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“Foreclosure/Erasure” of Claims-Making by the Everyday Life as Taken for Granted: Discourse Analysis about “Fictosexual” as Sexuality that does not Conform to “Sexual Orientation”

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Abstract^[1]

This article considers “foreclosure/erasure” of claims-making by the everyday life as taken for granted based on Judith Butler’s concept of “foreclosure” and asexuality studies. As a case study, this article analyzes the discourse surrounding “fictosexual,” a term coined to describe sexual attraction to fictional characters.

Someone who identifies as “fictosexual” has criticized sexualnormativity and amatonormativity from the very standpoint that they are attracted to fictional characters by using the coined term “interpersonally oriented sexuality” as a concept to refer to the sexual majority. However, others have called into question the validity of the category of “fictosexual” on the grounds that it is not an innate “sexual orientation” related to sexual and romantic interpersonal relationships. In addition, this article illustrates “erasure by incorporating into the majority,” which preserves the conventional interpretive scheme about sexuality by incorporating “fictosexual” into the framework of “otaku” or “romance.”

Keywords: Foreclosure/Erasure, Identity, Sexuality

1. The everyday life as taken for granted, and "Foreclosure/Erasure"

One argument within recent research surrounding issues of social disruption and exclusion involves "linking structural oppression with sensations that cannot currently be referred to as lived experience" (Asada, 2019:260). For these "sensations that cannot currently be referred to as lived experience", what instead should they be recognized as? Through a variant of this question, we can position the issue as a matter of how a specific set of circumstances is **not** recognized as social disruption. On this topic, Junko Kusayanagi references A. Schutz's statements regarding the self-evident nature of the everyday life—Schutz states that there is an "anti-disruption effect" present, wherein there is a tendency to "nullify attempts made to change

the status quo"; from this, Kusanayagi identifies the need for research focusing on this aspect of self-evidence that daily life carries within the scope of research done on social issues (Kusayanagi, 2015:74). This article takes up the baton of that identification, investigating the structural conditions of how this framework of interpretation based on self-evidence marginalizes certain types of people's existences, experiences, and anecdotes, as well as questioning whether and how much people's active efforts might be able to change this framework.

To elaborate on the "anti-disruption effect", Kusayanagi bases this term on concepts of "foreclosure" in the theory of Judith Butler. According to Butler, for a subject to be constructed, anything that would threaten that subject must be foreclosed upon (Butler, 1997-2015). Butler particularly notes that, before the formation of a heterosexual subject, the very possibility of any homosexual subject is excluded. Based on that framework, Kusayanagi classifies claims under the umbrella of "outside the bounds of normative thought patterns" within the concept of foreclosure (Kusayanagi, 2015:85). Furthermore, any claims that transgress these bounds of normative thought patterns simultaneously are interpreted by the listener as coming from an "Other" who cannot be easily understood, as well as act to reframe the construction of the speaking subject into a manner different from what it was before (Kusayanagi, 2015:90-91).

Though, as Hori Shingo points out in response to Kusayanagi's theory, it is more appropriate to approach Butler's definition of foreclosure from the lens that "rather than rendering claims-making invisible, it is incorporated as an underlying mechanism in the process of creating the subject of the claims-making" (Hori, 2015:52-53). Furthermore, "the self-evidence of daily life and the visibility of claims-making are not necessarily at odds with each other" (Hori, 2015:52). That is to say, the situation is likely "an immutable worldview of 'daily life' is maintained irrespective^[2] of any visible claims-making", or "issues arise in reality though they do not reach the level of being considered claims-making" (Hori, 2015:43). In this way, the foreclosure of claims through the self-evidence of the everyday life is not necessarily something that people would consider incomprehensible events. Additionally, this article borrows Butler's term of "erasure" to describe the situation of "being removed in advance, without requiring strong prohibitions to be put in place" (Matsuura, 2020b:128) to differentiate it from "foreclosure"⁽¹⁾.

