



An Introduction to Amatonormativity

What is Amatonormativity?

Amatonormativity is the assumption that a central, exclusive, romantic relationship is normal for humans, and is a universally shared goal. The term was coined by feminist academic Elizabeth Brake in her book "Minimizing Marriage."

How is Amatonormativity Harmful?

Amatonormativity affects everyone, whether we realize it or not. Many people feel lost, guilty, or unloved when they're not in a romantic relationship because they've been taught to prioritize romance over other kinds of love. Other people may feel pressured to only pursue monogamous romantic relationships, when other relationship types work better for them.

Amatonormativity can also result in romantic couples isolating themselves from the rest of their social network in order to prioritize their relationship. These are all detrimental impacts of amatonormativity.

Aromantic and polyamorous people are particularly affected by amatonormativity because their identities and relationship models don't fit the narrative of having and prioritizing an exclusive romantic relationship.



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What does Amatonormativity look like?



Amatonormativity comes in many forms. Some common examples include:

- Friends and family insisting that you should “find someone and settle down”
- Polyamorous relationships being viewed as unhealthy
- Married people being given special legal and financial benefits
- People prioritizing their romantic relationships over friends and family

What can you do to counter amatonormativity?

- Always ask before assuming your romantic partner is also invited to social events
- Reflect on how and why you prioritize certain relationships
- Educate yourself on aromantic and polyamorous issues

To learn more about aromanticism and amatonormativity check out www.aromanticism.org



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