity facet. Additionally, measure items that include a reference to social class and roles could be incorporated into the social identity facet, while items which mention belonging to a generation or group could be consolidated into the collective facet.

The second critique of the AIQ-IV involves the word choices currently representing the four identity aspects and the language/phrasing found within the scales' individual items. The collective identity aspect, as currently labeled, could be mistaken as measuring collectivist mindset (i.e., see Ting-Toomey, 2005; Trubisky, Ting-Toomey, & Lin, 1991; Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, S., Nishida, T., Kim, K., & Heyman, S. (1996), instead of one's connections to social groups. Additionally, the current AIQ items appear to be measuring one's connection to *traditional/formal* collectives and groups, not collectives/groups more broadly. These are important distinctions to be made. For example, this study found that polyam folks had a significantly lower association with the collective identity facet than the other relational orientations. The collective identity items in the AIQ-IV reference religion, generational identity, national pride, and similar positionalities as being important to one's overall sense of self. For reasons previously stated, it is understandable that polyam individuals would not relate to these collective identity items, but this does not necessarily suggest that social groups/categories are not important to these individuals; rather, responses to said items might reflect a matter of interpretation and, as such, a consideration for future research. The distinction between a formal/traditional vs new-wave collective identity items could be important and should be considered in future adaptations of this scale.

Additionally, phrasing and language choices throughout the scale could benefit from modernization and updating such that they are more sensitive, inclusive, and representative of diverse individuals who might be completing this measure. For example, the item "My sex, being a male or a female, is important to my overall sense of self" could be updated to be more inclusive of non-binary individuals, such as, "My gender, however that I choose to define it."

Removing the binary sex examples and providing participants with more autonomy to self-define allows for the item to be more applicable to a wider range of individuals.

Contributions, Limitations, and Future Research

The current study is the only and/or few of its kind to consider the associations among identity and relational orientations, sociosexuality, and attitudes. These associations are of importance because, as indicated by the sample data, identity has an influence on the way that individuals label their relational orientations as well as their orientations, behaviors, and attitudes regarding uncommitted sex and sexual engagement. Given, as demonstrated by the data in this investigation, numbers in these various populations appear to be increasing, the findings of the current investigation are particularly salient and valuable. Results of this investigation raise awareness regarding the diversity of identity and recognized and practiced relational and sexual forms. As such, the potential exists to further introduce and maintain this awareness into conversation, thereby raising not only socio-cultural awareness, but recognition and acceptance of diverse identities and relational and sexual forms. Moving forward, researchers might explore the changing socio-cultural fabric regarding once-accepted narrow and binary recognitions regarding sex, gender, identity and sexual and relational orientation and consider potential social and policy implications of these variations, to name a few.

As there are many views regarding what polyamory represents for different individuals [i.e., philosophy (Klesse, 2007), identity (Barker, 2005), sexual orientation (Klesse, 2014), a lovestyle (Anapol, 2010), relational practice (Lano & Parry Lano, 1995)], future research should parcel out what exactly the polyamorous identity label represents for identifying individuals. Additionally, this study introduces new terminology “polyam” as an alternative shorthand for polyamory as opposed to simple “poly,” due to concerns posed by indigenous Polynesian folks

who claim the term as a cultural/ethnic label (Aquafree, 2018; Manduley, 2015; n.a., 2016). To avoid cultural insensitivity and confusion between terms the author would also like to encourage others to embrace the terms polyam or polyamory in full as opposed to simply “poly” when discussing non-monogamy. Incorporating this additional term into the conversation will allow for it to become more embedded and accepted into social and relational consciousness.

There are several strengths of the current study that are noteworthy. As this was a short quantitative survey participant’ had the ability to complete this survey from any computer/mobile with ease from the privacy of homes or workplaces. The straightforward format and accessibility/convenience of this survey to allow us to reach individuals who would not otherwise have had the opportunity or time to participate in research studies. Furthermore, survey distribution/advertisement on the Internet, or relevant Reddit boards, in this case, is considered to produce greater diversity with respect to gender, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status and geographic region than convenience samples of students (Frederick & Fales, 2016; Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004). As this study’s scope was particularly interested in reaching a large and sexually/relationally diverse audience of emerging adults, the expanded reach and convenience of web-based surveys provided a notable advantage in reaching target groups.

Several limitations of this study must be noted. Due to the modest sample size and lack of racial diversity, and participant self-selection, the results of this investigation are not necessarily nationally representative and findings and should be interpreted with some caution as some of the categories were not strongly represented. Additionally, some results should be interpreted with caution given the small group sizes for some orientations. Numbers in certain groups, such

as swingers, might have increased with a wider age demographic—that is, swingers might be perceived as a generational term.

Additional survey items probed participants' knowledge and experience regarding the various relational orientations. Of our sample, only 9.3 percent ($n = 42$) indicated having little/no knowledge of swinging. Only two individuals within our sample identified a 'swinging' relational orientation, while almost 15 percent of this sample identified as monogamish. These data indicate that the majority is aware of the term 'swinging' and are choosing an alternative label. Future studies could explore a wider age range beyond emerging adults given that this study found that identity, sociosexuality, and attitudes toward non-monogamy were influenced by age.