Like the "exclusion" of homosexuality that arises from the existence of the heterosexuality / homosexuality binary, something that is "excluded" within a space of discourse is conversely framed by the prohibitions placed upon it, "on one hand continuing to be under prohibition and on the other having its existence strongly affirmed" (Matsuura, 2020b:130). Things that are "erased" are instead rendered invisible within discourse, with their existence not recognized even by the outline of words describing them.

Erasures of this kind slip through the cracks of dichotomized frameworks such as "Coming out/closeted, Claims-making/anything else^[3], and social issues/a world in which daily life is free of problems" (Hori, 2015:42-43). Therefore, Hori refers to the theory of Oka Makoto^[4]—which

follows from researchers looking at the way social issues are social constructs—arguing we must confront "Missed Chances^[5]" as "trauma-like behaviors that challenge the veracity of the epistemology researchers rely upon" (Hori, 2015:48). Incidentally, it is unlikely that researchers are the only ones experiencing "Missed Chances". As such, by focusing on "trauma-like behaviors that challenge the veracity of the epistemology researchers rely upon" people perform—in other words, things that can in some sense spark questions about the self-evidence of the world of the everyday and at the same time be described by or overlooked using the phrasing "Missed Chances"—it then becomes possible to analyze the phenomenon of erasure. By doing so, we can then examine via case studies the "anti-disruption effect" that the self-evidence of the daily life possesses.

2. Context for this research

With the above as a basis, this article analyzes the category of "fictosexual" with respect to the categories of sexuality, and those to whom the label applies. As will be detailed below, this term is used to describe either ① sexual attraction expressed toward fictitious targets, and not expressed toward other people, or ② the desire to engage with a fictional character in activities generally categorized as "sexual (erotic)" and/or "romantic".

These terms first saw use in Japanese spheres around the year 2017, on the Internet. In particular, the term "ace spectrum" (アセクシュアル・スペクトラム)^[6] (2) came to be recognized as comprised of or including the accounts of those who experience no sexual attraction towards other people in the physical world^[7]. Using that as context, we can denote that those under the fictosexual label are also marginalized by the system of values that treats eros^[8] as a matter of course (3). This sort of "prejudice that a normal human being obviously experiences sexual attraction to other human beings" is referred to as sexual normativity (性愛規範) and/or compulsory sexuality (強制的性愛) (Masuura, 2020a:90). Additionally, amatonormativity (恋愛伴侶規範) (4) is a term that condenses "the theory that a central and exclusive romantic relationship is normal for humans, as well as a common objective in life" (Brake, 2012-2019:157).

The experiences of ace people are often not captured within traditional frameworks of sexuality. We observe that ace communities, due to this, have the practice of coining new terms to describe the nature of sexuality and intimacy (5). This line of thought is the context for why the general concept of "fictosexual" is included within the ace spectrum. That said, the term "fictosexual" is not currently recognized by the general populace, and it is unclear if it will properly establish itself as such in the future. That this article focuses on the term regardless is because it allows us to encapsulate situations that prompt re-examination of interpretive frameworks of sexuality that have long been taken for granted. And precisely because it has no general recognition yet, it is conceivable that these situations are made all the more visible by the unsteady nature of definitions and interpretations.

2 (1) Interpretive frameworks of Sexuality^[9]

Before we begin analyzing interpretive frameworks of Sexuality, first, a review of prior research. Ishida Hitoshi uses the following categorization: "In our current time, the nature-related subjects that make up 'Natural^[10] Diversity' are Biological Sex, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity —elements of identity treated as 'innate', and defined as exclusive categories" (Ishida, 2006:164). Within movements fighting against homosexual discrimination, this framework of Gendering (ジェンダー化) accentuates the framing of Sexual Orientation as something immutable and innate.

This conceptualizing of Sexual Orientation holds important meaning to anti-discrimination movements. However, "this concept excludes those who do not prioritize gender when selecting for a partner and/or experience sparse erotic desires" (Ino, 2005:50), and additionally, placing Sexual Orientation into innate and mutually exclusive categories has drawn criticism for failing to connect with questioning social constructs regarding natures (Ishida, 2006) (6).

