

ROMANTIC JEALOUSY IN ALTERNATIVE COMMITTED RELATIONSHIPS

A Thesis By

APRIL TIMMERING
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-6755-2382

California State University, Fullerton
Summer, 2021

In partial fulfillment of the degree:

Master of Science, Clinical Psychology

Department:

Department of Psychology

Committee:

William D. Marelich, Department of Psychology, Chair
Aaron Goetz, Department of Psychology
Christine D. Scher, Department of Psychology

DOI:

10.5281/zenodo.5039594

Keywords:

romantic jealousy, consensual non-monogamy, polyamory, relationships, therapy

Abstract:

This literature review examines the impact of romantic jealousy on consensual non-monogamous (CNM) relationships. Research on romantic jealousy has dominantly focused on heterosexual monogamous relationships, with minimal empirical research on non-heteronormative relationships. In addition, awareness and positive societal attitudes towards non-monogamous partnerships have increased over time, demonstrating a need for increased research into alternative committed relationships. Relevant relationship factors within CNM partnerships are reviewed, including relationship type, level of consent, partner perceptions, and gender and sexual orientation. Further, factors of romantic jealousy that have been shown to influence CNM relationships are also reviewed, including mate retention behavior, relationship closeness, sexual desire, communication, and partner autonomy. Finally, this review examines available research on treatment goals, intervention strategies, and therapeutic approaches for working with CNM partners presenting with romantic jealousy as a primary concern. Findings summarized in this review show that treatment for CNM partners' jealousy should include considerations for the impact of negative societal attitudes, thorough assessment of relationship characteristics, and treatments focused on reducing romantic jealousy, improving communication, and sexual identity education and awareness. This review supports the need for continued research on understanding how romantic jealousy functions within CNM relationships, and identifying specific evidence-based treatment methods for working with CNM partners in clinical settings.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. UNDERSTANDING CNM RELATIONSHIPS.....	6
Factors of Consensual Non-Monogamy Relationships.....	6
CNM Relationship Configuration/Type	6
Perceptions of Primary and Secondary Partners	6
Gender and Sexual Orientation	7
What is “Cheating” in CNM?.....	8
Societal Attitudes on CNM.....	9
Arguments Against CNM.....	9
Pressure Toward Monogamy	11
Fear of Sexually Transmitted Infection & Disease (STI/STD)	11
Influences on CNM Relationship Success (Factors of Romantic Jealousy)	12
Mate Retention Behaviors	13
Relationship Closeness	13
Communication	14
Autonomy	14
Theories of Sexuality Involving Multiple Partners	15
Evolutionary Perspective	15
Social Construction	16
Attachment	17
3. THEORIES OF ROMANTIC JEALOUSY.....	18
Evolutionary Perspective	18
Psychodynamic.....	18
Attachment.....	19
Social Psychological	20
Systems Perspective	20
4. CLINICAL INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR CNM RELATIONSHIPS AND JEALOUSY	22
Measuring Individual and Relational Characteristics	23
Romantic Jealousy	23
CNM attitudes.....	24
Attachment Style	24
Treatment Goals for Working with CNM Couples	25
Reducing Romantic Jealousy.....	25
Improving Communication and Compromise	25
Sexual Identity Education and Awareness	26
5. REVIEW OF CURRENT THERAPY FOR CNM RELATIONSHIPS.....	28
6. CONCLUSION OF RESEARCH-BASED THERAPY WITH CNM PARTNERSHIPS	31
REFERENCES.....	36

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my advisor, Dr. William Marelich, for his continued encouragement, trust, patience, and constructive feedback throughout the process of completing this review. Without your confidence in my ability to finish and your frequent pep talks I would not have completed this work. In addition, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Christine Scher and Dr. Aaron Goetz, for their support and endorsement of this thesis.

Thank you to my husband, Zach, for always supporting me no matter what the direction, and for providing unconditional love and support always. Thank you to my mom and stepdad, Heidi and Tim, for pushing me to strive and reach completion despite my continuous struggle to find confidence over my graduate years. Thank you to my son, Koda, for reminding me of my strength and purpose. Thank you to my family for always challenging me to strive academically and pushing me to reach my goals. Thank you to my amazing M.S. Cohort for teaching me to believe in myself and sharing the many memories of challenges, frustrations, and successes over the years. Finally, thank you to my dearest friends, Rachel, Nichelle, and Scott, for continuing to believe in me and always knowing how to spark my motivation when it dwindles.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research on romantic jealousy has typically focused on opposite sex monogamous couples (Bringle, 1981; Buss, 1999; Buunk, 1997; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989; Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997). Although the majority of romantic partnerships are monogamous, consensually non-monogamous (CNM) partners present a new dimension to the dynamics of romantic jealousy. CNM is defined as any relationship configuration in which partners agree to have concurrent extradyadic romantic or sexual relationships (Cohen, 2016). There is a lack of research on clinical treatment methods aimed at reducing the impact of romantic jealousy on relationship success for couples who choose to expand their relationship to include outside partners. Multiple factors are present that may create a unique experience for couples engaged in consensual non-monogamy including level of consent of partners, sexual identity of partners within the couple, relationship commitment and engagement, sex of additional partners, and communication within the relationship (Aguilar, 2013; Balzarini et al., 2017; Barker, 2015; Cohen & Wilson, 2017; Mogilski et al., 2017; Wolkomir, 2015). Issues of attachment and evolutionary factors may also be at play (Bornstein et al., 2003; Buss, 1994; Moors et al., 2012).

The purpose of this review is to explore the impact of romantic jealousy in CNM relationships in order to inform therapy practices and clinical interventions when working with CNM partners. It is predicted that levels of romantic jealousy vary within CNM relationships as in monogamous partnerships. Although CNM arrangements include additional romantic and sexual encounters, this does not directly translate to increased levels of jealousy within primary dyads (Rubel & Bogaert, 2015; Wood et al., 2018). Factors specific to CNM relationships to be reviewed while measuring the impact of romantic jealousy include CNM relationship configurations/type, partner variations in consent to CNM status, perceptions of primary and secondary partners, and gender and sexual orientation. When these relationship configuration factors are considered and controlled for, recent research has been able to identify correlations between levels of romantic jealousy and mate retention behaviors, relationship closeness, sexual desire, communication, and autonomy within CNM

relationships, and will be additionally reviewed (Attridge, 2013; Balzarini et al., 2017; Buss, 1988; Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Mogilski et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2018). Finally, examined literature will be used to compile an integrative research-based approach to working with CNM partners presenting with romantic jealousy including a review of theoretical approaches, clinical considerations, current treatment methods, and available clinical interventions.

For the purposes of the current review, jealousy that is romantic in nature is defined as a response to a real or imagined threat to one's relationship with a partner or potential partner. Further, dispositional romantic jealousy is defined as a response to an event due to the interaction between an individual's personality characteristics and the nature of the situation (Bringle, 1981; Buss et al., 1999). When individuals perceive more threat (real or imagined) from a given place, person, or experience they will experience higher levels of reported jealousy. The dispositional jealousy approach has clinical implications such that if jealousy responses are seen as contextual, interventions can be used to reduce misperceived threats and reduce over all levels of romantic jealousy. Predictors of jealousy have been heavily studied through a multitude of theoretical perspectives including attachment, evolutionary, social exchange, and systemic (Attridge, 2013; Bornstein et al., 2003; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Multidimensional approaches to romantic jealousy break down its disposition into cognitive, behavioral, and emotional components each contributing to internal and external patterns of jealous behavior (Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989; Radek & Vladimir, 2017).

Why the focus on consensual non-monogamy and jealousy? In general, research on jealousy has focused on opposite sex monogamous couples (Salovey, 1991, for a comprehensive review of jealousy including gender differences; see also Buss, 1994). However, couples engaging in partnerships with inclusion of external mates has been consistent across literature with variations in labeling (open marriage, swingers, concubines), and with general increases in social discourse surrounding couples who freely engage in CNM (Conley et al., 2012b; Klesse, 2014; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017). CNM arrangements can range from an exploration of different sexual partners and romantic affiliations to long-term partnership triads and paired couples. CNM should not be confused

with polyamory, as not all who engage in CNM identify as polyamorous (Aguilar, 2013). A more recent and additional term used to explain the engagement in CNM is metamory (a love of loving), and has been used within the community to reduce derogatory terminologies such as mistress, other lover, by replacing the introduction of a partner's partner with the word metamour (Ritchie & Barker, 2006)

Stigmatizing attitudes against CNM relationships are present and have contributed to the view of monogamy as a universal phenomenon rather than a societal construct or pressure (Conley et al., 2013). Conley et al. (2013) has looked at the halo effect (cognitive bias that influences thoughts and feelings about a particular person or group) surrounding monogamous couples and indicates that monogamous relationships are perceived to attribute higher levels of commitment, relationship satisfaction, physical health, closeness, intimacy, and prevention of jealousy. However, these societal attitudes are not necessarily characteristic of actual comparisons between monogamous and non-monogamous couples (Conley et al., 2012a; Conley et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2018).

