

A black and white photograph of a woman's legs from the waist down, wearing pink, ruffled underwear. She is standing on a wooden ledge or window sill, with her feet crossed at the ankles. The background is a bright window with a white frame.

LOVE/SEX

Three's a Crowd? Maybe Not

By Lori Fradkin

Q: So why an open marriage?

A: My husband and I got married to take care of each other, to love and support one another, have a kid together. Having sex with other people in no way affects my ability or my desire to have that.

Q: How did you lay the ground rules?

A: First we said no one in town, no strangers at the house, no last names. But the main thing is there should be no surprises. Be prepared to change the rules—for example, my girlfriend lives in town—and talk out every possible scenario ad nauseam.

Q: What's your relationship with your girlfriend like?

A: She's basically like my best friend, only sometimes I sleep with her.

Q: Does your husband date, too?

A: Nope. I often say, "Are you sure this is OK?" And he always says, "Just because I'm not interested doesn't mean you're not."

Q: What do you tell your 9-year-old daughter?

A: I tell her I'm staying at my girlfriend's house. She doesn't know we're hooking up. And eventually, she'll just learn that's how things work in our house. When she asks, we'll just say, "Everybody chooses to live and love and put together their families in different ways. This is how we put together ours."

YES, WE ALL GREW UP with the same princess fantasy: First comes love, then comes marriage, and eventually... happily ever after. Unfortunately for many of us, that fantasy ends in divorce court. But suburban mother Jenny Block, who three years into her marriage had an affair with another woman, tried something different: She and her husband would stay together but also date other people. Block, author of a new book called *Open: Love, Sex, and Life in an Open Marriage*, tells MC how they made it work.