A design/methodological limitation of this study is that aside from the final question of the survey, which prompted for comments/feedback for the authors, no other qualitative data were collected. Future research should consider using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in order to properly encapsulate the unique diversity within non-monogamous populations. Considering the uniqueness/individuality of this topic, qualitative data would provide the most insight into how relational orientation, sociosexuality, and one's attitudes toward non-monogamy may be being influenced by the different aspects of their identity and perhaps why. Individuals could be asked to list the various roles to which they associate themselves and the strength of that roles association on their identity. Role responses could be coded into the four identity aspect categories (relational, social, collective, personal) and used in correlation with the AIQ-IV measure. Additionally, whether identity is influential on orientations and attitudes could be promoted more explicitly in qualitative format. For example, "does your

relational orientation intersect with other elements of your identity? How does it function within your understanding of yourself?”

This study did not collect data regarding participants’ partners or data from their partners. These data could provide interesting acumen regarding the association between various relational orientations and the identity aspects among partners. For example, because of the allowance of both sexual and emotional/romantic love in polyamory (and potentially others), these relationships have potentially limitless variability in structure. This variability in intimacy allows for the cultivation of poly-families (ex., chosen families, see Weston, 1991). More research and awareness is needed regarding the unique variations of non-monogamy particularly as individuals are living longer (Barratt, 2017), more transient (Putter, 2019) lifestyles than previous generations.

Conclusion

This study offers foundational insight into the association between identity and how individuals choose to label/represent their relational orientation, particular regarding non-monogamous practices. We found that a strong collective identity influences an individual's attitudes toward non-monogamy as well as their global orientations toward uncommitted sex. Collective as well as social identity were both significantly higher for strictly monogamous, monogamish, and open individuals in comparison to polyam folks. This is telling because polyamorous, monogamish, and open participants all indicated having significantly higher sociosexual desires and behaviors than strictly monogamous individuals. These data indicate that monogamish and open individuals are experiencing sociosexual desires regarding uncommitted/promiscuous sex as well as participating in these types of behaviors. Additionally, monogamish and open individuals indicated having more positive attitudes toward non-

monogamy than strictly monogamous individuals, but not quite as positive as polyamorous individuals. These data imply that the strong salience to the collective and social identity items (i.e., strong identity associations to traditional/formal collective groups and social reputation) is influencing monogamish and open individuals' decisions to not choose polyamory as their non-monogamous relational label.

This type of research is important because how one constructs their identity is important as it is often relative to the social world at large and influence these individuals' behaviors, attitudes, and communications, as well as how they are responded to by others (e.g., Fu et al., 2018; Harbaugh, & Lindsey, 2015). A better understanding of how certain role identities, such as one's relational orientation, are influenced could help provide clarity and understanding between opposing groups viewpoints regarding sexuality and non-monogamy.

Additionally, it is important to consider how individuals choose to label and represent themselves within marginalized groups as these individuals face negative stigmatization and backlash (Barker & Langdrige, 2010; Blumer & VandenBosch, 2015; Jackson, 2011; Moors et al., 2013). This is particularly true for non-binary, non-heterosexual, and non-monogamous individuals in the current culture which largely privileges monogamy and heteronormativity (Jackson, 2011; Jordan et al., 2017). This topic is of particular concern as it is evident that emerging adults today are more open to and participating in forms of non-monogamy without any formal/legal recognition or rights.

With so many more individuals openly participating in these various relational orientations this topic has the potential to become the next moral/legal debate regarding marriage (Dugan, 2017; Conley et al., 2013; King & Cronin, 2016; Westwood, 2013) and family (Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2006, 2010; Sheff, 2017), making more research regarding this issue particularly

crucial. Though these data are not generalizable beyond the sample scope at hand, this study is one of few that offers a preliminary foundation for research regarding the association between relational orientation and identity, as well as their influence on orientations regarding uncommitted sex and non-monogamy. Given the growing number of individuals embracing, experimenting, and identifying with these various practices and identities, research that can increase awareness, understanding, and acceptance is essential and necessary as we could presently be on the verge of a new frontier of sexual, emotional, and familial relationship practices and communication.

Appendix A: Tables and Figures

Table 1

*Correlations Matrix for AIQ Facets**

	RI	PI	SI	CI
Relational Identity	1	.409	.460	.311
Personal Identity	.409	1	.304	.332
Social Identity	.460	.304	1	.389
Collective Identity	.311	.332	.389	1

*all correlations significant at $p < .01$

Table 2*Main Predictors of Acceptance of Consensual Non-Monogamy*

Variables	β	<i>t</i> value	Sig.	Partial <i>r</i>	<i>B</i>	Lower CI	Upper CI
Relational Identity	.338	2.521	.012	.121	-.138	.074	.602
Personal Identity	-.214	-1.156	.248	-.056	-.060	-.579	.150
Collective Identify	-.778	-6.148	.0001	-.285	-.317	-1.026	-.529
Social Identity	-.116	-.877	.381	-.042	-.047	-.377	.145

Unstandardized Beta Coefficients, t-Values, Partial Correlations, Standardized Beta Coefficients and Confidence Intervals

Table 3
AIQ-IV x SOI-R Correlation

Variable		SOI-B	SOI-A	SOI-D
AIQ-RI	Pearson Correlation	.098*	-.043	.020
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	.370	.680
	<i>N</i>	445	443	444
AIQ-PI	Pearson Correlation	.010	-.125**	-.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.829	.009	.434
	<i>N</i>	444	442	443
AIQ-SI	Pearson Correlation	.076	-.007	.132**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.111	.891	.005
	<i>N</i>	443	441	442
AIQ-CI	Pearson Correlation	-.034	-.077	-.088
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.474	.107	.064
	<i>N</i>	445	443	444