That said, much as the umbrella term "LGBT" frequently sees use, interpretive frameworks that use this innate and immutable concept of Sexual Orientation currently hold some influence. In that sense, the concept of the fictosexual is one that one can reasonably assume would come into conflict with the mainstream forms of interpretation currently in use. Primarily, it is not a categorization of sexual interest based on gender, which causes it to call outside of the general definition of Sexual Orientation. Further, as it involves creative works and products of literature, it is reasonable to think that it is not a good fit for interpreting Sexuality in terms of innate qualities and immutables (or, "Strategic Essentialism") (7).

2(2) Prior research on romantic/erotic activity involving fictional characters by fans of literature

In regards to this, it has been argued that romantic/erotic activities involving fictional characters by fans of literature should be linked to "Otaku" theory, research into fans of comics, and/or research on literature. For example, such claims point to how what the "Otaku" desires is different from that involving the physical human body (Saitou, 2000), or that the types of erotic fantasies one may possess can have a variety of relationships to one's identity and one's sexual practices in physical reality (Mamoru, 2010). However, these categories of "Otaku", "Fan", "Reader of manga or other comics" are, conceptually at the very least, things with no particular relationship to Sexuality.

Likewise, the creation of "Yume Fiction" or "Yume" appears in data gathered on relationship activities (Yoshizawa, 2020).^[11] "Yume Fiction" is largely a genre of derivative work, illustrating one or more characters of an existing work in a relationship together with an Original Character referred to as "Dreamer" or "Yume Protagonist" (Pixiv Dictionary, 2021).^[12] However, there are not only those who enjoy projecting themselves onto a Dreamer; some find various ways to

appreciate the relationship between an appropriate character and the Dreamer from a 3rd-person point of view. Additionally, one can draw them in a variety of situations, not just through a romantic lens. Female enthusiasts of Yume works are frequently referred to as "Yumejoshi".

The genre of Yume works is one that easily enables the Fan to couple their self-insert with a character. However, as stated above, Yumejoshi cannot simply be viewed as people who desire erotic relationships with characters. Further, as the category of the Yumejoshi is based on the media content that they adore, here is another case of a concept unrelated to Sexuality.

And as mentioned above, prior research not only overlooked the accounts and identities of those who do not experience sexual attraction to others in physical reality, but also fails to make meaningful criticisms of existing norms for erotic and romantic relationships.

In contrast to this, the analysis of Matsuura (2021) is one of few existing studies that has interviewed people who self-identify as fictosexual. Those accounts include finding interest exclusively in characters that had been drawn or illustrated from the time of elementary school, experiencing feelings of discomfort toward romantic involvement during middle school years, harboring sentiments that "My own sense of sexuality was damaged" when encountering criticism toward erotic content in comics and cartoons naïvely calling such content "harmful", and relativizing the hypothesis that eros and romance toward physical others are self-evident. Additionally, accounts from those who expressed skepticism toward the concept of the fictosexual have not been included in the analysis.

3. Research Data Summary

Based on previous sections, this article will now conduct a qualitative analysis of posts on Japanese Twitter from September of 2017 to October 31st 2020 which contain the words "フィクトセクシュアル", "フィクトセクシャル", "F セク", "フィクセク", and/or "fictosexual"^[13]— 2292 relevant tweets, together with threads of replies they are part of (8). Additionally, within the tweets gathered from September of 2017, to the extent of our knowledge they are the oldest instances.

The rationale for using Twitter for analysis is as follows: First, Twitter is one of the main places the word "フィクトセクシュアル" (fictosexual) circulates. In addition to that, there are not only those present who express their own sexuality with フィクトセクシュアル, it is a platform where the responses of others to those people also circulate. Therefore, as touched on briefly above, it is also possible to confirm data on those "Missed Chances" (and the overlooking of that phenomenon).

Below, as a supportive task in the qualitative analysis, we performed quantitative text analysis on the text to provide an overview of overall trends. Quantitative methods are useful to identify "which parts of the raw data should be quoted and interpreted" (Higuchi, 2014:7) in qualitative

analysis. In other words, it is a summary from the entirety of the data which vocabulary has been used in which contexts which then assists when organizing for qualitative analysis.

