

A bright yellow-green circle containing the text "book club kit" in a bold, dark purple font.

**book  
club  
kit**

# **open**

**an uncensored memoir  
of love, liberation,  
and non-monogamy**

**rachel  
krantz**

**“[A] starkly naked story of a young woman’s adventure of  
self-discovery. This book will help a lot of people.”**

**—Dr. Christopher Ryan, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Sex at Dawn***

# Discussion Questions

1. Did you have any opinions on non-monogamous relationships before reading *Open*? Have your views changed? If so, what insight did you gain?
2. Krantz explores ways in which current cultural views of sex and marriage are archaic and patriarchal. Do you agree with her assessment?
3. Krantz is very forthcoming about her own feelings of jealousy about her primary partner's other relationships. Jealousy also occurs in monogamous relationships; how do you think non-monogamy impacted Krantz's feelings of jealousy? Do you think there is an amount of jealousy that is healthy for relationships? Is it possible to have a relationship without jealousy?
4. After reading *Open*, do you think non-monogamous relationships are more prevalent than cultural convention might suggest?
5. The idea of freedom is addressed throughout. Do you think non-monogamy offers more or less freedom than monogamy? Do you experience a tension between freedom and romantic love in your life, and, if so, how do you navigate that?
6. Krantz explores gaslighting in the context of non-monogamous relationships. Do you think the non-monogamous relationship style played into her experience of gaslighting? Why or why not?
7. *Open* explores gender dynamics within the context of a non-monogamous relationship. How did gendered roles impact the dynamic between Adam and Krantz? Do you perceive a tension between feminist values and a desire for submission in a romantic relationship?
8. Adam and Krantz explored an unspoken BDSM dynamic together. What are the dangers of this type of relationship without rules and boundaries being made explicit? Why did

Adam and Krantz avoid defining their boundaries? Have you experienced difficulty with boundaries in your personal relationships? What did you learn from *Open* about setting boundaries within a romantic context?

9. Krantz depicted many styles of non-monogamy in this book. Did any of them appeal to you? If so, what need or desire do you think they would fulfill?
10. Non-monogamy is considered taboo by mainstream culture. What are the historical reasons for this relationship style being discriminated against by the mainstream? What challenges do non-monogamous people face in their everyday lives? Do you think cultural norms should change so that these relationships are recognized legally and socially? Why or why not?

# An interview with Rachel Krantz

- 1. 21% of US single adults have reportedly been in polyamorous relationships. Why do you think people are increasingly seeking out relationships that push love beyond the traditional borders of monogamy?**

Mainly because monogamy isn't working for most people. Despite the stereotype that men are more likely to cheat, women report cheating at equal or higher rates to men, and are more likely to lose interest sexually in long-term live-in relationships. Most people who are "dating" have practiced non-monogamy, in that there is often some unspoken overlap between partners. Serial monogamy is of course common, and half of marriages end in divorce. I think people are looking for ways to have long-term committed partnerships without giving up all future romantic and sexual novelty.

- 2. How do you identify? What's your take on labels as they relate to your sexuality? Do you find them helpful? Limiting? Both?**

I'm still wary of labels, but increasingly feel there is also power in owning them. I'm comfortable calling myself a bisexual polyamorous woman. Bisexual means the same to me as pansexual, potentially attracted to all genders. I just know who I like when I meet them! I feel that more than anything, I am "fluid." I can go through periods of physical monogamy in a relationship (like during the pandemic), but emotionally, I think I will always be non-monogamous.

- 3. What drew you to explore a polyamorous relationship?**

Serial monogamy was my pattern, and I was tired of it. I couldn't imagine wanting to commit to just one person for the rest of my life, but I also wanted to find my "missing half," the way I'd been conditioned to. When Adam suggested that I could have my cake and eat the pie too, I decided it was time to try something different. He was experienced, and I knew it was an opportunity to have someone help me explore a different way of being in relationships.

**4. What's the most common misconception that monogamous people have about polyamory?**

There are so many misconceptions: that it is only about sex, or for people in relationships that are unsatisfying on their own. That it always ends badly. The truth is, there are just as many kinds of polyamorous relationships as there are monogamous ones—and the motivations and outcomes are just as varied as any other situation of two or more people coming together.

**5. What are some challenging aspects of being in a polyamorous relationship, and how did you work through them?**

My jealousy was the most difficult aspect of polyamory for me with Adam, though that was exacerbated by the lack of good communication between us. I think my story shows just how much clear and kind communication matters in any relationship, but maybe especially in non-monogamous ones, where you're attempting something so challenging. We did not work through our issues very well because we couldn't start from a place of mutual respect and gentleness. Now that I'm in a very different dynamic where I feel safe, jealousy feels much more manageable—even sometimes a little exciting.