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4
Relational orientation x CNAS ANOVA

Subset for alpha =.05				
	<i>n</i>	1	2	3
<i>Strictly Monogamous</i>	229	2.7162		
<i>Swinging</i>	2	4.1250	4.1250	
<i>Monogamish</i>	66	4.2386	4.2386	
<i>Open</i>	23		4.5815	
<i>Other</i>	10		4.7250	
<i>Negotiable</i>	37		5.1993	5.1993
<i>Polyamorous</i>	76			6.4819
<i>Sig.</i>		.065	.402	.195

Appendix B: Survey & Glossary

Sexual Identities, Attitudes, and Orientations Survey

Terms followed by an asterisk (*) are accompanied with a definition anytime they appear within the online survey (*see glossary*).

Identity Orientation: Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV; Briggs & Briggs, 2013).
(*PI*) = personal identity; (*RI*) = relational identity; (*SI*) = social identity; (*CI*) = collective identity; (*SP*) = special items.

The following items describe different aspects of identity. Please read each item carefully and consider which answer **BEST** applies to you using the following 1-5 scale:

1. Not important to my sense of who I am
2. Slightly important to my sense of who I am
3. Somewhat important to my sense of who I am
4. Very important to my sense of who I am
5. Extremely important to my sense of who I am

- 1.1.(*SP*). The things I own, my possessions
- 1.2.(*PI*). My personal values and moral standards
- 1.3.(*SI*). My popularity with other people
- 1.4.(*CI*). Being a part of the many generations of my family
- 1.5.(*PI*). My dreams and imagination
- 1.6.(*SI*). The ways in which other people react to what I say and do
- 1.7.(*CI*). My race or ethnic background
- 1.8.(*PI*). My personal goals and hopes for the future
- 1.9.(*SI*). My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body
- 1.10.(*CI*). My religion
- 1.11.(*PI*). My emotions and feelings
- 1.12.(*SI*). My reputation, what others think of me
- 1.13.(*CI*). Places where I live or where I was raised
- 1.14.(*PI*). My thoughts and ideas
- 1.15.(*SI*). My attractiveness to other people
- 1.16.(*SP*). My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation
- 1.17.(*SI*). My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make on others
- 1.18.(*PI*). The ways I deal with my fears and anxieties
- 1.19.(*SP*). My sex, being a male or a female
- 1.20.(*SI*). My social behavior, such as the way I act when meeting people
- 1.21.PI. My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others
- 1.22.(*RI*). My relationships with the people I feel close to
- 1.23.(*SP*). My social class, the economic group I belong to whether lower, middle, or upper class
- 1.24.(*CI*). My feeling of belonging to my community
- 1.25.(*PI*). Knowing that I continue to be essentially the same inside even though life involves many external changes
- 1.26.(*RI*). Being a good friend to those I really care about
- 1.27.(*PI*). My self-knowledge, my ideas about what kind of person I really am

- 1.28.(RI). My commitment to being a concerned relationship partner
- 1.29.(CI). My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a citizen
- 1.30.(SP). My physical abilities, being coordinated and good at athletic activities
- 1.31.(RI). Sharing significant experiences with my close friends
- 1.32.(PI). My personal self-evaluation, the private opinion I have of myself
- 1.33.(SP). Being a sports fan, identifying with a sports team
- 1.34.(RI). Having mutually satisfying personal relationships
- 1.35.(RI). Connecting on an intimate level with another person
- 1.36.(SP). My occupational choice and career plans
- 1.37.(RI). Developing caring relationships with others
- 1.38.(CI). My commitments on political issues or my political activities
- 1.39.(RI). My desire to understand the true thoughts and feelings of my best friend or romantic partner
- 1.40.(SP). My academic ability and performance, such as the grades I earn and comments I get from teachers
- 1.41.(RI). Having close bonds with other people
- 1.42.(CI). My language, such as my regional accent or dialect or a second language that I know
- 1.43.(RI). My feeling of connectedness with those I am close to
- 1.44.(SP). My role of being a student in college
- 1.45.(SP). My sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual

Sociosexual Orientation: Revised Sociosexual Orientation Inventory (SOI-R; Penke and Asendorpf 2008). (*B*) = behavior facet; (*A*) = attitude facet; (*D*) = desire facet.

Please respond honestly to the following questions using the provided 1-5 scales:

- 2.1.(B). With how many different partners have you had sex within the past 12 months?
1. (0); 2. (1); 3. (2-3); 4. (4-7); 5. (8 or more)
- 2.2.(B). With how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse on ONLY ONE occasion?
1. (0); 2. (1); 3. (2-3); 4. (4-7); 5. (8 or more)
- 2.3.(B). With how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse without having an interest in a long-term committed relationship with this person?
1. (0); 2. (1); 3. (2-3); 4. (4-7); 5. (8 or more)
- 2.4.(A). Sex without love is OK.
1. (strongly disagree); 2. (disagree); 3. (neutral); 4. (agree); 5. (strongly agree)
- 2.5.(A). I can imagine myself being comfortable and enjoying "casual" sex with different partners.
1. (strongly disagree); 2. (disagree); 3. (neutral); 4. (agree); 5. (strongly agree)
- 2.6.(A). I do not want to have sex with a person until I am sure that we will have a long-term, serious relationship.
1. (strongly disagree); 2. (disagree); 3. (neutral); 4. (agree); 5. (strongly agree)
- 2.7.(D). How often do you have fantasies about having sex with someone you are not in a committed romantic relationship with?