図-1 (Figure 1)^[14] contains a co-occurrence graph (10) produced in KH Coder (9). Of note within this data is that there are numerous references to the following 4 points (11). Point 1 covers the hobby space^[15] of "夢女子" (Yumejoshi) and the perception of being "フィクトセクシュアル" (fictosexual) or "something else" (違う) (4). In regard to this, there are not only those who refer to themselves as fictosexual but also those who refer to themselves in other ways. In addition, tweets included here are not limited to those discussing differences in concrete language, some expressed instead simplistic questions along the lines of "How are they different?". Point 2: objections raised toward the policing and censure of erotic depictions in manga/comics and anime/cartoons, arguing that they are based on efforts to standardize "allosexuality" and "eros in physical reality" (2,8). "現実" (physical reality) is used outside the context of "eros in physical reality" (現実性愛), and therefore has a higher rate of appearance than "対人" (interpersonal) which appeared almost exclusively as a component of "allosexuality" (対人性愛). Point 3 concerns the characteristic of the data that it includes those who have responded "Read" (読んだ・読む) "Web Articles" (記事) on these topics, and those who "Heard/seen for the first time" (初めて・聞いた) the term "フィクトセクシュアル" (fictosexual) (3,5). And Point 4, the data shows often mention also of the existence of people who desired or felt "love" (恋) or "(to be their) partner" (パートナー) from/toward fictional characters (1,7,9). Approached conversely, in analysis it is important to pay attention to the cases where people cannot use terms such as "love" (恋愛), "marriage" (結婚), or "partner" (パートナー) to describe their

or less correlation to time period are closer to the origin point (0,0) .