Societal stigma is also present in the word polyamory which is used to describe an affinity towards non-monogamy, and has often been used since the 1990's as a criticism against the sexual practices of lesbian, gay, and transgender individuals (Klesse, 2014). Klesse (2014) strongly suggests polyamory is a sexual orientation and personal identity rather than a relationship practice. Further, polyamory is seen as a spectrum in which there are varying degrees of intensity, closeness, number of partners, honesty/discreteness about sex with outside partners, and level of commitment (Conley et al., 2012a, 2012b; Klesse, 2014). Polyamory is defined by Conley et al. (2012a) as an identity in which people philosophically agree with and or practice multiple partnerships, with the consent of everyone involved. In recent studies by Barker (2015) and Benson (2017), the majority of participants consistently identified polyamory status as an identity, not a choice, and concluded Polyamory is focused on "openness to loving" through interdependence and support. Although research has indicated a majority consensus of polyamory as a sexual identity status, there are continued variations supporting the idea that the term "poly" has different meanings to different

people, and is a continuum that changes the willingness/intensity of engaging in CNM practices and relationships. Specifically, Polyamory requires a continuous navigation of one's identity, community, and relationships. Finally, Ritchie and Barker (2006) collected data from internet discussion forums, community message boards, and polyamorous websites in order to track the diverse use of language within the CNM community. They discovered the majority of sites and visitors use polyamory as a sexual identity term (something they are versus something they do), with used but less frequent terms being open, alternative, and ethical slut (the reclaiming of slut as a word of endearment and power; Easton & Liszt, 1997)

It is believed by these researchers that a core component of polyamorous identity is the value of sex and love over jealousy, control, and ownership of partners (Barker, 2015; Benson, 2017; Conley, 2012b; Klesse, 2014). In conclusion, polyamory has been described as something "people are" rather than something "they do," and is seen as a status depicting the ability to love multiple partners. Polyamory will be defined within this review as the personal identity and sexual orientation of not being limited to a single partner and is associated with willingness to engage in, and attitudes towards, CNM relationships (Cohen & Wilson, 2016; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2016; Wood et al., 2018). CNM in comparison will be used to highlight the behavioral act of couples engaging in third party sexual and romantic relationships.

Additional language differentiations and limitations have been identified in the literature examining romantic jealousy within the context of polyamorous identity and CNM relationships. Ritchie and Barker (2006) discuss the struggle for polyamorous identifying people and others engaged in CNM to define emotions beyond the limits of jealousy as the only acceptable feeling for a partners' romantic experience with someone else. Romantic Jealousy is continued to be used throughout literature within this community without an equally identifying antonym (the lack of jealousy, or the feeling of being happy for/joy of your partner expressing love for someone else. Some academic literature uses *compersion*, however the term is not unanimously accepted by all CNM communities. This review will therefore continue to contribute to literature with the hope that future

discourse will expand and improve language to better describe and understand polyamorous and CNM lifestyles.

CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING CNM RELATIONSHIPS

Issues with literature looking at romantic jealousy in CNM relationships stem from a lack of consensus in terms/defining constructs, measuring populations accurately, and the lack of seeing those who engage in CNM as a diverse group with a continuum of varying practices, beliefs, values, and identity statuses. The problems with reviewing literature on CNM relationships have also been observed by Rubel and Bogaert (2015), easily leading to some erroneous results due to small samples, lack of measurement on CNM attitudes (positive or negative beliefs about CNM), and consent about CNM between partners (e.g., swingers lead to divorce). This review attempts to consolidate literature as accurately as possible within the language used by this author (polyamory as identity, CNM as a sexual practice, and romantic jealousy as dispositional and multidimensional)

Factors of Consensual Non-Monogamy Relationships

CNM Relationship Configuration/Type

The prevalence of CNM partnerships has been estimated as high as 4-5% of relationships (Balzarini et al., 2017; Conley et al., 2012b). However, this upper bound percentage is limited and focused primarily on gay males with prevalence increases in the last 20 years adding diversity in sample populations. Samples working with CNM couples mostly consist of more common arrangements with one to two primary partners and additional secondary partners forming triads (three people) or paired couples (four people) (Barker, 2015). Although paired couple representations are similar to that of swingers, they are distinctly different in that romantic affiliation and sexual encounters are present.

Perceptions of Primary and Secondary Partners

In addition to differences in relationship configurations under the umbrella of consensual non-monogamy, perceptions of and attitudes toward primary and secondary partners exist.

Balzarini et al. (2017) interviewed 1308 self-identified polyamorous individuals to look at partner perceptions and found secondary partners are viewed as more expendable/less stable and require

less investment. Increased romantic secrecy with secondary partners was also observed (Balzarini et al., 2017). Primary partner inter-relational characteristics included increased investment of resources, commitment, interdependence, and communication. Previous research looked at need fulfillment, relationship satisfaction, and commitment in primary versus secondary partner relationships. Mitchell, Bartholomew, and Cobb (2014) looked at 1093 participants in CNM relationships and found polyamorous individuals felt fulfilled and satisfied in both primary and secondary partner arrangements and that relationships were mutually exclusive (need fulfillment in one relationship did not impact satisfaction or commitment to another relationship). In contrast, Mogilski et al. (2017) identified higher rates of relationship satisfaction with primary partners, and that they were seen as more desirable as long-term mates. These studies have demonstrated that there is still work to be done in understanding partner configurations within CNM relationships and how they influence result consistency and conclusions made about this population.

Gender and Sexual Orientation

Gender and sexual orientation are a crucial component when looking at any non-heteronormative relationship practice. Sex differences have been identified in attitudes and willingness towards engaging in CNM relationships. Literature suggests men are more willing to engage in CNM, while it is more probable for women to consent to CNM as a way to maintain a primary relationship (Aguilar, 2013). Although these differences do not account for all men and women engaging in CNM, the same study revealed that less consenting partners report feeling more threatened and having higher levels of romantic jealousy especially in the presence of other individuals who engage in CNM (Aguilar, 2013)

Since some gender differences exist, it is additionally important to further investigate individual differences and examine sexual orientation as a diversifying factor within the CNM population. In Balzarini et al.'s (2017) study of 1308 self-identified polyamorous pairs, 51% identified as bisexual or pansexual. Gender and sexual minorities (GSM) already have more fluid sexual orientation, increased sexual awareness, and live with reduced heteronormative lifestyles, beliefs, and values

(Balzarini et al., 2017). Implications for not including GSM folk within the context of CNM include lack of generalization and inaccurate conclusion.

One large component when working with GSM is that not everyone has embraced an open lifestyle, and some continue to live within the confines of internalized homophobia. For example, Wolkomir (2015) conducted interviews with 55 mixed orientation marriages (with one partner identifying as heterosexual and the other as homosexual/bisexual) in order to determine how these couples, navigate extramarital lovers. It was discovered that most plans for CNM were negotiated post-marriage in order to accommodate for one partners same sex attraction. Some partners ascribed to monogamy in order to “live a normal life” as a result of internalized homophobia and societal/cultural pressure. This small but significant population within CNM demonstrates the issue with monogamy being seen as the right and only way to engage in a loving partnership. Poorest outcomes for relationship success were found amongst couples with distinct differences in CNM attitudes (one partner holding on to monogamous ideas and beliefs “I had no choice but to leave”).

Further examination of CNM attitudes has been conducted by Cohen and Wilson (2017) while developing their Consensual Non-monogamy Attitudes Scale (CNAS). They found non-heterosexual individuals were more likely to have positive attitudes towards CNM, and those with non-normative gender identities were also more accepting towards CNM practices. Balzarini et al. (2017), Cohen and Wilson (2017), and Wolkomir (2015) highlight concern with grouping all CNM partner arrangements as one group without controls on attitudes as people engage in CNM with varying levels of positive attitudes, consent, and ascription to polyamorous beliefs/values.

What is “Cheating” in CNM?

Within monogamous relationships cheating and infidelity can be described as extradyadic romantic or sexual affiliations (O’Neil & O’Neil, 1984). However, within the context of non-monogamy these same unacceptable behaviors become accepted and often encouraged by partners. Therefore, “cheating” as a construct goes beyond the expected social schemas. One researcher has attempted to navigate the meaning of cheating with CNM relationships. Cohen (2016) found that cheating was

seen primarily as lying and withholding information amongst 122 CNM individuals and that participants who had been previously cheated on were more likely to view partners' behaviors as cheating. This is in agreement with romantic jealousy literature indicating those who have felt cheated are more likely to have higher levels of jealousy due to increased threat perception to jealousy evoking scenarios (Cohen, 2016).

Societal Attitudes on CNM

Dominant attitudes in western society favor heterosexual monogamous pairs and often influence the creation of negative stereotypes, poor attitudes, and false ideas adopted by the public, researchers, and clinicians (Barker, 2005; Conley et al., 2012a; O'neil & O'neil, 1984). Societal attitudes have biased academia on polyamory and CNM firstly in its lack of content, but also in its generalizations made about polyamorous and CNM populations, continued pressure toward monogamy, and a fear of heightened risk for STI's/STD's (Barker, 2015; Conley et al., 2012; Conley et al., 2015; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017). Before continuing to examine influences of CNM relationship characteristics on romantic jealousy, societal attitudes impacting current research when working with this population will be reviewed.

