**Defining Sexuality: Evidence Log**

**Before reading Foucault’s “We Other Victorians”, write down your initial perception, position, or thoughts on the following essential question:**

1. **What is the relationship between individual identity and assigned identity?**

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|  | **Making Connection to Essential Question** | **Evidence from the Video or Article** |
| Title | How does this selection relate to the essential question “(3+ sentences): What is the relationship between individual identity and assigned identity? | Copy at least 3-4 specific statements or passages from the selection that helped you make your connection. (Include when it was said in the case of videos.) |
| 1/25: Michel Foucault, “’We Other Victorians.’” | Foucault presents the repressive hypothesis which describes sexual identity as only beginning in the Victorian era. Almost paradoxically, this same hypothesis states that sexuality was not talked about outside of references to “the bedroom.” Certain identities were illegitimate but simultaneously never discussed.  The relationship here is that the repressive hypothesis posits assigned identities as being the only ones that mattered to victorians. For example, the medicalization of sexuality provides a strict set of conditions which would help identify deviants. | “A single locus of sexuality was acknowledged in social space as well as at the heart of every household, but it was a utilitarian and fertile one: the parents’ bedroom.”  “If it was truly necessary to make room for illegitimate sexualities, it was reasoned, let them take their infernal mischief elsewhere”  “At the beginning of the seventeenth century a certain frankness was still common, it would seem” |
| 1/27: Robert Buffington, “Introduction” | Before social constructionism took hold, many ideas about human sexuality were essentialist, and had to do with what was natural. This meant that people’s identities were assigned essentially by scientists and if they fell outside some classification then they were part of some “natural” sexual difference.  Sexuality is influenced by many social relations and even our identities influenced by these societal defined labels.  The cultural attitudes of a particular country greatly influence what is considered normal and what identities people are willing to identify with. | “By the early 1970s, the intellectual tide had begun to turn as ‘social constructionists’ such as philosipher-historian Michel Foucault developed compelling critiques of ‘essentialist’ notions of human sexuality…”  ...Jeffrey Weeks summarized social constructionism with five broad categories of social relations, which are both constructed around and in turn shape and reshape sex and gender relations.  “In early twentieth-century Japan, for example, nation building prompted an obsession with all things modern (including the perceived need to modernize sexual attitudes and behaviors) and a rejection of backwardness ( including traditional sexual attitudes and behaviors) whether at home or in the colonies of the nascent Japanese empire.” |
| 1/30: Sabine Frühstück, “Sexuality and the Nation-State” | There is a tendency to look outwards and compare our cultures to other cultures. Often, this is to justify or invalidate our identities and our assigned identities.  People sometimes alter their appearance to fit some assigned identity even if that does not match with their own identity. | “Some investigators have focused their search for ‘others’ elsewhere than on their own national sexual cultures. These are frequently double edged. While early Western ethnographers of sexualities often used their findings to reconfirm preconceived notions of other sexual cultures’ primitivism and backwardness, many also employed their insights regarding other sexual cultures to criticize Euro-American puritanism, rigidity, and hypocrisy.”  “As historian Peter Boag notes, the decision to change their gender or sexual identity “simply felt natural to some men and women, while women sometimes found it useful to dress as men in order to travel safely or make a decent income” |
| 2/1: Shosh Shlam and Hilla Medalia, “Where Being A Single Woman is Not Okay” (video) | Here Huamei is labelled as a “leftover woman”, old and unattractive despite herself being a successful lawyer and college graduate. She is expected to be submissive and let the man in the relationship make the decisions. Here it seems as though the people around her and the government do not approve of the lifestyle associated with her individual identity. Individual identity becomes a tool used by others to assign value and thus an imposed identity. | 0:40 “Also you’re really old”  1:39 “women who are still single at 27 or older are labeled ‘leftover women”  4:17 “…every man in Shangdong is a male chauvinist”  4:33 “I want to be dominant in the family” |
| 2/6: “Scientist or Storyteller?” and Cody Delistraty, “Untangling the Complicated, Controversial Legacy of Sigmund Freud.” | The importance to individual identity comes in the form of the medicalization of sexuality. For the first time patients were allowed to view their sexuality as a separate aspect of their “true” identity, something that can be analyzed separately and treated. The assigned identities here would be now less ‘criminal’ and more ‘individual with stunted sexual development.’ | “Freud believed that the sexual organs were connected to the nose, and sexual “issues,” particularly masturbation, were principle causes of neurotic maladies, and that they could sometimes be solved by nasal surgery.”  “Freud was a master of words and socio-cultural insights. His genius was to bend science toward them.”  “And, just by placing sexual desire and perversions into a ‘scientific’ context, Freud freed sexuality from the largely religious context that focused on its moral degeneration or inherent criminality. His theories, therefore, often allowed people to feel more comfortable with their sexuality, and to view it as separate from their core identity.”  “Perhaps it’s forever impossible to entirely discredit it Freud, hard as some might try. Even Crews was once a Freudian before he became disenchanted with Freud’s lack of empiricism and the fact that psychoanalysis permits any number of interpretations, all of them valid”  “Freud often worked backward, finding “scientific” excuses for various behaviors and then working to “prove” those theories.” |
| 2/8: Excerpt, Alfred Kinsey, “Sexual Behavior in the Human Male” |  | “Only the human mind invents categories and tries to force facts into separated pigeonholes”  “The homosexual has been a significant part of human sexual activity ever since the dawn of history, primarily because it is an expression of capacities that are basic in the human animal”  “The police force and court officials who attempt to enforce the sex laws, the clergymen and business men and every other group in the city which periodically calls for the enforcement of the laws – particularly the laws against ‘perversion’—have given a record of incidences and frequencies in the homosexual which are as high as those of the rest of the social level to which they belong” |
| 2/10: Joan Roughgarden, “The Theory of Evolution” | Evolutionary biologists have a tendency to take what a typical behavior, perceive it as natural, and construct an evolutionary explanation to naturalize such behavior. This logic is no different from those affiliated with repressed identities naturalizing the identities assigned to them. How fitting it is that “queer”, a once (and still) derogatory term assigned to people with “unnatural” sexual practices is now being used as an individual identity and “natural” state of being. “Born with it” the banner reads. Should it really be the case now that the narrative to be believed by homophobes should be “queers can’t help it?” This implication works under the assumption of homophobia, not against it. | “Conversely, females are supposed to be choosy because their eggs are expensive, and hence they must guard their investment from being diluted with bad genes from an inferior male.”  “Same-sex sexuality is contrary to sexual selection theory, so the existence of homosexuality must be explained away as either an aberration or a deception.”  “The uncritical acceptance of sexual selection theory has led to underestimation of the extent of cooperation among animals, forcing scientists to construe all interactions between organisms as somehow competitive.” |

**How do these sources change or add to my initial thinking about the essential question?**

I enjoyed reading all of the sources.