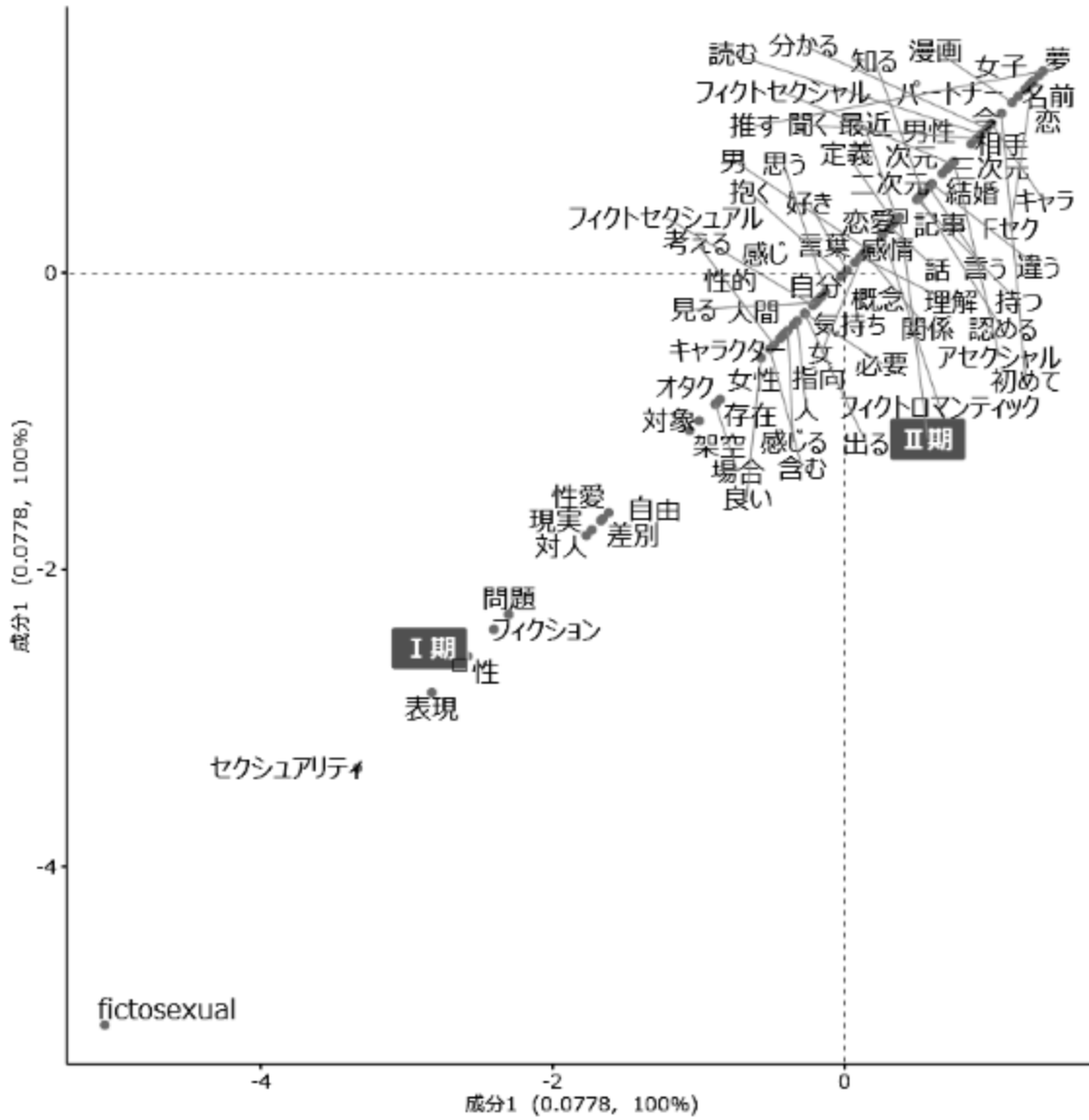


図-2 時期ごとの対応分析

With all of the above taken into account, we can proceed to qualitative analysis, however first we will briefly explain how the data was handled. As typical posts from a public business/media account are similar to publishing blog posts, they were essentially treated as a regular webpage. However, for personal tweets, their URLs were concealed and they were annotated with the day of collection. (14)

4. Analysis

4 (1) Categorization of Sexualities

Performing a loose sort on those who self-identify as fictosexual and declare that aspect of their identity, we can say that there are two meanings that the term is most frequently used to

describe: ① Those who, while fond of erotic content involving fictional characters, experience no sexual attraction to others in physical reality; alternatively, ② Those who wish to engage in activities with fictional characters typically described by "eros" and/or "romance".

To look at ① first, as in the example statement "My Sexuality is, effectively, aroace", there are a number of people who describe themselves using terms related to asexuality. Additionally, within those who use the word fictosexual to describe their identity, there are those who have or engage in erotic fantasies but who indicated their Sexuality does not involve wanting to participate in physical sex—autochorissexual (オートコーリスセクシュアル) (16). We will touch on this more properly later, but the people who use the term fictosexual with this specific connotation cannot be assumed to have romantic feelings toward characters.

In comparison, according to the accounts of those under delineation ②, they use the term fictosexual in order to not represent their feelings as "pseudo"-romantic or as "hobbies, tastes, or preferences" (趣味). And when addressing trends across the Period divisions, there was a noticeable increase in the comments of those self-identifying as fictosexual within Period II that use this second meaning.

This is admittedly a theoretical distinction only, and there are many instances where the use of the term holds both meanings. However, what the two have in common is that it is difficult to discuss them within the categorization of hobbies and interests such as "Otaku" and "Yumejoshi". As mentioned previously, "Otaku" and "Yumejoshi" are conceptually detached from Sexuality, and neither carries the implication that persons in their grouping "experience no sexual attraction to others in physical reality". Due to this, it can be said that the vocabulary term of fictosexual may at times be used to express to aspects of asexuality or aromanticism (17), and at times to express desires to engage in erotic activities with fictional characters.

4 (2) Shifts in interpretive frameworks with respect to the category of "allosexuality"

As has been seen, fictosexuality is frequently associated with asexuality. And within the world of physical reality, fictosexuality much like asexuality is "burdened by an unsympathetic society and other people's criticisms".