Arguments Against CNM

When taking a further look at societal attitudes and arguments against CNM, several themes have been identified. For example, Sizemore and Olmstead (2017) surveyed 549 participants resulting in four major themes for why people would be unwilling to engage in CNM: Mononormativity (socially unacceptable, sinful, monogamy as right/better way), Anxious attachment (anticipated jealousy, possessiveness, needy, insecurity), offensive/break-up imminent (seeing non-monogamy as disrespectful, of poor character), and against beliefs, morals, religion.

Despite personal choice to avoid CNM for reasons highlighted above, there is continued lack of support and acceptance for others who choose to engage in a CNM relationship. Societal attitudes have been maintained towards monogamy in Western culture and have viewed extradyadic romantic and sexual affiliations as inappropriate (Moors, 2017). However, recent movement toward the

acceptance of LGBTQ+ and non-normative sexual identities, including polyamorous identity, has benefited CNM partners through an increase in societal tolerance, understanding, and acceptance of multiple partner relationships (Moors, 2017; Ruth & Santacruz, 2017).

Changes in Societal Attitudes

Positive attitudes towards polyamory and CNM have been analyzed through examining *Google Trends* across a 10-year period (2006-2015) by Moors (2017). Americans' interest in seeking information related to polyamory and CNM has significantly increased (even with the exclusion of searches related to celebrities and popular media trends). Moors (2017), and Sizemore and Olmstead (2017), both demonstrate a need for communication on this topic and academic merit for continued investigation based on public interest and movement towards the acceptance of polyamorous identity and the practice of CNM.

Microaggressions Toward GSM/LGBTQ+

Microaggressions are often a result of dominant discourses and societal beliefs about a group and include intentional and unintentional indirect verbal and behavioral insults, assaults, and aggressions (Ruth & Santacruz, 2017). Barker (2015) used a structured questionnaire with 30 participants engaging in CNM to identify societal perceptions and influence on sense of self. He found participants believe western society sees polyamory as cheating, and disapproved of (demonized, oppressed). Consistently, Benson's (2017) qualitative analysis of three self-identifying polyqueer women explains the challenges to polyamorous identity as the need to combat friends, family, and societal assumptions about connection, relationship structures, and acceptable behavior. All three women experienced continuous misunderstanding, slut shaming, feelings of lonesomeness, and disconnect that affected their mental health.

Heteronormative societal attitudes have additionally influenced beliefs about jealousy in relationships. Dominant language coins anything outside monogamy as "infidelity" and suggests people need to be jealous of extradyadic attractions, affairs, and thoughts (Attridge, 2013; Ritchie & Barker, 2006). This language holds microaggressions of abnormality, sinfulness, and promiscuity for

polyamorous and CNM peoples and contribute to viewing polyamorous and CNM peoples as uncommitted, childish, neurotic, adulterous, and sex addicts (Ruth & Santacruz, 2017). Although views and beliefs have positively changed over time in support of non-heteronormative relationships, the impacts continue to influence the robustness of literature with these populations (Ruth & Santacruz, 2017).

Pressure Toward Monogamy

Monogamous marriage has been the dominant western ideal and yet 21-57% of married men cheat on their wives, and 11-35% of married women cheat on their husbands (Conley et al., 2005). The belief that monogamy is superior and the continued devaluation of CNM have influenced public attitudes that people in CNM relationships are not as happy or sexually satisfied, and have poorer personalities. For example, Conley et al. (2012a) found that people's attitudes towards monogamy included increased commitment (61%), increased physical health (59%), increased trust (56%), and increased meaningfulness (46%) when compared to CNM relationships. These societal beliefs have the power to be internalized and lead to mental health consequences for those engaged in CNM as a result of continued experience of microaggressions. In contrast to public belief about non-monogamous pairs, similar level reports of relationship and sexual satisfaction have been found for monogamous and CNM individuals; This data spotlights CNM relationships are of no greater or lesser quality than monogamous ones (Wood et al., 2018).

Fear of Sexually Transmitted Infection & Disease (STI/STD)

The fear of STI's has practical roots with the fact that increased number of sexual partners has a higher risk for the potential to contract a sexually transmitted infection (STI) or sexually transmitted disease (STD). However, those engaged in CNM are less likely to engage in deception about sexual partners, have higher levels of sexual communication, and are more likely to utilize protection efforts (condoms, regular testing; Conley et al., 2015). Specifically, Conley et al. (2015) reviewed literature comparing monogamy and CNM on risk for STI's and found that CNM does not equate to a higher risk for contracting STI's. Similar beliefs and medical implications have been attributed across GSM

identities and it is evident that there is a continued need to destigmatize the relationship between sexual identity and automatic risk for poor sexual health (O'Hare et al., 1996).

In conclusion, Western societal attitudes have been overwhelmingly negative towards non-monogamy and are correlated with inaccurate public beliefs about polyamorous and CNM peoples (Attridge, 2013; Barker, 2015; Benson, 2017; Conley et al., 2012a; Ritchie & Barker, 2006; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017). These beliefs have contributed to a lack of consistent past literature on CNM populations, but have increasingly improved as the public and academia gain interest and acceptance of CNM as a relationship practice (Moors, 2017; Wood et al., 2018). This review aims to consolidate these newer findings with a focus on relationship success as influenced by romantic jealousy in an effort to inform continued research, dispel false beliefs, and identify clinical applications for working with CNM couples.

Influences on CNM Relationship Success (Factors of Romantic Jealousy)

Differences in romantic jealousy between monogamous and CNM groups were predicted to exist, and therefore demonstrate need to further analyze how romantic jealousy presents and functions within CNM relationships in order to inform future academia and clinical practice. Contrary to social stigmatization, it was not found that CNM arrangements will lead to lower levels of relationship satisfaction or success (Conley et al., 2012b). When looking at societal beliefs about monogamy, Conley et al. (2012b) found people in CNM relationships have equal to higher levels of relationship satisfaction, are more likely to have lower levels of reported jealousy, reported jealousy as less non-manageable, and are more likely to exhibit secure attachments (Moors et al., 2012).

Conley later tested these findings in a direct comparison between 1507 monogamous and 617 CNM (polyamorous, swinging, and open) heterosexual pairs. His team found that in addition to there being no group differences in relationship satisfaction or commitment, higher levels of trust and lower levels of jealousy behaviors and anticipated jealousy attitudes existed for CNM groups overall compared to monogamous participants (Conley et al., 2017). Their final findings indicate people in monogamous relationships were reportedly more jealous overall (increased behaviors and attitudes).

Additional research has focused on romantic jealousy specific to CNM. Rubel and Bogaert (2015) completed an extensive review to compile literature on individual factors that influence romantic jealousy for CNM. Their findings suggest differences in self-perceptions of jealousy (describing self as less jealous, seeing jealousy as manageable rather than intolerable, and as a healthy experience that brings couples together/enhances personal development), and self-reports of *compersion* (positive feelings towards extradyadic partners) impacted levels of romantic jealousy. It is also important to consider that romantic jealousy within any relationship can change over time. Beyond the reviews of Conley et al. (2012b), Rubel and Bogaert (2015), and the study by Conley et al. (2017), this review will examine additional components within romantic jealousy research and identify their influence for CNM relationship success including mate retention behaviors, relationship closeness, communication, and autonomy.

Mate Retention Behaviors

Mate retention behaviors are efforts devoted to preventing the loss of a romantic partner and are positively correlated to romantic jealousy (Buss, 1998). Mogilski et al. (2017) compared mate retention behaviors amongst individuals involved in monogamous and CNM relationships. Monogamous participants were found to have higher rates of mate retention behaviors and increased mate retention was observed more with primary partners than secondary partners within the CNM group (Mogilski et al., 2017). Since previous research has correlated higher mate retention rates with higher perceived threat/infidelity these findings may indicate monogamous partners as more jealous than CNM partners (Buss & Shackelford, 1997).

Relationship Closeness

Mogilski et al.'s (2017) observation that primary partners were engaged in higher rates of mate retention support the investigation of relationship closeness as an influencer of romantic jealousy within CNM relationships. Relationship closeness is the interdependence between partners including strength of the relationship, frequency of interactions, diversity of activities engaged in, and duration of influence within the relationship (Berscheid et al., 1989; Kelley et al., 1983). Attridge (2013) used

the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (MJS) with 229 participants and found that the more time partners spent with each other the higher the rating of relationship closeness. Concurrently, the less time partners spent together, the more likely someone is to be suspicious their partner is engaging in infidelity. Attridge (2013) also detected that higher levels of relationship closeness were associated with higher levels of emotional/reactive jealousy. These results support the conclusion that the more important a person is to someone, the higher magnitude of threat they will feel if there is a perceived threat to the relationship.