1. (Never); 2. (Very seldom); 3. (About once a month); 4. (About once a week); 5. (Nearly every day)

2.8.(D). How often do you experience sexual arousal when you are in contact with someone you are not in a committed romantic relationship with?

1. (Never); 2. (Very seldom); 3. (About once a month); 4. (About once a week); 5. (Nearly every day)

2.9.(D). In everyday life, how often do you have spontaneous fantasies about having sex with someone you have just met?

1. (Never); 2. (Very seldom); 3. (About once a month); 4. (About once a week); 5. (Nearly every day)

Attitudes Toward CNM: Consensual Non-Monogamy Attitude Scale (Cohen & Wilson, 2017).

Please rate the extent to which you agree with the next eight statements using the following 1-7 scale:

1. strongly disagree; 2. moderately disagree; 3. slightly disagree; 4. neutral; 5. slightly agree; 6. moderately agree; 7. strongly agree

3. 1. *You must be in a monogamous relationship to be in love.
 3. 2. I can see myself entering into a non-monogamous relationship.
 3. 3. *A monogamous relationship is the most satisfying type of relationship.
 3. 4. *Intimate relationships with more than one person are too complicated.
 3. 5. It is possible to have several satisfying intimate relationships at the same time.
 3. 6. It is possible to date other people while in a loving relationship with your partner.
 3. 7. It is possible to have sexual relationships with other people while in a loving relationship with your partner.
 3. 8. It is possible for one partner in a relationship to be monogamous while the other partner is not monogamous.
-

Demographics:

Please respond honestly to the following questions:

4. Please indicate your current age. _____

5. Please select ONE of the following items which best indicates your religious background and/or current practice.

1. Buddhist
2. Christian
3. Hindu
4. Jewish
5. Muslim
6. Spiritual but not religious
7. No religious or spiritual identity
8. Other - Please specify _____

6. Please indicate which of the following you **most closely identify**. Please select only ONE. 1. African American

2. Asian
2. European American
3. Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
4. Hispanic/Latinx
5. Native American or Alaskan Native
6. Other - Please specify _____

7. Please indicate your household income the last 12 months: Less than \$10,000

1. \$10,000 to \$14,999
2. \$15,000 to \$24,999
3. \$25,000 to \$34,999
4. \$35,000 to \$49,999
5. \$50,000 to \$74,999
6. \$75,000 to \$99,999
7. \$100,000 to \$149,999
8. \$150,000 to \$199,999 5.8%
9. \$200,000 or more

8. Which of the following best describes your current living situation?

1. Living alone
2. Cohabiting with a romantic/sexual partner
3. Living with family
4. Living with roommate(s)

Gender Identity: (2QAGI; Tate et al. 2013)

9. Please select the **gender identity that you most closely identify with currently**. Please review the definitions as needed and select only ONE.

1. Female
2. Male
3. Trans* female
4. Trans* male
5. Genderqueer*
6. Intersex*

10. What gender category were you assigned at birth?

1. Female
2. Male
3. Intersex*

Sexual Orientation:

11. What is your sexual orientation? Please review the definitions as needed and select only ONE.

1. Heterosexual*
2. Homosexual*
3. Bisexual*
4. Asexual*
5. Pansexual/anthroposexual*
6. Other - Please specify ____

Relational Orientation:

12. Please indicate which of following **most closely describes your relational orientation (regardless of your current romantic status)**? Please review the definitions as needed and select only ONE.

1. Strictly Monogamous*
2. Monogamish*
3. Open*
4. Swinging*
5. Polyamorous*
6. Negotiable
7. Other - Please specify ____

Familiarity/Experience:

Using the following scale, please indicate which BEST represents your knowledge/experience of each of the following relational configurations:

1. Never heard of this practice
2. I have heard of this practice, but I have no idea what it is
3. I am familiar with what this practice is, but have no experience
4. I have experience with this practice, but it is not the primary way I conduct my relationships
5. This practice is the primary way I conduct my relationships

- 13.1.a. Strict Monogamy*
- 13.2.b. Monogamish*
- 13.3.c. Open relationships*
- 13.4.d. Swinging*
- 13.5.e. Polyamory*

Current Relational Status:

14. Please indicate which relational status below BEST describes your **current** relationship(s) status.

1. Single, not dating
2. Single, and casually dating
3. In a committed relationship
4. Engaged
5. Married/married-like

6. Divorced/Widowed, not dating
7. Not listed - Please specify _____

15. Which of the following time frames is **most representative of your current relationship(s)**?

1. 1 day - 6 months
2. 6+ months - 12 months
3. 1+ year - 1.5 years
4. 1.5+ years - 2 years
5. 2+ years - 3 years
6. 3+ years - 5 years
7. 5+ years - 7 years
8. 7+ years - 10 years or more

16. Which of the following is most representative of your current relationship(s)?

1. **Exclusive**: (i.e., you and your partner agree to not have sexual or emotional connections with other people)
2. **Non-exclusive** (i.e., you and your partner(s) agree that **sexual BUT NOT emotional** connections with other people permitted)
3. **Non-exclusive** (i.e., you and your partner(s) agree that **emotional BUT NOT sexual** connections with other people permitted)
4. **Non-exclusive** (i.e., you and your partner(s) agree that **BOTH sexual AND emotional** connections with other people permitted)
5. **Unnegotiated**: (You and your partner have not formally discussed this yet)

17. Which of the following is most representative of **your current romantic relationship status**? Please select only ONE.

