



Many Love: A Memoir of Polyamory and Finding Love(s)

Sophie Lucido Johnson

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In this bold, illustrated memoir, a young woman shares both a personal and sociological take on modern, “unconventional” love, exploring her own transformation from serial monogamist to proud polyamorist.

After trying for years to emulate the kind of relationship her parents had—married happily for forty years—Sophie Lucido Johnson realized that maybe the love she was looking for was down a road less traveled.

In *Many Love*, Sophie delivers a fresh look at polyamory: its history, its misconceptions, and its new relevance among the many millennials embracing non-monogamous relationships. With a series of caring partners all the way from her high school sweetheart to her current fiancé, Sophie explores her sexuality and the very nature of love itself, questioning everything we’ve all been taught about relationships. She shares each of her revelations—sometimes painful, sometimes hilarious—and ultimately uncovers the incredible power of making room for all kinds of love in one’s life.

Complete with informative charts (did you know there are *five* distinct types of jealousy?) and witty illustrations, *Many Love* is an empowering, heartwarming memoir offering a memorable glimpse into an unconventional life.

Many Love: A Memoir of Polyamory and Finding Love(s) Details

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Author : Sophie Lucido Johnson

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From Reader Review Many Love: A Memoir of Polyamory and Finding Love(s) for online ebook

Dan says

I liked this book quite a bit.

It's kind of written as an introduction to polyamory, and it's honestly not the best at being a comprehensive guide, but it is also actually really well-written and enjoyable to read, which just can't be said about a lot of the other books in this genre.

So I probably won't start recommending this as the go to nonmonogamy 101 text, but I am really glad I read it.

And there were definitely a few new ideas in it, and she really fleshes out some ideas that other people talked about more theoretically with some concrete examples and personal experience. Like, I've heard people talk about treating their friendships more like Relationships, but this book gave me a clearer idea of what that could look like in action.

There's a part where the author's interacting with the poly scene in Chicago at a time when I was poly and living in Chicago but not interacting with that scene, which I guess feels weird for me to read, like I simultaneous feel very close and very disconnected from the subject matter.

Touchstone Books says

Fresh, funny, original, and incredibly insightful about all relationships—polyamorous or otherwise.

Lara Blackman says

A touching, sharp and witty look at polyamory through one young woman's journey - you'll laugh, cry, and think deeply about your own relationships, plus enjoy over 100 original illustrations. A truly great read :)

Jenny (Reading Envy) says

I have friends in poly relationships and thought this book sounded interesting, a way to learn more. Most people will tell you to read *The Ethical Slut: A Guide to Infinite Sexual Possibilities* if you are interested in polyamory, but as this book's author explains, it really is focused on the sex part of polyamory, and to her, while sex is present it is not the point. (TES also serves as more of a how-to guide, and I wasn't interested for that reason, just curious how people who make it work actually make it work.)

This book would be an okay place to start if you don't know a lot about polyamory but are curious about it, because the author started out pretty naive about it herself, and includes that journey in the book. I only know

about it through other people so while this narrative confirms what I've learned from others (mainly - polyamory requires constant communication and major jealousy maintenance), I appreciated Johnson's perspective and individual thinking on some elements.

Along the lines of what I call jealousy maintenance, Sophie explains the concept of "processing."

'Processing' is probably the most important word in most early polyamorous relationships. It's a euphemism that refers to what people do when they know they shouldn't be mad, but everything in their body is telling them to be mad.

She talks about navigating the first time someone you love falls for someone else, which is the ultimate moment that must be navigated carefully if you are truly going to be polyamorous and not just a serial monogamist or someone who doesn't commit.

Other things I found interesting - the ebb and flow of relationships, especially the drifting off of the primary or central lover in a natural way (I think monogamist people like me tend to think all relationships are forever; polygamists often accept that most relationships come to a natural end. Some, but not all.) Bed death. Post-lover friendships. Living arrangements. Whether or not it's all the same as friendship intimacy (I'm not sure I fully agree with her point of view on this one but I appreciated it!)

One little note - Goodreads shelved this as a graphic novel, and I would say that while there are illustrations by the author periodically through the text, and they are delightful, there are also entire pages of text, unless the review copy is hugely different from the final version. This is heavier on memoir than graphics, in case that matters to you.

Thanks to the publisher for granting access through Edelweiss. This came out June 26, 2018.

Madeleine (Top Shelf Text) says

Note: Top Shelf Text received a free copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

I'll admit, this book was a little out of my wheelhouse, but it came highly recommended and turned out to be a fascinating read. The author writes about her journey from failed monogamous relationships to discovering polyamory and navigating the various facets of relationship anarchy. The memoir is written as though you're sitting down for coffee with a girlfriend, and it was so helpful and accessible to readers like me, who have no experience with polyamory, but lots of questions. I came away with a better understanding of why people choose to be polyamorous, and I'd recommend this to anyone curious about the topic.

Naomi Ruth says

This was a really good read, very engaging. I didn't want to put it down! I especially loved her chapter "Just Friends" because I related to it. so. much. It really helped me understand my own relationship models. Also, love the concept of relationship anarchy and was happy that on one of the charts she included asexuals
happy smile A wonderful read and very important one!

Luke HoardeGalvan says

This is the book you should read this summer! A refreshing look at how love can work in 2018.

Danielle says

Well, I gave this a quick read because it sounded like an interesting look at social and relationship dynamics that don't get written about very often but maybe I missed something. 'Married, heterosexual woman had some girl crushes in college and now has close, platonic female friends' doesn't sound all that new or interesting to me and, unless I missed a chapter or something, that's what this book seems to be about. It was also really disjointed which made it annoying to read.