Attridge (2013) also showed emotional/reactive jealousy is associated with positive relationship factors including secure attachment, life satisfaction, positive emotions, and relationship stability, and that suspicious jealousy (a cognitive dimension/factor) is related to negative relationship factors (obsessive love style, negative emotions, insecure/anxious attachment. This study demonstrates that attachment is a fundamental feature in the potential relationship success of partners, and that some types of romantic jealousy may benefit the relationship while others may harm it.

Communication

Communication is a core component of relationship satisfaction and ties to romantic jealousy with monogamous pairs (Andersen et al., 1995). Recently, specific communication variations have been found and studied within CNM groups. When looking at primary and secondary partner variations of CNM, individuals demonstrate increased communication with primary partners than secondary partners (Balzarini et al., 2017). This is a result of continued identification of needs/expectations, negotiating agreements, coordinating schedules, setting boundaries, and working through problems necessary to maintain a long-term primary relationship. However, quantity of communication does not indicate quality of communication. There is no current available research investigating that communication between primary versus secondary partners is different.

Autonomy

The decision-making process for engagement in sexual interaction with extradyadic partners involves individual decisions and can impact satisfaction with the sexual encounter and relationship

overall. For example, some sexual interactions are consented to based on social exchange, compromise, or sacrifice. Wood et al. (2018) found that autonomy in sexual interaction leads to higher fulfillment of sexual needs. When the motives of one's sexual actions are intrinsic (not out of a social exchange, compromise, sacrifice) there is a higher feeling of fulfillment leading to higher relationship satisfaction. It has been previously mentioned that consent for extradyadic partners varies within CNM relationships. (Aguilar, 2013, Cohen & Wilson, 2016; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2016; Wood et al., 2018). When this is combined with the findings that autonomy in sexual encounters leads to increased relationship satisfaction, there are large implications for how variations in these two factors influence levels of romantic jealousy amongst CNM partnerships. When partners are unsatisfied with the current arrangements of their relationship, this could lead to higher rates of romantic jealousy, and poor relationship outcomes.

Theories of Sexuality Involving Multiple Partners

In order to work with couples engaging in CNM it is important to understand theoretical backgrounds influencing affinity towards and choices to engage in sex with multiple partners. Multiple attempts to explain the dynamics and benefits of CNM for couples are available and some hold stronger arguments for explaining CNM to inform clinical practice. Here, I will explore three theories of sexuality involving multiple partners including evolutionary, social construction, and attachment. This section will be followed by an examination of theories exploring romantic jealousy in order to create a comprehensive understanding of both constructs before analyzing current and best practice working with CNM couples where romantic jealousy is a primary concern.

Evolutionary Perspective

Evolutionary theories are among the first to explain shifts from monogamous lifestyles. Evolutionary theory focuses on the ways in which human behaviors have adapted over time as a result of mate selection and its influence on evolution. Women have been historically seen by evolutionary theorists to prefer less mates as a result of needing partners for resource needs (intelligence, financial aid, social status; Buss 1994). In contrast, the choice for women to engage in

CNM relationships can be understood within evolutionary theory as secondary partners can allocate additional resources not provided by primary partners. The primary drive for men has been seen as the need to spread genes counterintuitive to the constraints of monogamy (Buss, 1994). However, women's requirements for commitment likely determine men's willingness to be monogamous despite underlying drives to engage sexually with multiple partners.

Research within the CNM community has supported some evolutionary theory. Specifically, the prevalence of deceptive monogamy among men and increased willingness to engage in CNM for men compared to women support these sex differences in mate selection (Aguilar, 2013; Conley et al., 2005). Evolutionary theory fails to explain sexuality and romantic affiliation beyond primal motivations and lacks emphasis on the influence of societal norms and expectations on mate selection.

Social Construction

Social construction theory understands behavior by identifying meaning as being socially created (Gergen, 1985). Individual beliefs, values, and behaviors are a compilation of influences from family, communities, and dominant society. Within the context of sexuality, western ideals of monogamous relationships influence individuals' continuous practices of monogamy and despite the high prevalence of cheating and divorce. Social construction also supports that sexual identity is constructed over time based on partner experiences and therefore demonstrates the fluidity of sexuality and sexual preferences. Support for social construction theories of sexuality has been identified in research on CNM and polyamorous individuals by Aquilar (2013) and Manley et al. (2015). When individuals are placed in communal groups ascribing to multiple partner relationship preferences, some couples previously identified as monogamous were willing and actively engaged in practicing CNM (Aquilar, 2013). Manley et al. (2015) recorded observable changes in polyamorous identifying and CNM engaging individuals in sexual identity, attraction, and partnering behaviors in correlation with sexual experiences or current partner changes. These observations support that

identity is developed as a construct of experiences, societal practices, and dominant discourse perceptions.

Attachment

In addition to evolutionary and social construction theories, attachment theory lends input on willingness to engage in CNM and successful relationship outcomes based on attachment type. Multiple partner relationship concerns have been identified for both higher levels of dependency and anxious attachment styles. Those who manifest higher levels of dependence (destructive overdependence) have been shown to be less willing to engage in a CNM relationship, have poorer reports of relationship success, and are more likely to have higher jealousy ratings (Bornstein et al., 2003). Similarly, individuals presenting with anxious attachment who engage in CNM are more likely to demonstrate increased anxiousness about availability of their partner and feel less fulfilled or happy in their relationship (Moors et al., 2012). Both Bornstein et al. (2003) and Moors et al. (2012) support the importance of measuring attachment style before engaging in clinical interventions, as a lack of secure attachment can lead to poorer relationship outcomes.

Overall, evolutionary, social construction, and attachment theories contribute to the understanding of the dynamics of individuals who engage in CNM and inform clinical considerations for measuring and examining each partners' previous sexual deception, identity, attachment style, and individual beliefs, values, and ideals.

CHAPTER 3

THEORIES OF ROMANTIC JEALOUSY

Theories of romantic jealousy have been further developed and researched compared to those available in the literature on sexuality in multiple partnerships. As forementioned, most research within romantic jealousy literature has focused on monogamous couples. However, theories on romantic jealousy contributes understanding to working with couples regardless of orientation type and therefore are useful for this review before discussing clinical considerations and implications for working with CNM couples. Evolutionary, psychodynamic, attachment, and systems theories are to be discussed and specific implications for CNM couples will be highlighted when available.

Evolutionary Perspective

Evolutionary theorists understand romantic jealousy as an innate human behavior (Pines, 1992b). Buss's (1994) well-recognized text on evolutionary theory of sexual desire, mate selection, and partnership views romantic jealousy as a drive that "motivates action in response to a threat in a relationship" (p.15). High levels of romantic jealousy have consequences of increased propensity for vigilance and/or violence (Buss, 1988). Sex differences in romantic jealousy through the evolutionary lens have predicted men and women will vary in responses to sexual and romantic infidelity (Pines & Friedman, 1998). Buss et al. (1999) tested this hypothesis with 10 emotional and sexual triggers to jealousy. In support of evolutionary predictions, male responses indicated significantly higher distress to sexual infidelity, while female responses indicated significantly higher distress to emotional infidelity (Buss et al., 1999). Sex differences in responses to romantic jealousy support the idea of romantic jealousy as a multidimensional construct. Evolutionary theory provides important context to working with CNM partners as sexual and romantic encounters may be held at different weights of approval and acceptance.

Psychodynamic

While evolutionary theory sees romantic jealousy as innate, psychodynamic theory explains romantic jealousy as a result of unresolved childhood experiences (Pines, 1992a). An individual's

parents' relationship, relationship with parents, and relationship with siblings all contribute to romantic jealousy thoughts and behaviors in the present. The process by which romantic jealousy arouses is viewed to be held in unconscious psychological processes and would require deep awareness and understanding of past experiences to attempt clinical influence when working on romantic jealousy (Pines, 1992b). When working with CNM couples an examination of each partners individual childhood experiences could be a center point of treatment when utilizing the psychodynamic approach.

Attachment

Attachment theory provides additional understanding of the dynamics of romantic jealousy by explaining variances in responses through attachment styles (Bornstein et al., 2003; Buunk, 1997; Rydell & Bringle, 2007; Simpson et al., 2007). Bornstein et al. (2003) found that those with overdependence are more likely to score higher on ratings of jealousy, a factor that would decrease the likelihood of maintaining a successful CNM relationship. Individuals with avoidant attachment styles have been found to more frequently exhibit jealousy and exhibit higher threat perception to scenarios (Simpson et al., 2007). Differences have also been found between responses to emotional and sexual romantic jealousy scenarios based on attachment style. Those with secure attachment have been found to be more distressed by emotional than sexual infidelity. (Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997) Finally, multidimensional facets of jealousy have been correlated with attachment style such that those displaying cognitive factors (suspicion, paranoia) are more likely to have anxious attachment (Rydell & Bringle, 2007).

