

ENTERTAINMENT

Polygamy: Has the Media Glorified It?

Aislinn Murphy, Staff Writer



the cast of *Sister Wives*, http://www.starmagazine.com/media/originals/sisterwives_425.jpg

Many of you may be familiar with a show called *Sister Wives* that is featured on TLC, a reality show based on a polygamist relationship between a man and his three—soon to be four—wives. Many people are disturbed, and some outraged, that this series is allowed to be aired on television, but this isn't the only show in today's society that portrays polygamy. HBO's *Big Love* features a fictional Mormon polygamist family in Utah, and Fox's *Lone Star* has a main character on the verge of being a polygamist. Being in a polygamist relationship, which involves marrying more than one person, or a polyamorous relationship, a non-marital relationship with more than one person, is both more common and more discussed in today's society.

Being in a serious relationship myself, I understand that it is difficult for most people to wrap their minds around being in a serious relationship with more than one person. Understanding polygamy is easier when you get input from someone who is actually in a polyamorous relationship or has been in one in the past. Three students who wish to remain anonymous (who are referred to as Britney and Cindy in this article; Lucy did not want to participate) are currently in such a relationship. I asked Britney and Cindy the following questions:

What does being in a polyamorous relationship mean to you? When asked about what a polyamorous relationship meant to her, Cindy replied with, "Being in a polyamorous relationship means that I don't have to ignore my feelings towards other people, but I can acknowledge them without the strain of losing my current relation-

ship." Cindy had been in a relationship with her girlfriend Lucy for quite some time, but when she met Britney she decided that her relationship with Lucy is too important to end, but she also didn't want to lose a possible romantic relationship with Britney.

Do you think being in a polygamous or polyamorous relationship is more common today? If so, do you think that the media has had an effect? Britney did not know for sure whether or not they were more common today, but Cindy on the other hand thought "I do think that polyamorous relationships are on the rise and have gained more media attention, but I don't think the attention has been positive or fair towards people who are in stable polyamorous relationships."

I asked Courtney Hewett, a fellow Meredith student who has never been in a polyamorous relationship, how she felt about polygamy in the media. She responded, "I definitely think it's more glorified. I mean there are all of these reality shows about it. You see it a lot. I'm sure that really puts the idea in people's heads more."

Both those who have been polygamists and those who have never been in such a relationship seem to agree that the media is having an effect on the exposure of polygamous and polyamorous relationships, and perhaps not a completely positive one. Before you judge polygamy by how they are presented on cable TV shows, do more research and you will find that if someone is in that type of relationship, it is usually completely different than the media version.

Commencement: A Fresh, Fictional Approach on Life at a Women's College (A Review)

Amy Hruby, Editor

Commencement is a story of four women who meet as freshmen at Smith College and forge a friendship that lasts long after they graduate. Beginning on move-in day of their freshmen year, the book follows Celia, Bree, Sally and April—four girls who have nothing in common except their age and close living quarters.

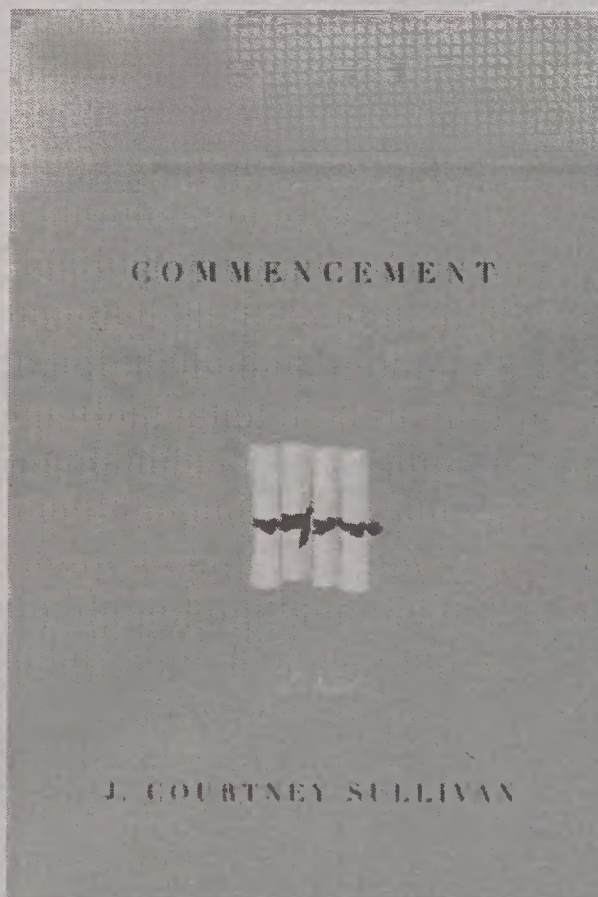
While the novel spent most of the summer flying off of the "Beach Reads" table at Barnes and Noble, it works hard to transcend "chick-lit" and offers a poignant examination of

female friendship and of the complex choices young women are now making in their college and early professional years. The author, J. Courtney Sullivan, is an alum of Smith College and portrays the setting well, offering a believable women's college atmosphere that any Meredith College student would find relatable.

The novel's strong points include its handling of feminist themes (main character April is more radical than any feminist I've ever come across) and explorations of sexuality (readers

see the love and challenges in leading woman Bree's lesbian relationship), but the book falls short with its few male characters, leaving them flat, lackluster and less than believable.

Commencement is great for any Meredith College student looking for a relatable read that's a nice break from studying. Once read, it'll probably end up being passed amongst friends and creating arguments about which one is the Celia, Bree, Sally or April of the group.



Disclaimer: A free copy of this book was provided for review by Anchor Books.

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