In the physical world, I am X-Gender and aromantic. Recently, I learned about the term fictosexual within the label asexual, and that feels incredibly right to me. It's not that being asexual is something painful. What's painful is being burdened by an unsympathetic society and other people's criticisms. (18)

Several other tweets to the same effect were identified, however some of them use the term "allosexual" to refer to the majority grouping, such as in "I think this society that fails to understand the non-allosexual (ace, fictosexual, and everyone else) should change" (19). While allosexuality is a term without one clear definition, we can summarize from the examples

collected that allosexuality as a Sexuality entails sexual attraction to living, flesh-and-blood others, as well as erotic desires involving those others. Comments that use this neologism explicitly identify the majority as being heterosexual, and thereby direct criticism at the standards that exist for erotic and romantic partners. This will be detailed further below, but the concept that "Romantic or sexual attraction to living, flesh-and-blood others is what a normal Sexuality consists of" is referred to as "allonormativity" (対人性愛中心主義).

A feature worthy of note is that criticism toward allonormativity arises **from those who appreciate and enjoy expressions of eros**. In other words, the criticism is the claim that the compulsory norms of erotic and romantic partners are the origin from which come the perception that erotic feelings and impulses held toward fictional characters are lesser when compared to allosexuality. The data also contains examples of these claims and criticism, namely of how ethical value is attached to erotic expression with allosexuality as the standard. For example, one post reads: "By treating fictional characters and actual as one and the same, regulations and age-gating on the premise that desire itself is evil ignore the existence of those who like characters for their being characters (fictosexuals)" (20).

Further comments concerning advocacy for those who defend erotic expression that were observed include concerns raised about the position of "Advocating for BL rights citing rights of homosexuals implies allosex is in a position of superiority^[16]" (21), responding that "Regulating BL isn't discriminatory against homosexuals, it's discriminatory against fictosexuals and autochorissexuals" (22). It can be said that these comments are challenging claims that erotic expression comes secondary to forms of allosexuality, as that is a form of allonormativity.

In addition to this, there are also concerns raised in some posts regarding how interpretive frameworks surrounding sexual violence disregard allosexuality. As an example, the following comment: "One of the major triggers for and circumstances of pedophilia how the majority exists within allosexual culture, which is something that shares a common heritage with rape culture" (23). As seen below, comments and posts with such concerns do not necessarily take the form of claims-making as well.

People often say that the trigger for sex crimes against minors is sex dolls resembling children, or that minors are targeted because someone got a taste for teenage porn, etc, but it seems plausible to me that it's instead because allosexuality itself doesn't make a big fuss about it and considers it "something normal" (even though this is decidedly not the case). (24)

Tweets like these all make reference to the asymmetry in how erotic expression and "rape culture" are perceived as parts of a continuum, while "rape culture" and "allosexual culture" are perceived as entirely separate. Highlighting this asymmetry in these posts challenges the interpretive frameworks that take allosexuality for granted.

4 (3) Allosexuality in the capacity of a "Sexual Orientation" that ought to be acknowledged as such

As was detailed above, within posts and comments concerning the fictosexual there were several that criticized interpretive frameworks that are maintained as being self-evident. Following we will focus on the reactions from those other to the topic that had coincidentally learned about these things. Of these other responses, there are broadly 3 categories they can be split into: ① Ones without explicit value judgement, ② Ones that declared they accept the existence of the fictosexual categorization, ③ Ones that demonstrate doubts and opposition to the fictosexual categorization. While ① and ② contain relatively shorter comments on average, ③ contains relatively lengthy comments detailing doubts and oppositions. This section focuses on those responses.

To go further in depth on group ③, doubts and opposition are expressed against adopting fictosexuality into the set of Sexualities. Of particular note here is that the reason given from this data is that fictosexuality is not covered by the definition of Sexuality. To skip other formalities, the 2 reasons collected in the data are that it is not compatible with "Sexual orientation" as a component of strategic essentialism, and that it is not compatible with the norms for erotic or romantic interpersonal relations. In other words, **strategic essentialism differentiating between "Sexual orientation" and "Sexual preference"**, and **normalizing allosexuality as a Sexuality that should be acknowledged** are what prevent fictosexuality from being interpreted as a Sexuality.

