Consensual Non- Monogamy in the 21st Century   
Kristen Vallely  
SUNY New Paltz

**Introduction**  
 In Ancestral times, monogamy was a sure way to ensure successful progeny, but not the only way. The two main relationship types are monogamy, in which one has a singular partner at once and the umbrella term, consensual non-monogamy (CNM). This is defined as “a relationship where people involved consensually agree to have more than one concurrent sexual/romantic partner.” Studies show that those in CNM experience higher levels of trust, communication, and lower levels of jealousy (Moors, 2016). Those practicing CNM also have familial benefits in emotional, financial and practical areas such as extra income, availability of support, and a wider range of role models (Sheff, 2014). Society leans towards monogamy in the US and this lack of acceptance stunts education on the topic of CNM and leaves people to their own devices. For example, google searches of CNM increased significantly over the past decade (Moors, 2016).   
 Our ancestors were interdependent with shelter, food and security and they needed each other to have successful offspring. Today, we are independent, owning homes, cooking and partaking in hookup culture. It is not necessary for survival to be with one person; with longer life spans, many find it difficult to be with one person for life. Up to 40-50 percent of marriages will get a divorce according to the American Psychological Association (APA 2018).   
 Our relationship forms have impacted us, imprinting it in our DNA and it can be seen by the male to female ratio of x chromosomes (Barash, 2016). Additionally, you can find different genetic variances in monogamous and polyamorous cultures (Hammer, 2008). While most Americans do not practice CNM, many cultures and religions have kept to their ways of CNM (Barash, 2016). Overall, I propose that CNM relationships provide a style of intimate relationships that could strongly benefit the human species not only genetically, but socially as well.  
 **Method**  
 Retrieving DNA data from multiple parts of the world where Monogamy and CNM is culturally and generationally practiced would be necessary to see how CNM effects DNA. The study will point out the populations’ instances of genetic variation and of genetic defect and help us understand A. The specific genes that generally show up in monogamous vs CNM groups, and B. Which has more instances of genetic defect vs who has more gene diversity in the community/culture. Participants will complete surveys pertaining to: relationship satisfaction, levels of jealousy, feelings of support, levels of commitment, feelings of intimacy, and community involvement. Additionally, for the promotion of social wellbeing we then compare the populations domestic violence prevalence in monogamous versus CNM relationships. It would be socially beneficial if less partners were killed due to DV and it may lead to insights on jealousy.  
 **Anticipated Results**  
 The prediction from this research is that CNM populations have more genetic variation and less genetic defect. I also predict we would see less domestic violence in populations with CNM due to less romantic restriction and lower levels of jealousy.

**Conclusion**  
 Such findings would substantiate that CNM would be advantages for humans as a species to encourage genetic diversity and have less defect. Regarding social wellbeing, when people can surpass the need for survival and feel competent in their resources enough to be altruistic, it benefits the entire community. If monogamy is no longer the only way to preserve our race, maybe it is time we look for ways to improve our life, not just survive.

**References**  
http://www.apa.org. (2018). Marriage and Divorce. [online] [Accessed 23 Apr. 2018].

Barash, D. (2016.). Out of Eden. 1st ed. Oxford University Press;, p.11  
Dr. Elisabeth Sheff, C. (2018). Three Waves of Non-Monogamy: A Select History of Polyamory   
 in the United States. [online] Elisabeth Sheff. [Accessed 23 Apr. 2018].

Hammer, M. (2008). Sex-Biased Evolutionary Forces Shape Genomic Patterns of Human   
 Diversity. [online] PLOS. [Accessed 24 Apr. 2018].

Mogilski, J., Memering, S., Welling, L. and Shackelford, T. (2018). Monogamy versus   
 Consensual Non-Monogamy: Alternative Approaches to Pursuing a Strategically   
 Pluralistic Mating Strategy.