Overall, research has provided evidence to the intersection of attachment styles and romantic jealousy. There is no evidence that would suggest these results would not apply with CNM couples. The biggest impact of attachment style research on understanding romantic jealousy for CNM relationships is that some individuals engaged in these arrangements may have increased risk for higher levels of distress and poor relationship satisfaction and success.

Social Psychological

Pines (1992a, 1992b) provides additional understanding of romantic jealousy through examining the social psychological (social learning, social construction) lens. Social psychology views social experiences as shapers of the romantic image, mate preferences, resource requirements, and how people should and do express love (Pines, 1992a, 1992b). Gender differences in romantic jealousy expression have been examined through the social-psychological lens and have found these differences to be minimal and specific to particular situations (Pines & Friedman, 1998). In combination with evidence provided by evolutionary theorist in sex differences for elicitors of jealousy responses (sexual, romantic), these results demonstrate the importance of contextually specific measures when looking at romantic jealousy both academically and clinically.

Systems Perspective

Systems theory provides unique perspective to working with couples on romantic jealousy as it is the only theory that focuses directly on relational dynamics and de-emphasizes individual characteristics. Within systems theory, all parties involved in the relationship are responsible for maintaining romantic jealousy and contributing to vicious cycles that perpetuate its continued emergence (Pines, 1992b, White, 1991). Romantic jealousy is seen as serving a function for the relationship that all parties benefit from in some way. Treatment with CNM triads and paired couples may include the involvement of all parties, even if a specific dyad presents in treatment, in order to understand the entire relationship system contributing to relational dissatisfaction or dysfunction. Investigating how each member functions within jealousy triangles is key to improving therapy outcomes within the lens of the systems perspective (White, 1991).

In conclusion, the wealth of viewpoints examining romantic jealousy provide unique and useful considerations for clinical practice. Despite the lack of research specific to understanding romantic jealousy in CNM relationships, theory can be adapted to informed predictions about how romantic jealousy functions within CNM. Furthermore, the understanding of evolutionary, attachment, social

psychological, and systems theories provides practical implications for clinicians looking to provide theory-based treatment options for their clients.

CHAPTER 4

CLINICAL INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR CNM RELATIONSHIPS AND JEALOUSY

Working with polyamorous clients and CNM partnerships have been minimally discussed in academic literature. Marriage and family courses minimally review alternate relationships beyond monogamous pairs and focus primarily on heterosexual couplings. This hole in applied research and practice does not match the growing awareness of CNM engagements and fails to provide comprehensive cultural considerations for polyamorous identifying people and CNM relationships. Romantic jealousy is a significant component when working with any multiple partner relationship as perceived threats to relationship security, attachment, and closeness can increase with additional involved romantic and sexual partners. A comprehensive review of CNM, romantic jealousy, and the intersection of both topics has been completed within this review. A need for continued investigation and breadth of literature regarding CNM and romantic jealousy has been identified.

However, the reviewed data provides substantial information that can be used to inform clinical practice through providing the groundwork for considerations when working with this population. Firstly, the measurement of romantic jealousy, CNM attitudes, and relational characteristics are essential beginnings to comprehensive treatment with CNM partners. Second, treatment goals such as reducing romantic jealousy, improving communication and compromise, and sexual identity education and awareness should be included in client treatment plans. Finally, some attempts to measure treatment outcomes for CNM pairs with a focus on romantic jealousy have been conducted using psychodynamic, existential, and eclectic therapy approaches.

The competence to work clinically with CNM partners requires an understanding of GSM identity, reduced bias towards non-monogamous lifestyles, and deconstructing of traditional beliefs about what is considered pathological within a relationship. It is hoped that this review may provide a platform for continued education and informed treatment when working with non-heteronormative relationship pairings as the increase in public awareness and acceptance for these groups continue.

Measuring Individual and Relational Characteristics

Romantic Jealousy

Measuring romantic jealousy involves assessing both multidimensional responses to potential scenarios and previous sexual behavior patterns that could trigger romantic jealousy (e.g., use of sexual deception). A comprehensive jealousy scale that has been adapted to working with individuals engaged in CNM has been developed by Buss (2013). This scale goes beyond previous instrument bias towards monogamous partnerships and includes both physical and romantic extradyadic behavior scenarios to elicit jealousy. One example question includes, “Which action would be more difficult for you to forgive: your partner has passionate intercourse with [another person], [or] your partner becomes deeply emotionally attached to [another] person (Buss, 2013, pp. 2).” Buss’s (2013) jealousy instrument could be easily administered in a clinical setting with 22 questions and can provide clinicians with comparable partner congruencies and differences in jealousy elicitors and responses. An additional jealousy scale appropriate for working with CNM partners is the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989), which can provide specific information regard each partner’s experience of emotion, cognitions, and resulting behaviors when a jealousy response is elicited. As correlations between various experience endorsements have been related to positive and negative outcomes, this measure can be useful in identifying risks to relationship success if no intervention is used.

Identifying existing patterns of sexual deception can be useful to clinicians for understanding each partners propensity towards lying and putting the relationships at increased risk for breaking CNM contracts and boundaries. Marelich et al. (2008) developed and tested a behavior-based sexual deception scale identifying two types of motivation for sexual deception (approach and avoidance). Individuals either use deception to seek pleasure/reward or to avoid problems and potential relationship threatening confrontations (Marelich et al., 2008). Within the context of CNM, partners who use avoidance strategies may be agreeing to CNM relationships in order to avoid losing their

partner, and those who use approach deception may be more likely to lie to partners about sexual interactions, and STD's putting primary and secondary partners at increased health risk.

CNM Attitudes

CNM attitudes can have vast variations between CNM partners as individual decisions to engage in CNM do not always come from polyamorous identity and beliefs in the ability to have equal love for equal partners. It has been mentioned during this review that choices to engage in CNM are not always autonomous and can be a result of compromise to save a relationship or experimentation. When evaluating clients engaged in CNM, addressing differences and similarity and attitudes may reveal the root of romantic jealousy within the relationship and/or current relationship dissatisfaction. Cohen and Wilson's (2017) Consensual Non-monogamy Attitude Scale (CNAS) is a reliable and valid measure to quickly and easily gather this data without increased client burden. This scale involves 10 items using a 7-point scale for each item looking at how accepting people are of a CNM relationship. The degree of which couples agree in their attitudes for or against CNM can be used to examine relationship quality (with higher degree of concurrence predicting increasing higher quality of CNM partnership; Cohen & Wilson, 2017).

Attachment Style

Despite a clients underlying willingness to engage in and positive attitudes towards CNM, attachment style has been shown to influence romantic jealousy and success in CNM relationships (Bornstein, 2013; Buunk, 1997; Moors et al. 2012; Rydell & Bringle, 2007; Simpson et al., 2007). Bornstein et al.'s (2003) Relationship Profile Test measures three components of attachment (destructive overdependence, dysfunctional detachment, and healthy dependency) through emotional, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral components regarding the self and other people. This 30-item self-report questionnaire can be used as a baseline to help couples move closer to healthy dependency through increasing autonomy and strengthening interpersonal skills, social connectedness, and flexibility (Bornstein et al., 2003).

Although there is a breadth of questionnaires and survey that can be used with couples, it is important to not overload clients with the burden of paperwork and therefore, some other considerations not discussed but useful on a case-by-case basis may be justified and included when working with clients.

Treatment Goals for Working with CNM Couples

Following measurement of couples presenting in clinical settings, several treatment goals will be identified as pertinent to working with CNM couples. Overarching themes contributing to poor relationship satisfaction and success have been discussed including poor communication, high levels of romantic jealousy, and distress as a result of GSM status (Attridge, 2013; Balzarini et al., 2017; Barker, 2015; Berscheid et al., 1989). Cohen (2016) studied 122 individuals in open relationships and identified the most common reported problems leading to negative relationship experiences include communication issues (32%), romantic jealousy (24.6%), and trust issues (8.2.%). In alignment with these findings, treatment goals should include but are not limited to reducing romantic jealousy, improving communication and compromise, and sexual identity education and awareness.

Reducing Romantic Jealousy

Romantic jealousy can lead to irrational and uncharacteristic behaviors for an individual including feelings of loss of control, obsession, paranoia, delusions, and possessiveness (Buss, 1988; Pines, 1992a; Rydell & Bringle, 2007). Working with CNM couples should include components of reducing romantic jealousy when present for one or both partners through focusing on the roots (building insight, regaining control) of romantic jealousy. Underlying components of romantic jealousy that may be a central focus of treatment include exploring feelings of inferiority, humiliation, abandonment, and addressing poor self-esteem and loss of security when present (Pines, 1992a; Pines, 1992b)

Improving Communication and Compromise

The process of reducing romantic jealousy innately includes an increase in communication between partners. As each partner builds better understandings of each other and the relationship

system there is an increased power to facilitate change. Decisions to engage in extradyadic romantic and sexual encounters successfully require the ability to provide autonomous consent, set boundaries, and negotiate. Without core communication skills, partners enter CNM agreements with a risk for failure.