Continuing on the former point, there are comments collected that had either asked, "is that a type of innate characteristic?" or "Drawing a line between Sexual orientation and Sexual preference seems difficult" (25). Among them were some involving more than a simple "no" when addressing if fictosexuality should be included in either "Sexual orientation" or "LGBT", but doubted that it is a Sexuality at all. One example of these is the post reads: "I'd seen an article talking about the Sexuality called fictosexuality, but is that even a Sexuality? ...simply having the preference for an idealized existence = a preference, no??" (26).^[17]

What these tweets give a clear shape to is that they are interpreting "Sexual orientation" and "LGBT" as inherent expectations associated with the term "Sexuality". This, then, puts the interpretation at odds with the view that Sexuality can also encompass "Enjoying fictional erotic content while not experiencing sexual attraction to others in physical reality" and "Feeling romantic and/or erotic desires toward fictional characters".

With that being said, the resistance towards and doubt of the validity of fictosexuality as a category does not purely ride on distinctions made between "Sexual orientation" and "Sexual preferences". This brings us to the latter point. For example, according to the comment "IMO: m/f virgins (incl. amateur virgins)^[18] = no romance experience = can't properly build up interpersonal experience. ...Isn't it odd to mix that in with LGBT??" (27), the LGBT

categorization is tied to interpersonal relationships that are both romantic and involve sexual activity. Additionally, the tweet below simultaneously presents the doubt that "Fictosexual" is "really" a "Sexual orientation" or not, and that the standards and criteria for classifying something as a Sexuality are "a target and partner who "both possess a self/ego and are able to communicate as equals" ".

Is it really fine to think of what they call "fictosexual" as a Sexual orientation? If it really exists in the first place, it certainly doesn't involve a target and partner who "both possess a self/ego and are able to communicate as equals", at which point it's the same thing as zoophilia or pedophilia—at least, that's what I think of it. (28)

In this way, the idea that erotic and romantic interpersonal relationships (whether these are even possible or not) are the very basis for how Sexuality is classified gets tied up into the questioning the legitimacy of fictosexual as a category. And this is by no means simply a problem of classification. The background for these comments is that there is a perception that allowing fictosexual to exist as a specific categorization within "LGBT" or "Sexual orientation" is the same thing as granting legitimacy to the category.

To use the comment above as an example again, fictosexuals who "can't properly build up interpersonal experience" are made into opposition against the "LGBT". In other words, "LGBT" is placed in a position where it holds the value that something is being done "proper(ly)". And from the following post, which states that "the word "Disgusting" is suppressed" and "what do other people think?", it can be seen that "LGBT" is used as the wording for the recognition of other people.

Those people who call themselves fictosexuals are really just desperately trying to put a nice appearance on the behavior of saying "so-and-so is mine!", aren't they? The only thing that gets across is their "feelings" that they absolutely don't want to be called "disgusting". And if they cozy up to the LGBT like that, they can suppress the usage of "disgusting". There's a limit to how much you can worry what other people call you. (29)

In these ways, interpretations of "Sexual orientation" and "LGBT" built on strategic essentialism are composed of 2 things: "erotic/romantic interpersonal relationships" and "recognition". And within that, it can be said that "Sexual orientation" and "LGBT" are recognized as things that do not oppose the norms of erotic or romantic relationships.

4 (4) Overlooking "Missed Chances" — Erasure via incorporation into existing interpretive frameworks

The previous section dealt with discomfort and opposition stemming from things perceived to be at odds with existing interpretive frameworks. In stark contrast to that, this section will observe anti-problematization that relies on incorporation into existing frameworks.