Kelsey says

Read and fell in love immediately. Sophie is so funny, talented, honest, thoughtful, and brave. Cannot wait for everyone to read this.

Janelle | She Reads with Cats says

Many thanks to Touchstone Books for providing my free copy of MANY LOVE by Sophie Lucido Johnson - all opinions are my own.

The great thing about reading memoirs is I get to learn something new or at least learn a new perspective, so I usually like to read a variety. MANY LOVE is an honest and refreshing take on love and relationships - I absolutely enjoyed it! It's enlightening, evocative, witty, insightful, and fascinating!

Johnson is a clever writer and illustrator who brings to light how she went from serial monogamist to a proud polyamorist. I love how she defines the term and explains the meaning as "many love" not "many sex". We follow her transformation from a monogamous marriage to polyamorous relationships, not focusing on finding "the one". Ultimately, this book is also about friendships, sexuality, jealousy, and how society perceives others' relationships.

The overall construction of the memoir is brilliant. The drawings add depth and humor to the narrative. Johnson is delightfully charming and her personality really shines through. Case in point, I actually laughed-out-loud when she used the fictitious name Rory from the Gilmore Girls to protect the identity of other people. Johnson includes a FAQ section, commentary notes, and the culture and history of polyamory, all along with comic style drawings on almost every page. MANY LOVE is a provocative, interesting, and illustrated memoir I highly recommend to anyone looking for a new perspective on love.

Andrienne says

Another honest book about a person's journey to find the right relationship fit. Love already has its complications so it just follows that a multiplication of it does not decrease the issues attached to it. She brings up jealousy, sex, friendships and offers distinctions from other relationship types.

Access to review copy provided by the publisher.

Jessica Woodbury says

Recently I tried to read a novel about a couple that opens up their relationship. I couldn't do it. They were doing it all wrong, they were making terrible choices, they were setting themselves up for disaster, and it just kept bothering me that people would read this book and think that this was how nonmonogamy worked. I care about this because I've been nonmonogamous myself for the last few years and I've heard too many stories of people cheating on their spouses and then trying to excuse themselves by claiming they're not cut out for monogamy. (That's not how any of this works.)

Usually when people read about polyamory it's because they are attempting to be polyamorous. A lot of the books in the space are more how-to books than anything else. But Johnson's book is the first I've come across that isn't trying to be that kind of book, it may be useful for people interested in polyamory, but mostly it's for people who may have never even heard of polyamory before. Which is great! We really need that kind of book! Especially one full of personal experiences and illustrations.

I did really enjoy this book, but I also found myself somewhat frustrated by its structure. It isn't told in chronological order but instead by concepts like love and jealousy. This has us jumping around through Johnson's romantic life in a way that can occasionally feel dizzying. And sometimes it feels like Johnson recounting stories of all her ex's, though the narrative of a person's love life is usually only interesting to that person. In addition, Johnson tells her own story but also spends time explaining much of the language and beliefs within polyamory, it jumps back and forth from being specific to general. It's a worthy goal but it had its downsides. While Johnson often acknowledges that polyamory can take many different forms, she mostly does that in the more instructive sections. When reading her personal stories it can feel like her version of polyamory is the only one. (For example, she mentions parallel polyamory and explains it but it's also not how she practices and she's rather quick to dismiss it, implying it's unfeeling and less valid, which was rather grating to me since that's how my relationships are formed.)

Still, I definitely learned things and found myself thinking about a lot about myself and my relationships while reading. I particularly enjoyed Johnson's approach to love, one I hadn't really seen before but that aligned very nicely with a lot of what I've been pondering lately. It gave me insight into new approaches I hadn't really thought about before. I suspect that for monogamous readers there will be a lot of interesting things to consider, especially those in their 20's.

I read an early version on my kindle and sometimes the formatting left a little to be desired to fit in the illustrations with the text, I'm not sure if this will be true in the final kindle version, but I'd suggest attempting to read it in print if possible.

Anna says

This was (accidentally) a perfect companion read to the novel I just finished. Part memoir, part graphic novel with tons of research tossed in- it definitely was an entertaining read. The chapters are divided up almost topically, which for me made it a bit confusing since the life events she described throughout were not happening chronologically

Sarah says

Such an excellent take on love and relationships. It confirmed so much for this reader. Everyone loves differently. Having been in long monogamous relationships, complicated situationships and even married, I now know a single person cannot be everything and all for you. You receive love, even if it's platonic from all forms of friendships. Having been married and divorced I now realize the greatest loves have been my friendships. Every relationship has been a life lesson. Sophie did a phenomenal job in this book often citing sources from books I have already read (some have been added to by my TBR piled) and adding her personal experiences. The graphics were a great supplement even though it was hard to read them on a kindle (sigh). Sophie's writing voice is loud and clear. It's as if you were in a bar with your closest friend who you have so much love for, drinking a moscow mule discussing the state of your relationship(s). After reading Esther Perel's book on infidelity, this was a great compliment. The polyamory take was an interesting perspective but feels a need to have a follow up book on the topic itself. It seems super complicated with two consenting adults who are 100% self aware of themselves, which seems hard. There are some great quotes which I've highlighted after yelling YES on a crowded train. Currently writing a follow up essay in response to this book. Look forward to reading more of Sophie's work. This is a great first memoir.

lit.erary.britt says

This is part memoir, part explanation of the many ways polyamory can exist. Johnson writes candidly about relationships, inserting sketches that add to the narrative. She's funny, talented, and thoughtful. I loved how the folks she didn't want to name were referred to as Rory (a nod to Gilmore Girls). Though polyamory is not for me, I respect that it can work, and I appreciate Johnson putting herself out there.

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Thanks, NetGalley!