1. Strictly Monogamous*
2. Monogamish*
3. Open*
4. Swinging*
5. Polyamorous*
6. Not listed - Please specify _____

18. Do you have children?

1. No
2. Yes
3. Unsure (e.g., unsure if have fathered any

18.1. If yes - how many? _____

19. After participating in this study, have your attitudes toward identity or relational configurations changed? If so how? Do you have any comments/feedback for the authors?

Survey Glossary

** All definitions are provided anytime the following words appear in the survey.*

Asexual: Little to no romantic or sexual attraction or interest toward either gender.

Bisexuality: Romantic and sexual attraction toward both male and female genders.

Genderqueer: Individuals who do not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders.

Heterosexual: Romantic and sexual attraction strictly toward the opposite gender.

Homosexual: Romantic and sexual attraction strictly toward the same sex gender.

Intersex: Individuals born with any of several variations in sex characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones (such as androgen), or genitals that, according to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "do not fit the typical definitions for male or female bodies"

Monogamish: Relationships in which partners participate in limited extradyadic romantic or sexual encounters, but consider their relationship to be monogamous

Open relationship: A dyadic relationship in which partners have agreed to independently pursue and engage in extradyadic sexual activities (but not emotional).

Pansexual/anthroposexual: Romantic and/or sexual attraction not limited by biological sex, gender, or gender identity.

Polyamorous: Relationships in which partners are allowed to maintain multiple emotional, romantic, and/or sexually intimate, and long term extradyadic partners.

Strict monogamy: Relationships limited to two romantic partners who maintain strict obligations of fidelity with no extradyadic romantic or sexual partners.

Swinging: Relationships in which emotionally committed couples engage in sexual relations (but not emotional) with extradyadic others, most commonly, in the presence of one's partner.

Trans: An individual who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that differs from the one which corresponds to the person's sex at birth.

Appendix C: IRB Permissions and Materials



UNLV Social/Behavioral IRB - Exempt Review Exempt Notice

DATE: October 22, 2018
TO: Tara Emmers-Sommer
FROM: Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
PROTOCOL TITLE: [1315648-1] Sexual Identities, Attitudes, and Orientations Survey
ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
EXEMPT DATE: October 22, 2018
REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this protocol. This memorandum is a notification that the protocol referenced above has been reviewed as indicated in Federal regulatory statutes 45CFR46.101(b) and deemed exempt.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence with our records.

PLEASE NOTE:

Upon final determination of exempt status, the research team is responsible for conducting the research as stated in the exempt application reviewed by the ORI - HS and/or the IRB which shall include using the most recently submitted Informed Consent/Assent Forms (Information Sheet) and recruitment materials.

If your project involves paying research participants, it is recommended to contact Carisa Shaffer, ORI Program Coordinator at (702) 895-2794 to ensure compliance with the Policy for Incentives for Human Research Subjects.

Any changes to the application may cause this protocol to require a different level of IRB review. Should any changes need to be made, please submit a **Modification Form**. When the above-referenced protocol has been completed, please submit a **Continuing Review/Progress Completion report** to notify ORI - HS of its closure.

If you have questions, please contact the Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects at IRB@unlv.edu or call 702-895-2794. Please include your protocol title and IRBNet ID in all correspondence.

Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
4505 Maryland Parkway . Box 451047 . Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047
(702) 895-2794 . FAX: (702) 895-0805 . IRB@unlv.edu



Exempt Research Study - Information Sheet

Department of Communication Studies

TITLE OF STUDY: Sexual Identities, Attitudes, and Orientations Survey

INVESTIGATOR(S): Dr. Emmers-Sommer, PhD., Ms. Stephens, B.A.

Email: sexual.id.att.ori.survey@gmail.com **Phone:** (812) 250-8564

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to examine emerging adults' identities and attitudes toward relational configurations. In order to participate in the study, you must be between the ages of 18-29.

PROCEDURES:

I understand that my participation will include taking an online survey about identity and attitudes toward relational configurations. I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary.

DURATION:

This study will take 20-30 *minutes* of your time.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

No personally identifiable data will be collected. Survey data will be stored in an SPSS file on a password protected computer for three years. After three years, the data will be destroyed.

RISKS:

This study includes only minimal risks.

BENEFITS:

The potential benefits of your participation in this study include possibly increasing awareness on this subject matter and helping to inform the current body of research regarding emerging adults, attitudes and relational configurations. Additionally, UNLV COM students who participate through SONA will receive course research credit. Participants recruited through Reddit (i.e., an online public forum site) will receive no compensation for participation.

WITHDRAWAL:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time during the course of partaking in the online survey. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or while participating in the research study.

CONCERNS:

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact **the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794, toll-free at 877-895-2794, or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.**

CONSENT:

I acknowledge that I have read the above information, I am between the ages of 18-29 years of age, and I agree to participate in this study. A copy of this form is available via screenshotting this information sheet.