Communication with family is an additional consideration for working with CNM clients as relationship secrecy is high among CNM pairs due to challenges against dominant discourse of the monogamous ideal family. The lack of ability for partners to fully accept self and identity leads to enhanced stress with investing in strategies to maintain heteronormative passibility through covering within the relationship of others (Balzarini et al., 2017). Movement towards reduced secrecy and deception between each other, family, and friends can improve positive relationship characteristics, closeness, and overall relationship success.

Sexual Identity Education and Awareness

Individuals who engage in CNM are more likely to endorse additional GSM statuses (Balzarini et al., 2017; Cohen & Wilson, 2017; Wolkomir, 2015). Differences in stages of identity development, experiences of minority stress, and the impact of internalized homophobia can influence relational stress. Pressure from dominant society towards monogamy has led to experiences of guilt, shame, and otherness by polyamorous and CNM people (Attridge, 2013; Barker, 2015; Benson, 2017; Conley et al., 2012a; Ritchie & Barker, 2006; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017). The experience of shared microaggressions as a result of an open CNM relationship can cause additional distress as partners navigate how to manage feelings and reactions to implicit and explicit discrimination.

Partners engaging in extradyadic sexual encounters with poor communication may influence the use of safe sex practices. McKell (2009) looked at 296 adult participants sexual behavior and found that sexual communication increases the likelihood of using safe sex and decreased the likelihood of one-night stands. This identifies the importance of communication within CNM relationships in order to reduce the risk of increased health concerns (STD's, pregnancy, number of partners, HIV/AIDS). This study continues to support evidence that increased sexual communication

may be a protective factor for CNM partners and should be a topic of discussion in clinical and medical settings. In contrast, Conley et al. (2015) reviewed literature comparing monogamy and CNM on risk for STI's and found that CNM does not equate to a higher risk for contracting STI's. This is attributed to the higher rates of sexual communication found amongst CNM partners. In addition, they found that CNM couples practiced safer sex than monogamous couples, were more likely to be regularly tested, and more likely to discuss extradyadic intercourse (Conley et al., 2015). Therefore, it should not be assumed by clinicians that clients engaging in CNM are at automatic risk for poor sexual health, and rather clinicians should assess partners communication about and use of safe sexual practices before providing education.

CHAPTER 5

REVIEW OF CURRENT THERAPY FOR CNM RELATIONSHIPS

Limited evidence-based studies have examined therapeutic outcomes for CNM partners engaged in treatment. Studies that are available focus on CNM dyads. Although there are many adaptations of treatments that can be applied to CNM couples, only those available in the literature will be discussed within this review. It is hoped that continued information will be available to current and aspiring practitioners in order to influence comprehensive and effective treatment when working with non-monogamous couples. General findings indicate CNM individuals have similar relationship quality and psychological well-being as monogamists with scores in normal range across self-esteem, neuroticism, and personality (Rubel & Barker, 2015). Rubel and Barker (2015) found no negative differences in frequency of sex or sexual satisfaction with the exception of an increased feeling of sexual satisfaction for bisexual women with their husbands following engagement in CNM relationship. It is also indicated that CNM relationships are of no greater or lesser quality than monogamous ones, and therapists should ensure they do not impose their values of what relationships should be in an effort to improve the relationship. There is no evidence that engaging in CNM leads to poor relationship outcomes (Conley et al., 2012a; Conley et al., 2012b; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017; Wood et al., 2018).

Psychodynamic and behaviorist approaches to working with couples have been considered as one treatment approach for working with CNM partners. Pines (1992a) lists a series of treatment steps for working specifically with couples indicating romantic jealousy as a primary concern that can be adapted to CNM partners seeking treatment. Firstly, therapists are advised to gain insight into the core of jealous feelings, and the jealous behavior cycle. This is followed by the use of desensitization in order to treat jealousy (build control, mindfulness, awareness and management of triggers (Pines, 1992a).

Berry and Barker (2014) tested existential sex-therapy with CNM clients and found positive treatment outcomes including a reduction in pathology of sexual behavior. Existential approaches

focus on client freedom and belonging and understand clients through their own subjective meanings of their choices. A utilization of treatment interventions including *bracketing* (separating out one's own prejudgments and values) and *horizontalizing* (situating clients' sexual identity within larger context of their life experience) were effectively used. Bracketing helped clients separate aside prior beliefs, preconceived notions, and judgements about experiences in order to understand own perceptions about the experience itself. Horizontalizing was used to improve minority identity stress through rejecting binary views of "normal vs pathological" and seeing sexuality as a fluid and diverse spectrum within someone's life.

Dance therapy, a more controversial approach to working with clients, has additionally been tested on CNM couples and can provide guidance for intervention components available to clinicians. Chatara-Middleton (2012) engaged in interviews with three dance therapists working w/CNM clients to identify main themes in sessions. Five unanimous themes were identified including jealousy, guilt and shame, doubt, agreements and communication, cultural beliefs and roles, and failure/pathology. These themes were targeted by dance therapists through somatic exploration and expression of feelings through physical and visual forms. In addition, dance therapists use movement as a relaxation technique to release negative energy, and include other sensory experiences such as breath, touch, and sound. Although it is not recommended that dance intervention be an unaccompanied approach to working with CNM couples, the primary focus to increase attunement between partners of understanding and communicating feelings and needs in order to increase partner connectedness is viewed as a core treatment goal for this population.

Additional evidence-based treatments such as cognitive behavioral therapy, affirmative therapy, and functional family therapy have yet to be tested and researched with this population but will likely be shown to have additional benefits to working with CNM couples as future research is done. It is to be noted that working with CNM partners requires an additional layer of competence in working with GSM clients as higher rates of these orientations have been found in CNM couples and a willingness to challenge dominant relationship conceptions is a primary component of engaging in a

non-monogamous lifestyle. Therefore, working with CNM couples is not appropriate practice for all clinicians, and practitioners are advised to examine their scope before working with polyamorous identifying and CNM practicing clients.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION OF RESEARCH-BASED THERAPY WITH CNM PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout this review, detailed descriptions of polyamory, CNM, and how romantic jealousy plays a role in non-monogamous relationships have been included. An exploration of available theories used to explain the dynamics of CNM and romantic jealousy have additionally been discussed. The limited availability of population specific treatment considerations and intervention were addressed and additionally reviewed. Implications for working with CNM couples to improve relationship satisfaction and success have included improving communication, reducing deception, sexual identity awareness, practicing safe sex, and using psychodynamic, behavioral, existential, and eclectic approaches to achieve positive treatment outcomes (Balzarini et al., 2017; Berry & Barker, 2014; Chatara-Middleton, 2012; Cohen, 2016; Conley et al., 2015; McKell, 2009; Pines, 1992a, 1992b). This review will be concluded by an integration of these components to provide a series of clinical suggestions when working with CNM partners. Future evidence-based practice will need to be demonstrated to support these proposed conclusions.

Firstly, romantic jealousy should be seen by practitioners as a combination of predisposed individual characteristics, responses to specific triggering events, and expressed multidimensionally through cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions (Bringle, 1981; Buss, 1994; Marelich, 2002; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989; Radek & Vladimir, 2017). There is evidence that some individuals display lower magnitudes of jealousy and require stronger stimuli to be triggered (Buss, 2013; Pines, 1992b; Pines & Friedman, 1998). In addition, some traits of romantic jealousy have been shown to lead to poorer outcomes for CNM relationship success (Cohen, 2016; Conley et al., 2017). It is evident that some individuals may be more effectively able to live a CNM lifestyle and comparing partners' levels of jealousy should precede intervention. Partner jealousy and levels of attunement (attitudes and behaviors) should be analyzed in order to help clients see jealous behavior as an expression of vulnerability and to identify the underlying primary drive of jealousy (Girard & Brownlee, 2015). Factors of romantic jealousy that have been shown to influence CNM relationship satisfaction include

mate retention behaviors, relationship closeness, sexual desire, communication, and autonomy in sexual interactions and should be addressed during treatment (Attridge, 2013; Balzarini et al., 2017; Buss, 1998; Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Mogilski et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2018).

Secondly, social attitudes leading to individual and relational distress including pressure towards monogamy, microaggressions, and inaccurate beliefs about increased risk of STD's, have led to the experience of minority stress for GSM individuals engaged in CNM demonstrating the need for sexual identity awareness in treatment goals (Barker, 2015; Conley et al., 2012a; Conley et al., 2015; Wood et al., 2018). Practitioners must examine their self as therapist and be able to acknowledge CNM as a satisfying and effective non-pathological relationship dynamic in order to maintain a non-biased position and prevent continued contribution to stress experienced by CNM partners. History has viewed non-monogamy as a symptom of being in a non-satisfying relationship but no evidence has been found to confirm this view. Opposing findings have been discussed indicating there are no differences in relationship satisfaction when comparing monogamous and CNM groups (Conley et al., 2012a; Conley et al., 2012b; Rubel & Barker, 2015; Sizemore & Olmstead, 2017; Wood et al., 2018). Practitioners should strive to affirm clients open non-monogamy in order to help deconstruct internalized social stigma and beliefs about "right versus wrong" sexual experiences. This review encourages practitioners to view a client's non-monogamy status as equally legitimate as a monogamous status.