**6. What most surprised you about being in a polyamorous relationship?**

That it opened me up so much to so many different ways of being in relationships, and of being in love. I came into my queerness, discovered I was into far more kinks than I realized, and also learned that there is a difference between emotional intimacy and partnered commitment. I realized I don't have to do anything I was taught I had to do—like get married or have kids—in order to arrive at my adult life.

**7. What's one thing you would tell people who are interested in exploring non-monogamy in their own lives?**

I think you should go for it—but have lots of support! Read books like *Open*, *The Ethical Slut*, and *Love in Abundance*. Listen to podcasts like *Multiamory* and try to find a therapist or counselor who either specializes in non-monogamy or is listed as a kink-friendly therapist. It's also a great idea to join polyamorous and/or swinger Facebook groups and local meetups to have a sense of community norms, and a place to go to ask questions.

**8. What do you hope readers will gain from learning about your experience?**

I hope readers will see that they should be able to write their own “Happily Ever After,” and that there are LOTS of options in between total monogamy and relationship-anarchy-style polyamory. For example, women with men might be surprised to learn that it is such a common fantasy for many men to see their partner with another man—but that’s rarely talked about! Seems like a win-win, even for women who don’t want to deal with jealousy. There’s swinging, there’s primary/secondary polyamory, there are relationships that are only open on one side. Reading *Open*, you get a taste of what all these options might look like and some of the pros and cons. I also hope my book will show the consequences of not communicating clearly about power dynamics in relationships, and give ideas for how to practice BDSM more safely.

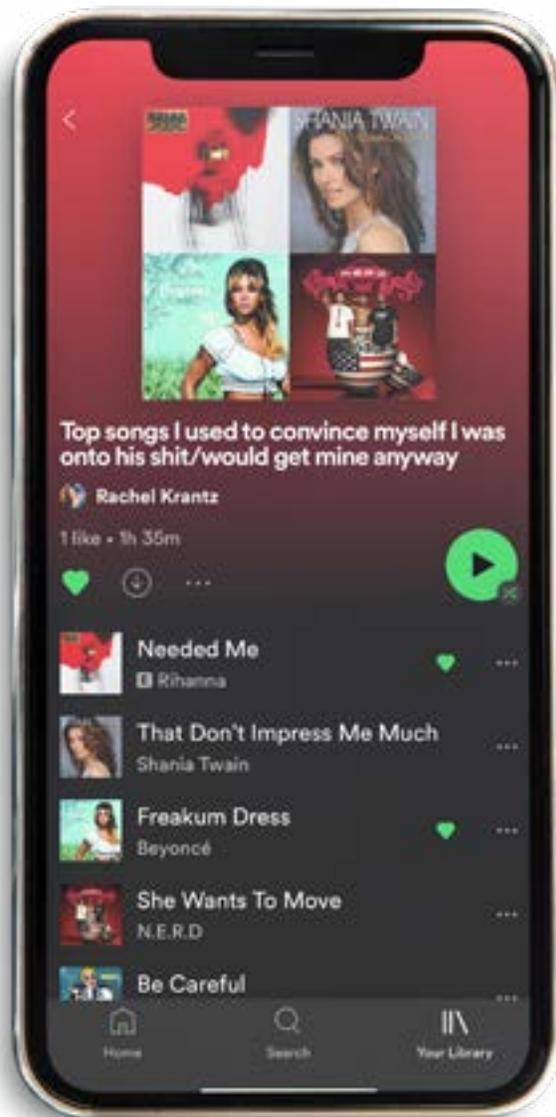
**Join the conversation online:**

  **@rachelkrantz**

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# Playlist:

**Top songs I used to convince myself I was onto his shit and would get mine anyway**

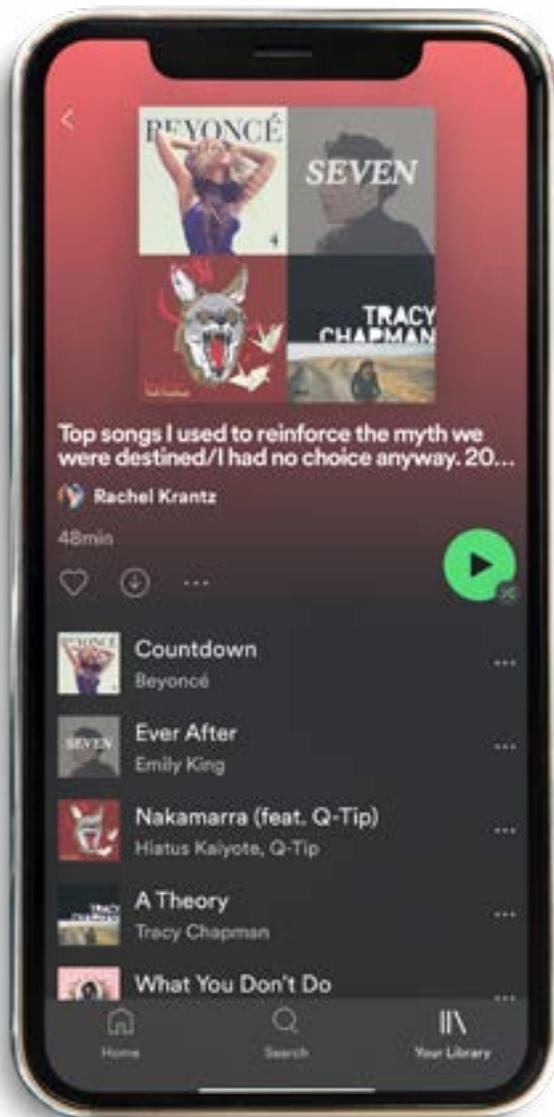


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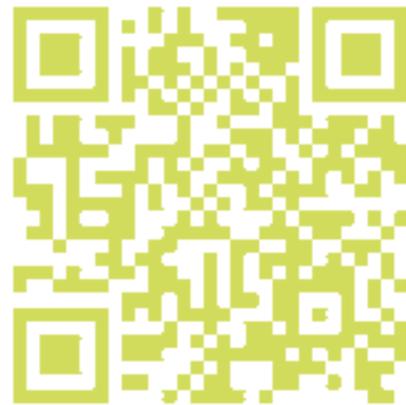


# Playlist:

**Top songs I used to reinforce the myth we were destined/I had no choice anyway**

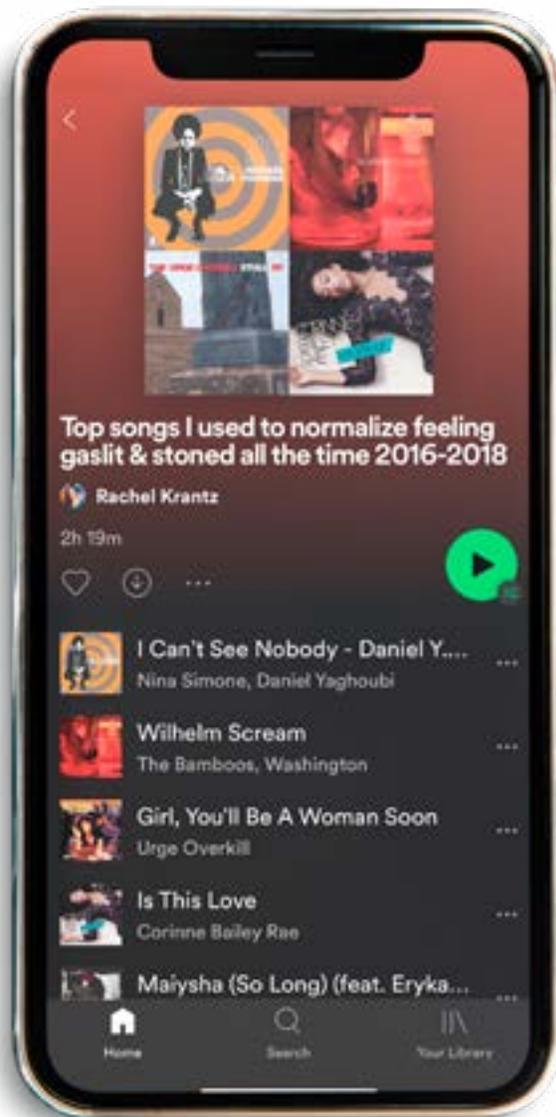


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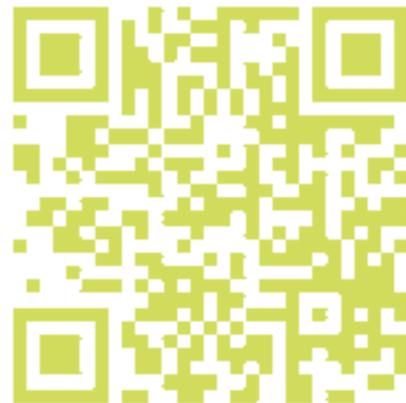


# Playlist:

**Top songs I used to normalize feeling gaslit & stoned all the time**



**Click here to play:**



# Discussion questions from playlists

1. How do you think the lyrics of these playlists' songs were reinforcing Rachel's mental state? What does her quoting from Lizzo's song "Soulmate" at the end of the book suggest about the lesson she's learned?
2. Can you relate to any of these playlists or songs more than others? What are some of your go-to songs that fall into some of these categories?
3. Do you think you'll start listening to any different songs or try cutting out others after seeing how much lyrics might affect someone's mindset?

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