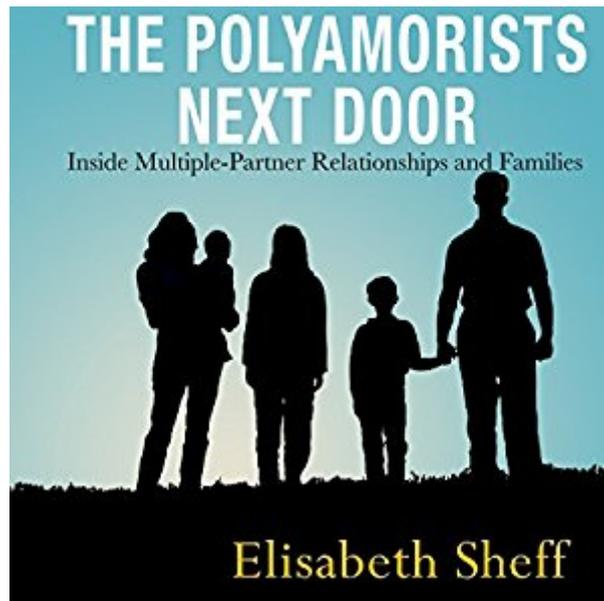


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# The Polyamorists Next Door: Inside Multiple-Partner Relationships And Families



## Synopsis

Marriage and monogamy are not what they used to be, and today many couples are opting to start families before getting married, or deciding not to get married at all. At the same time, gay couples in states that recognize same-sex marriage are getting married in droves. Some people prefer non-monogamy and have relationships that include swinging and polyamory. The landscape of American marriage and relationships is changing, and a variety of family systems are developing and becoming more common. *The Polyamorists Next Door* introduces polyamorous families, in which people are free to pursue emotional, romantic, and sexual relationships with multiple people at the same time. They do it openly and with support from their partners, sometimes forming multi-partner relationships or other arrangements that allow for emotional and sexual freedom within the family system. In colorful and moving details, this audiobook explores how polyamorous relationships come to be, how they grow and change, how they manage the ins and outs of daily family life, and how they cope with the challenges they face both within their families and from society. Using polyamorists own words, Dr. Elisabeth Sheff examines polyamorous households and reveals their advantages, disadvantages, and the daily lives of those living in them. While polyamorous families are increasingly common, fairly little is known about them outside of their own social circles or of the occasional media sensationalism. This book provides information that will be useful for professionals with polyamorous clients, educators who wish to understand or teach polyamory, and especially people who wish to better understand polyamory themselves or explain it to their potential partners, adult children, or in-laws.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There is a lot of fascinating information in *The Polyamorists Next Door*, and many polyamorists will enjoy reading it to see the results of Dr. Sheff's studies of polyamory. Poly parents will find interesting (and useful!) information in the sections on children raised in poly families. However at the end of the day, this book isn't written for us. Instead, it is the book polyamory has needed for decades. A book written not for people who want to be polyamorous, but for monogamists who want to understand polyamory. You know the question that pops up in every poly forum eventually – "What book can I get for my (parents/friends/siblings/friends) to help them understand polyamory?" The answer is: this one. Brace for Science-Speak. This is not a coffee table book. This is not light reading. This is a book written by a professional researcher. And it shows. Books like this take me so long to read because academics and researchers are really good at writing for other academics and researchers. Unfortunately, the writing style used in academics and research is not what the rest of us are used to. Complex sentences are the norm in this book. Reading it, there were many times when I had to stop and re-read a seemingly simple sentence. I know every word in this sentence, it is perfectly grammatical. Why can I not understand what she is saying? I did, eventually, figure it out. Let me clear say: this is not a criticism of Dr. Sheff's writing. This is the norm for popular sciences books (as well as philosophy, and several other fascinating subjects). Some professions just seem to lead to a very complicated writing style.

What I believe to be the first book of its kind, *The Polyamorists Next Door* looks at a growing relationship style, the benefits and risks associated with it, and what it means to a world at large. Sheff starts with an explanation of what polyamory is at the very basic level, giving a snap shot of many of the forms it might take, explaining the communities that are created because of it, and what understanding and accepting this relationship could mean in terms of a more peaceful society at large. No where does she make the claim that everyone should be polyamorous (in fact, she is quite clear that it is NOT the choice for everyone - herself included), nor that it is a relationship structure without trouble. What she does do is explain it in plain terms, focusing on many of the people she has studied over the years to give vivid examples of starts, middles and endings of polyamorous relationships. Taking it step further, which I was ecstatic to see, Sheff discusses the effects of parental polyamorous relationships on children. What does it mean to a young child to see Mom have two husbands, to see a family comprised of Mom, Dad, Othermother and Otherfather, to

see some other mix of multiple adults in a family? What does it mean in terms of their mental and social growth? The short answer: benefits can be great; risks exist; plan accordingly. In the end, Sheff concludes that relationship structures change over time, and in order to survive the changing course of relationships, taking the successes and skills that can be learned from polyamorists is a beneficial way to go. Learning to focus on "honesty, compassion, freedom, self-responsibility, forming an ethical framework to guide interactions and decision making.

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