IRB Approved Reddit Post

POST TITLE: Sexual Identities, Attitudes, and Orientations Survey (18+ welcome)

Survey link: https://unlv.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9B1234As3VV38z3

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this UNLV research is to examine emerging adults' identities and attitudes toward relational configurations. In order to participate in the study, you must be at least 18 years of age or older. Participants will receive no compensation for participation. The potential benefits of participation in this study include increasing awareness on this subject matter and helping to inform the current body of research regarding identity, attitudes, sexuality, and relational configurations.

PROCEDURES:

This study will take 20-30 minutes. Participants will complete survey items regarding identity, attitudes toward relational configurations, and relational and sociosexual orientations. This survey works best from a laptop/desktop computer because there are definitions which require a mouse to hover over the text, but the survey will also work from smart devices.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

No personally identifiable data will be collected. Survey data will be stored in an SPSS file on a password protected computer for three years. After three years, the data will be destroyed.

WITHDRAWAL:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants may withdraw at any time during the course of partaking in the online survey.

For any questions about this research study, please email: sexual.id.att.ori.survey@gmail.com
Phone: (812) 250-8564

Appendix D: AIQ-IV Breakdown

AIQ-IV - Breakdown			
Identity aspect	Description & Example	Survey Items	Cronbach's α
Personal	<p>Traits, values, and abilities</p> <p>Ex. "I am an intelligent person."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My thoughts and ideas 2. My personal values and moral standards 3. My dreams and imagination 4. My personal goals and hopes for the future 5. My emotions and feelings 6. The ways I deal with my fears and anxieties 7. Knowing that I continue to be essentially the same inside even though life involves many external changes 8. My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others 9. My self-knowledge, my ideas about what kind of person I really am 10. My personal self-evaluation, the private opinion I have of myself 	$\alpha = .851$
Relational	<p>Others with whom individuals have direct personal contact</p> <p>Ex. "I am a committed/caring girlfriend."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My relationships with the people I feel close to 2. Being a good friend to those I really care about 3. My commitment to being a concerned relationship partner 4. Sharing significant experiences with my close friends 5. Having mutually satisfying personal relationships 6. Connecting on an intimate level with another person 7. Developing caring relationships with others 8. My desire to understand the true thoughts and feelings of my best friend or romantic partner 9. Having close bonds with other people 10. My feeling of connectedness with those I am close to 	$\alpha = .776$
Social	<p>Social roles and reputation</p> <p>Ex. "I am a liked and respected community leader."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My social behavior, such as the way I act when meeting people 2. My reputation, what others think of me 3. My attractiveness to other people 4. My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make on others 5. My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body 6. The ways in which other people react to what I say and do 7. My popularity with other people 	$\alpha = .713$

Collective	<p>Social categories and group memberships</p> <p>Ex. "I am Irish-Catholic."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being a part of the many generations of my family 2. My feeling of belonging to my community 3. My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a citizen 4. My commitments on political issues or my political activities 5. My language, such as my regional accent or dialect or a second language that I know 6. My religion 7. My race or ethnic background 8. Places where I live or where I was raised 	$\alpha = .922$
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- Wright, M., & ProQuest. (2017). *Identity, sexuality, and relationships among emerging adults in the digital age* (Advances in human and social aspects of technology book series). IGI Global; Hershey, PA: IGI Global

Young, J. M. (2014) "We are pioneers": Polyamorists' stigma management strategies. *Research*

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https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1686&context=gs_rp

Curriculum Vitae
Amber K. Stephens, MA
amberkory90@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Masters of Arts in Communication Studies,
University of Nevada Las Vegas, Las Vegas Nevada May 2019
Bachelors of Arts in Psychology, Minor in Sociology,
University of Nevada Las Vegas, Las Vegas Nevada Dec. 2016
Associates of Arts in Psychology, Summa Cum Laude Graduate
Georgia Military College, Valdosta, Georgia Dec. 2013

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Identity
- Social equity
- Gender
- Romantic relationships
- Sex work
- Mixed- and qualitative methodologies
- Feminist/Queer theory

AFFILIATIONS, HONORS, & SCHOLARSHIPS

- COM Studies Dept. Graduate Research Award April 2019
- Graduate Student Assistantship, LSAMP May 2018 - May 2019
- UNLV GPSA Research Spotlight Nov. 2018
- Nevada Regents' Graduate Scholar Award Nominee Oct. 2018
- National Communications Association 2018
- Graduate Student Teaching Assistantship, UNLV Aug. 2017 - May 2018
- Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program Jan. 2015 - Dec. 2016
- Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society 2016
- Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society 2016
- PSI CHI – UNLV Chapter: Public Relations Coordinator and Historian Jan. 2014 - Dec. 2015
- American Psychological Association 2015
- Western Psychological Association 2015
- PSI CHI – International Honor Society 2014
- UNLV Psychology Club 2014
- Dean's List, College of Liberal Arts – UNLV 2014
- Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society 2011

PUBLICATIONS

- Barchard, K. A., Freeman, A., Ochoa, E., & **Stephens, A. K.** (2019). Comparing the accuracy and speed of four data checking methods. *Behavior Research Methods*, 1-19.
<https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-019-01207-3>
- Stephens, A. K.**, & Robnett, R. D. (2016). Advantage or obstacle? Associations between women's romantic relationship involvement and their academic outcomes in STEM. *McNair Scholars Journal*.

MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED OR IN PREPARATION

- Thoman, S. E., **Stephens, A. K.**, Robnett, R. D. (in prep). Considering the concept of STEMInism and its impact on women in STEM.
- Thoman, S. E., **Stephens, A. K.**, Robnett, R. D. (under review). Child(less): Qualitative insight into the mindsets and strategies among women in STEM fields relative to work-life balance.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Stephens, A. K.** (2018, Nov.) *Self-expansion within romantic relationships: Positioning self-expansion as a communication phenomenon*. Poster presented at the National Communication Association Conference, Salt Lake City, UT.
- Stephens, A. K.**, Underwood, C. R., Chiang-Lopez, C., & Robnett, R. D. (2018, Oct). *I am Polyam: Emerging adults expressions of polyamorous identities*. Poster presented at the Gender Development Research Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Thoman, S. E., **Stephens, A. K.**, & Robnett, R. D. (2018, Oct). *#Girlswhocode: Grassroots "STEMInism" and its manifestations and effects on women in STEM*. Poster presented at the Gender Development Research Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Thoman, S. E., **Stephens, A. K.**, & Robnett, R. D. (2018, July). *Child(less): Mixed Method Insight into the Early-Career Mindsets of Women in STEM*. Poster presented at the Gender and STEM Network Conference, Eugene, OR.
- Stephens, A. K.**, Thoman, S. E., & Robnett, R. D. (2017, Nov). *Beakers or Babies: Work-Life Balance among Women in STEM*. Poster presented at the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association Conference, Philadelphia, PA.
- Barchard, K.A., **Stephens, A. K.**, & Ochoa, E. (2017, May). *Checking Again vs. Checking out Loud: A Surprising Second Best*. Poster presented at the Association for Psychological Science Annual Convention, Boston, MA. This poster was also presented in April 2017 at the Western Psychological Association convention, Sacramento, CA.
- Stephens, A. K.**, Thoman, S. E., & Robnett, R. D. (2016, Oct). *Advantage or obstacle? Associations between women's romantic relationship involvement and their academic outcomes in STEM*. Poster presented at the Gender Development Research Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Thoman, S. E., Underwood, C. R., **Stephens, A. K.**, Buck, J. E., & Robnett, R. D. (2016, Oct). *Test tubes or soccer practice: Retention and work-life balance among women in STEM*. Poster presented at the Gender Development Research Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Stephens, A. K.**, Tayag, C., Chiang-Lopez, C., Holly, M., & Barchard, K. A. (2016, Feb). *Esc'ing errors: Pick the best method, not the best person*. Poster presented at Western Psychological Association convention, Long Beach, CA.
- Stephens, A. K.**, Wright, R., Willis-Almaguer, E. R., Chaidez, H., Scavetta, M. (2016, Apr). *Advantage or obstacle: Associations between romantic relationships, academic self-efficacy, and career identity*. Poster presented at UNLV PSI CHI Poster Conference.
- Willis-Almaguer, E. R., **Stephens, A. K.**, Wright, R., Barakat, M., & Lyon, B. (2016, Apr). *Social Dominance Orientation, Communication Styles, and Sources of Power in Same-Sex Relationships*. Poster presented at UNLV PSI CHI Poster Conference.

Ibarra, M., Willick, S., **Stephens, A. K.**, Maxim, B. R., & Barchard, K. A. (2016, Feb). *Partner read aloud: Data checking at its fastest*. Poster presented at the American Association of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Las Vegas, NV.

CONFERENCE SYMPOSIA

Chiang-Lopez, C., & **Stephens, A. K.** (2019, Feb). *Resistance capital: A counterstory on pushed-out students with learning disabilities*. Submitted for presentation at the Conference on Academic Research in Education

Stephens, A. K., & Chiang-Lopez, C. (2019, Feb). *Polyamorous identities: The intersection of identity and relational intimacy*. Submitted for presentation at the Ethnographic & Qualitative Research Conference

Thoman, S. E., & **Stephens, A. K.** (2019, Feb). *Feministas in the Field?: Case Studies in "STEMinism"*. Submitted for presentation at the Ethnographic & Qualitative Research Conference

Thoman, S. E., & **Stephens, A. K.** (2018, Oct). *Acclimatizing: Outfitting early-career women for stem persistence*. Presented at the NSHE Southern Nevada Diversity Summit

INVITED TALKS

Robnett, R. D., & **Stephens, A. K.** (2016, Sept). *Psychology research involvement for undergraduates*. Presented at the UNLV Future Scholars Series

RESEARCH LAB EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Social Development Research Lab Aug 2015 – Dec 2017
University of Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

- Collaborated to create a qualitative coding manual using thematic analysis
- Advertised, recruited and administered research studies
- Poster Leader for research conference posters
 - Mentored lab members through conference applications, preparation, and presentation.
 - Organized and headed weekly poster meetings
 - Provided peer review on posters and publications within the lab
 - Presented finding at both regional and national professional research conferences

Research Assistant, Social Interaction Lab Jan. 2017 – April 2017
University of Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

- Created surveys using Qualtrix
- Advertised, recruited, and administered research studies

Research Assistant, Interactive Measurement Group Jan. 2015 – Jan. 2017
University of Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

- Assistant Lab Manager (Spring 2016 – Summer 2016)
 - Headed weekly lab meetings