Thirdly, variance in individual and academic understanding of polyamory, CNM and the available lifestyle variations held within each construct exists (Aguilar, 2013; Benson, 2017; Conley, 2013; Ritchie & Barker, 2006; Types-Barker, 2015). Due to language differences in meaning therapists must go into session as naive on clients experience so they may absorb client's own version of their lived life (Berry & Barker, 2014). An assessment of how the couple functions and understands their own relationship and extradyadic romantic and sexual encounters including an assessment of rules, boundaries, and compromises shared by the partnership is an essential feature for beginning therapeutic work. The role of CNM within the relationship may play variations of

significance for the couple and should not be assumed as a primary characteristic of the relationship, rather a contributing component.

Finally, treatment interventions for improving relationship satisfaction with CNM couples should address core values of CNM partnerships such as trust, honesty, communication (boundary setting, compromise, reduced deception), understanding jealousy, and safe sex (Girard & Brownlee, 2015). Interventions can include a combination of strategies for addressing each core component contributing to problems within the relationship. Interventions identified have included the use of desensitization to reduce jealousy responses and manage triggers, separating the self from internalized societal beliefs through behavioral bracketing, expressing and understanding one's own and one's partners feelings, experiences, and forms of expression to build closeness and connectedness between partners, and providing education on sexual identity and ways to engage in safe sex when warranted (Berry & Barker, 2014; Chatara-Middleton, 2012; Girard & Brownlee, 2015; McKell, 2009; Pines, 1992a).

One might argue that consensually monogamous partnerships seem minimally different from monogamous pairs and therefore do not need unique treatment considerations. Although this review has supported ideas that CNM partnerships are no different in terms of relationship quality, satisfaction, or success—the specific dynamics and functioning of CNM partnerships are uniquely different (e.g., developing outside partner contracts, increased sexual awareness, handling secrecy or outness with family and friends; Balzarini et al., 2017; Conley et al., 2012b; Conley, et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2018). Therefore, to answer questions about unique treatment considerations for CNM partners a look into the treatment benefits of cultural competency when working with GSM status holding clients will be quickly reviewed.

Research shows that lack of consideration for minority status in treatment can have negative impacts on client mental health outcomes and psychological improvement in clinical settings and that *culture-infused counseling* (purposefully incorporating cultural awareness into therapeutic practices) leads to more positive outcomes (Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Corey et al., 1993; Duggal, 2014; Knapp,

1975). In addition, when clinicians demonstrate allyship with GSM groups through conversation, identification symbols (such as a pride flag in the office), adapting office spaces to accommodate more than two partners, and adapted treatments, increases in client outcomes and mental health improvement have been demonstrated (Girard & Brownlee, 2015; Richards & Barker, 2013; Weitzman, 2006; Weitzman et al., 2012; Zimmerman, 2012). It is important that clinicians do not ignore the specific stress that occurs when holding a minority status and approach treatment with an affirmative, open, and informed lens (APA, 2015; Hancock et al., 2012; Green & Mitchell, 2002)

Further, there is a large body of research that focuses primarily on therapeutic approaches and considerations when working with CNM partners more generally including reducing biases and assumptions of mononormativity, awareness of legal issues faced by CNM couples, ensuring forms and assessments are inclusive of non-monogamous groups, addressing coming-out struggles with family and friends, and being an active ally (Anapol, 2010; Cassidy & Wong, 2018; Liddle, 1996; Weitzman, 2006). These considerations should also be implemented by clinicians when working specifically with romantic jealousy as a primary concern. The most relevant intervention modifications when working specifically with romantic jealousy as a primary concern include allyship, inclusion of multiple partners in therapy, seeing client as expert of their experience, reducing mononormativity, and maintaining transparent about one's own biases, assumptions, and beliefs regarding GSM and CNM relationship dynamics; These are supported by literature within this review such as the impact of societal attitudes, differences in CNM attitudes, perceptions, and romantic jealousy responses among partners, and core values of CNM being trust, honesty, communication, and safe sex (Balzarini et al., 2017; Barker, 2015; Buss, 2013; Conley et al., 2012a; Girard & Brownlee, 2015; Pines, 1992b)

In conclusion, it has been clearly identified that there are outcome benefits to providing modified intervention practices when working with CNM groups and that approaching treatment without these modifications can hinder client improvement and contribute to additional minority stress (Anapol, 2010; Cassidy & Wong, 2018; Liddle, 1996; Weitzman, 2006; Zimmerman, 2012). Therapists

and psychologists should aim to provide best quality of care that is supported by research evidence and are responsible for maintaining cultural competency with their clients. CNM partners presenting with romantic jealousy as a relationship concern will benefit from working with providers in all settings that affirm their relationship status, are educated on unique relationship factors and dynamics of CNM partnerships, set goals surrounding core CNM values, and who use evidence-based treatment approaches when working with all GSM clients.

REFERENCES

- Aguilar, S. J. (2013). Situational sexual behaviors: The ideological work of moving toward polyamory in communal living groups. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 42(1), 104-129. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241612464886>
- Anapol, D. (2010). *Polyamory in the 21st century: Love and intimacy with multiple partners*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield
- Arthur, N., & Collins, S. (2010a). The rationale for culture-infused counselling. In N. Arthur & S. Collins (Eds.), *Culture-infused counselling* (2nd ed., pp. 26–44). Counselling Concepts.
- American Psychological Association. (2015). Guidelines for psychological practice with transgender and gender nonconforming people. *American Psychologist*, 70(9), 832–864. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039906>
- Andersen, P. A., Eloy, S. V., Guerrero, L. K., & Spitzberg, B. H. (1995). Romantic jealousy and relational satisfaction: A look at the impact of jealousy experience and expression. *Communication Reports*, 8(2), 77–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08934219509367613>
- Attridge, M. (2013). Jealousy and relationship closeness: Exploring the good (reactive) and bad (suspicious) sides of romantic jealousy. *Sage Open*, January-March, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013476054>
- Balzarini, R. N., Campbell, L., Kohut, T., Holmes, B. M., Lehmilller, J. J., Harman, J. J., & Atkins, N. (2017). Perceptions of primary and secondary relationships in polyamory. *PLoS ONE*, 12(5), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0177841>
- Barker, M. J. (2005). This is my partner and this is my . . . partner's partner: Constructing a polyamorous identity in a monogamous world. *Journal of Constructionist Psychology*, 18, 75-88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10720530590523107>
- Benson, K. L. (2017). Tension of subjectivity: The instability of queer polyamorous identity and community. *Sexualities*, 20(1-2), 24-40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460716642154>
- Berry, M. D. & Barker, M. J. (2014). Extraordinary interventions for extraordinary clients: Existential sex therapy and open non-monogamy. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 29(1), 21-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681994.2013.866642>
- Berscheid, E. S., Snyder, M., & Omoto, A. M. (1989). The Relationship Closeness Inventory: Assessing the closeness of interpersonal relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(5), 792–807. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.5.792>
- Bornstein, R. F., Languirand, M. A., Geiselman, J. A., Creighton, M.W., Gallagher, H. A., & Eisenhart, E. A. (2003). Construct validity of the Relationship Profile Test: A self-report measure of dependency-detachment. *Journal of Personality*, 80(1), 64-74. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327752JPA8001_15
- Bringle, R. G. (1981) Conceptualizing jealousy as a disposition. *Alternative Lifestyles*, 4, 274-290. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01277941>
- Buss, D. M. (1988). From Vigilance to violence: Tactics of mate retention in American undergraduates. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 9(5), 291-317. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0162-3095\(88\)90010-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0162-3095(88)90010-6)

- Buss, D. M. (1994). *The evolution of desire: Strategies of human mating*. Basic Books.
- Buss, D. M. (2013). *Jealousy Instrument*. [Measurement instrument].
<http://www.midss.org/content/jealousy-instrument>
- Buss, D. M., & Shackelford, T. K. (1997). From vigilance to violence: Mate retention tactics in married couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 7(2), 346-361.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.72.2.346>
- Buss, D. M., Shackelford, T. K., Kirkpatrick, L. A., Choe, J. C., Hasegawa, M. H., Hasegawa, T., & Bennett, K. L. (1999). Jealousy and beliefs about infidelity: Tests of competing hypothesis in the United States, Korea, and Japan. *Personal Relationships*, 6, 125-150.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6811.1999.tb00215.x>
- Buunk, B. P. (1997). Personality, birth order and attachment styles as related to various types of jealousy. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 23(6), 997–1006.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(97\)00136-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(97)00136-0)
- Cassidy, T. & Wong, G. 2018. Consensually Nonmonogamous Clients and the Impact of Mononormativity in Therapy. *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, 52(2), 119–139.
- Chatara-Middleton, A. (2012). Working with non-monogamy: dance/movement therapists' experience of working with individuals in non-monogamous relationships. *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 34, 114-128. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10465-012-9138-6>
- Cohen, M. T. (2016). An exploratory study of individuals in non-traditional, alternative relationships: how “open” are we?. *Sexuality and Culture*, 20, 295-315. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-015-9324-z>
- Cohen, M. T., & Wilson, K. (2016). Development of the Consensual Non-monogamy Attitude Scale (CNAS). *Sexuality & Culture*, 21, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-016-9395-5>
- Conley, T. D., Moors, A. C., Matsick, J. L., Ziegler, A. A. (2012). The fewer the merrier?: Assessing stigma surrounding consensually non-monogamous romantic relationships. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 13(1), 1-30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1530-2415.2012.01286>
- Conley, T. D., Ziegler, A. A., Moors, A.C., Matsick, J. L., & Valentine, B. A. (2012). A critical examination of popular assumptions about the benefits and outcomes of monogamous relationships. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 17(2), 124-141.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868312467087>
- Conley, T. D., Matsick, J. L., Moors, A. C., Ziegler, A. A., & Rubin, J. D. (2015). Re-examining the effectiveness of monogamy as an STI prevention strategy. *Preventative Medicine*, 78, 23-28.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2015.06.006>
- Conley, T. D., Matsick, J. L., Moors, A. C., & Ziegler, A. A. (2017). Investigation of nonmonogamous relationships: Theories, methods, and new directions. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 12(2), 205-232. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691616667925>
- Corey, G., Schneider-Corey, M., & Callanan, P. (1993). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions* (4th ed.). Brooks/Cole.

- Duggal, C. (2014). Negotiating an open marriage in couple therapy. *Psychological Studies*, 59(1), 76-81. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12646-013-0212-z>
- Easton, D., & Liszt, C. A. (1997) *The ethical slut: A guide to infinite sexual possibilities*. Greenery Press
- Hancock, K. A., Cerbone, L., Dworkin, A., Gock, S., Haldeman, T., Kashubeck-West, D.S., & Russell, G. (2012). Guidelines for psychological practice with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients. *The American Psychologist*, 67(1), 10–42. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024659>
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(3), 511–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.3.511>
- Gergen, K. J. (1985). The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology. *The American Psychologist*, 40(3), 266–275. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.40.3.266>
- Girard, A., & Brownlee, A. (2015). Assessment guidelines and clinical implications for therapists working with couples in sexually open marriages. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 30(4), 462-474. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681994.2015.1028352>
- Green, R. J., & Mitchell, V. (2002). Gay and lesbian couples in therapy: Homophobia, relationship ambiguity, and social support. In A. S. Gurman & N. S. Jacobson (Eds.), *Clinical handbook of couple therapy* (pp. 546–568). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Kelley, H. H., Berscheid, E., Christensen, A., Harvey, J. H., Huston, T. L., Levinger, G., McClintock, E., Peplau, L. A., & Peterson, D. R. (1983). *Close relationships*. Freeman.
- Klesse, C. (2014). Polyamory: Intimate practice, identity, or sexual orientation? *Sexualities*, 17(1/2), 81-99, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460713511096>
- Knapp, J. J. (1975). Some non-monogamous marriage styles and related attitudes and practices of marriage counselors. *The Family Coordinator*, 24(4), 505-514. <https://doi.org/10.2307/583034>
- Liddle, B. (1996). Therapist sexual orientation, gender, and counseling practices as they relate to ratings of helpfulness by gay and lesbian clients. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 43, 394-401. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.43.4.394>
- Manley, M. H., Diamond, L. M., & Anders, S. M. (2015). Polyamory, monogamy and sexual fluidity: a longitudinal study of identity and sexual trajectories. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 2(2), 168-180. <https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000098>
- Marelich, W. D. (2002). Effects of behavior settings, extradyadic behaviors, and interloper characteristics on romantic jealousy. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 30(8), 785-794. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2002.30.8.785>
- Marelich, W. D., Lundquist, J., Painter, K., & Mechanic, M.B. (2008). Sexual deception as a social-exchange process: Development of a behavior-based sexual deception scale. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 45(1), 27-35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224490701596176>
- McKell, A. (2009). *Sexual motivations' influence on sexual disclosure* [Unpublished master's thesis]. California State University, Fullerton.

- Mitchell, M. E., Bartholomew, K., & Cobb, R.J. (2014). Need fulfillment in polyamorous relationships. *Journal of Sex and Research, 51*(3), 329-339. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2012.742998>
- Mogilski, J. K., Memering, S. L., Welling, L. M., & Shackelford, T. K. (2017). Monogamy versus consensual non-monogamy: Alternative approaches to pursuing a strategically pluralistic mating strategy. *Archive of Sexual Behavior, 46*, 407-417. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-015-0658-2>
- Moors, A. C., Edelstein, R. S., Conley, T. D. (2012). *Avoiding monogamy: Attachment, sex, love, and consensual non-monogamy* [Paper presentation]. Biennial Conference of the International Association for Relationship Research, Chicago, IL.
- Moors, A. (2017). Has the American's public interest in information related to relationships beyond "the couple" increased over time?. *The Journal of Sex Research, 54*(6), 677-684. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2016.1178208>
- O'Hare, T., Williams, C. L., & Ezoviski, A. (1996). Fear of AIDS and Homophobia: Implications for Direct Practice and Advocacy. *Social Work, 41*(1), 51–58. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/41.1.51>
- O'Neil, N., & O'Neil, G. (1984). *Open marriage*. M. Evans and Company, Inc.
- Pfeiffer S. M. & Wong, P. T. (1989). Multidimensional jealousy. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 6*(2), 155-160. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.1997.25.2.155>
- Pines, A. M. (1992). *Romantic jealousy: Understanding and conquering the shadow of love*. St. Martin's Press.
- Pines, A. M. (1992). Romantic jealousy: Five perspectives and an integrative approach. *Psychotherapy, 29*(4), 675-683
- Pines, A. M. & Friedman, A. (1998). Gender differences in romantic jealousy. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 138*(1), 54-71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224549809600353>
- Radek, M. T., & Vladimir, H. (2017). Psychometric properties of the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale. *Psihologia, 50*(4), 521-534. <https://doi.org/10.2298/PSI170121012T>
- Richards, C., & Barker, M. (2013). *Sexuality & gender for mental health professionals: A practical guide*. SAGE Publications Ltd, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473957817>
- Ritchie, A., & Barker, M. (2006). There aren't words for what we do or how we feel so we have to make them up: Constructing polyamorous languages in a culture of compulsory monogamy. *Sexualities, 9*(5), 584-601. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460706069987>
- Rubel, A. N., & Bogaert, A. F. (2015). Consensual nonmonogamy: Psychological well-being and relationship quality correlates. *The Journal of Sex Research, 52*(9), 961-982. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2014.942722>
- Ruth, R., & Santacruz, E. (2017). *LGBT psychology and mental health: Emerging research and advances*. ABC-CLIO, LLC.
- Rydell, R. J., Bringle, R. G. (2007). Differentiating reactive and suspicious jealousy. *Social Behavior and Personality, 35*(8), 1099-114. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2007.35.8.109>
- Salovey, P. (Ed.). (1991). *The psychology of jealousy and envy*. Guilford Press.

- Sharpsteen, D. J., & Kirkpatrick, L. A. (1997). Romantic jealousy and adult romantic attachment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72(3), 627–640. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.72.3.627>
- Simpson, J. A., Collins, W. A., Tran, S., & Haydon, K. C. (2007). Attachment and the experience and expression of emotions in romantic relationships: A developmental perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92(2), 355–367. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.2.355>
- Sizemore, K. M., & Olmstead, S. B. (2017). Willingness of emerging adults to engage in consensual non-monogamy: A mixed methods analysis. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-017-1075-5>
- White, G. L. (1991). Self, relationship, friends, and family: Some applications of systems theory to romantic jealousy. In P. Salovey (Ed.), *The psychology of jealousy and envy* (pp. 231–251). Guilford Press.
- Weitzman, G. (2006). Therapy with clients who are bisexual and polyamorous. *Journal of Bisexuality*, 6(1), 137-164. https://doi.org/doi:10.1300/J159v06n01_08
- Weitzman, G., Davidson, J., & Phillips Jr., R. A. (2012). What psychology professionals should know about polyamory. National Coalition for Sexual Freedom, Inc. p. 7-28.
- Wolkomir, M. (2015). One but not the only: Reconfiguring intimacy in multiple partner relationships. *Qualitative Sociology*, 38, 417-438. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-015-9312-5>
- Wood, J., Desmarais, S., Burleigh, T., Milhausen, R. (2018). Reasons for sex and relational outcomes in consensually nonmonogamous and monogamous relationships: A self-determination theory approach. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 35(4), 632-654. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265-540751774308>
- Zimmerman, K. J. (2012). Clients in sexually open relationships: Considerations for therapists. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy: An International Forum*, 24(3), 272-289. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08952833.2012.648>