- Screened and interviewed potential lab members
- Scheduled events and workshops
- Lead presentations on Leadership, the GRE, and How to Choose a Graduate Program.
- Completed workshops on Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, SPSS, Captivate, Qualtrics, Effective Email, Website Development, Dreamweaver, Amazon mTurk, and Adobe Creative Suite
- Completed workshops on Leadership, Interpersonal Communication, Interpersonal Conflict, Assertiveness, Tough Discussions, Giving and Receiving Feedback, and Exploratory Factor Analysis
- One-on-one meetings mentor sessions with new and current lab members
- Study Administrator Trainer (Fall 2015 – Spring 2016)
 - Administered a 5-week training for new study administrators
 - Created and distributed captivate videos explaining the study, along with reading the IRB protocol, and CITI training
 - Created and maintained a schedule of all study administrators
 - Conducted one-on-one mentoring sessions with study administrators
 - Conducted weekly meetings with the study supervisor to review the collected data to ensure data was collected correctly and viable
 - Formatted and performed data cleaning on the collected data from the study
 - Co-chaired weekly meetings discussing study progression/important updates
- Lab Hours Coordinator (Aug 2015 – July 2016)
 - Created and maintained lab hours data
 - Conducted one-on-one training regarding time management and logging hours
 - Conducted weekly communications and updates
- Conference Coordinator (Aug 2015 – July 2016)
 - Organized and managed lab conference schedule
 - Maintained relevant information regarding conference dates, hotels, directions, and potential costs associated with attendance
 - Provided estimated budgets and schedules for lab members attending conferences (e.g., conference fees, hotel prices, travel (gas, directions, flights), food expenses, and local activities)
 - Headed weekly presentations regarding conference information
 - Mentored lab members through conference applications, preparation, and presentation.
- Poster Leader
 - Organized and headed weekly poster meetings with co-authors
 - Provided peer review on posters and publications within the lab
 - Presented finding at both regional and national professional research conferences
- Co-author on publications
- Advertised, recruited and administered research studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Graduate Assistant, National Science Foundation, Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Program (NSF-LSAMP) May 2018 – May 2019

The Center for Academic Outreach and Enrichment (CAEO), University of Nevada, Las Vegas

- Community outreach and alliance building
- Organized workshops, events, and recruitment/retention strategies for underrepresented minority students in STEM fields and pathways
- Designed and organized academic/professional development workshops
- Co-coordinated a large scale student mentoring program
- Created instructional/information tutorials
- Entered, managed, and manipulated large-scale student data
- Designed and created a professional website, generating all site content
- Conducted one-on-one mentoring with students regarding their academic goals and research interests and graduate school preparation
- Mentored students through conference applications, preparation, and presentation
- Co-organized Spring and Summer program research symposia
- Mentored students through graduate/professional school applications

TEDx Coach, TEDxUNLV

Jun. 2018

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

- Worked closely with three professionals in their respective fields to create memorable and engaging talks related to the event theme "Living in the Extreme."
- Helped speakers to outline and flesh out their presentations, refine their message, improve vocalizations and non-verbals, and provided tips and suggestions regarding their presentation and improving their public speaking skills.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Communications Studies

Aug. 2017 – May 2018

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

- Prepared course syllabi, lesson plans, and evaluative course content.
- Taught three sections (26 students per section) of COM 101 Public Speaking each semester.
- Created and implemented lessons that engaged and encouraged academic growth regarding public speaking among a wide variety of students from diverse backgrounds
- Collaborated closely with fellow administrative and teaching faculty to provide a safe, effective learning environment for all students.
- Worked one on one with students from Project F.O.C.U.S. (Forming Occupational and Community Understanding for Success) a 2-year post-secondary education program for young adults with an intellectual/developmental disability.

Research Assistant, Division of Hydrologic Sciences

Mar. 2016 – Mar. 2017

Desert Research Institute, Las Vegas

- Produce watershed statistical summaries of environmental data from remote sensing and other sources
- Collected and organized satellite data for analysis
- Gained experience and proficiency using ArcGIS, RStudio, Anaconda, Python, Spyder, Microsoft Access, including writing SQL and Macros, and familiarity with coding/scripting

Research Assistant, Camp Make-believe Kids & Step Up Program

Aug. 2015 – Jan. 2016

- Created literature reviews for research on social-emotional learning in children
- Creating reports to distribute to schools and clients
- Co-chaired group therapy sessions with children ages 5-15 referred for social-emotional issues

Clinical Intern, Dual Success Jan. 2015 – Aug. 2015
 Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services & Las Vegas Recovery Center

- Received Behavior Skills Training & Psychosocial Rehabilitation for Co-Occurring Adults
- Maintained strict adherence to confidentiality laws including HIPPA and 42 CFR
- Co-headed weekly group sessions with clients in the program ages 18-65
- Learned and applied therapeutic attending, client intake, and case management skills

CERTIFICATIONS

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| • Graduate College Post Masters Career Pathways | May 2019 |
| • Graduate College Research Certification | May 2019 |
| • Graduate College Teaching Certification | May 2019 |
| • CITI Responsible Conduct of Research Course | August 2014 |
| • CITI Human Subjects Protection: Social/Behavioral IRB Course | August 2014 |
| • CITI Conflicts of Interest Course | December 2015 |
| • CITI PAM: Stage 1 Lab Animal Research | December 2015 |
| • CITI GCP for Clinical Trials with Investigational Drugs & Biologics | December 2015 |