One such phenomenon is incorporation into "The Otaku framework". We will return to the tweet quoted above for an example: "the behavior of saying "so-and-so is mine!" ". This "so-and-so is mine" is a form of Internet slang frequently used by "Otaku" individuals when declaring their love for fictional characters. In other words, the activity of "Otaku" loving a character is being used to encompass the fictosexual. In this instance, fictosexuality is being interpreted separate from any framework that relates it to Sexuality. Due to this, even if the speaker here does encounter any information on fictosexuality, it will fail to affect their understanding of Sexuality-related interpretive frameworks. In essence, by incorporating things that would affect one's understanding of frameworks into different existing frameworks allows one to overlook the existence of anyone or anything that would question one's own "Epistemological basis".

Worth noting from this is that the targets erased by the overlooking of "Missed Chances" are not necessarily made an incomprehensible and heterogeneous^[19] other. This can be observed in other comments such as "Fictosexual... ain't that normal?" (30) and "aren't Japanese people are all kinda fictosexual?" (31). There is the recognition that forms of erotic and romantic activity directed at fictional characters are "normal" activities, and thereby questioning the basis that fictosexuality has a claim to uniqueness or if it is simply "normal" as well. In these cases, it is handled as something not worth questioning and bundled into existing frameworks.

In addition, there are cases where this erasure via incorporation into existing frameworks occurs even in contexts favorable to fictosexuality. This is the second phenomenon, incorporation into "The Romance framework". As stated in the previous section, there was the perception that the concepts stated as "Sexual orientation" and "LGBT" are unrelated to the norms of erotic and romantic partners. And if the expectations implied in the term "Sexuality" are "Sexual orientation" and "LGBT", then "Fictosexuality as a Sexuality" will also experience the same expectations under erotic and romantic partner norms. It is reasonable to think that this framing is why "Fictosexuality" as something capable of "romance" and "having a partner" is often discussed by web media outlets. In other words, the existence of people who cannot be captured by "The Romance framework"—one that those who take for granted that people are allosexual can also understand—is erased by being incorporated into that framework anyway (32).

And it is because of this that we observed those fictosexuals—who are in the broad type that cannot explain their experiences with the vocabulary of "romance" nor "partner"—responding to that sort of article from web media outlets. Some were observed to fork the definition as "Those who define themselves as fictosexual, but who have never had thoughts of participating in eros with characters, instead preferring to enjoy a 3rd-person perspective from within the fiction" (33). From that perspective, articles which made fictosexuality visible by emphasizing "romance" made the criticism that "I don't like that you're pushing your idea of "The normal fictosexual" on everyone, whether they're fictosexual or fictoromantic" (34). This criticism addresses how "Sexuality" and "Romance" are assumed to be conflated by default, or in other

words, how norms of romantic relationships are allonormative. Additionally, it unfairly elevates the prestige of "1:1", "exclusive" romantic relationship norms (Brake, 2012-2019). Thus, there are also posts relating to polyamory, wishing that fictosexuals that are married not be made invisible (35). The web media outlets that emphasize the wording of "romance" and "having a partner" also ignore that this gives asymmetric merit to allosexuality and erotic representation. One such comment of criticism collected is quoted below.

If you emphasize the part that says "Romance and sex are important to me, but to you they're unimportant, right?" and ignore the part that says "Sexual expression is just entertainment to me, but it's important to you, right?", then it feels like you're just showing a form of fictosexuality convenient for the majority. (36)

The tweet quoted above is by no means within the majority position within the data. However, we can certainly say that it raises the important question of how "fictosexual" will be interpreted by an allonormative society.

5. Conclusions

5 (1) Reflections

Inquiry made into data in this article can be summed up in the following 4 points. Point 1: Theoretical insights can be cited based on anti-problematization stemming from the self-evidence of daily life. Within this article, "erasure" by means of incorporation into existing frameworks was identified on top of "foreclosure" noted in prior research as ways interpretive frameworks of the self-evidence of daily life are maintained. One example of this erasure is the overlooking of "Missed Chances"—something that interprets the fictosexual without asking any questions about existing frameworks for Sexuality. In this way, the existence of anything that would challenge everyday-self-evident frameworks is not just erased as an incomprehensible minority, but sometimes made invisible by its incorporation as a subsection of some majority group. This erasure can be termed "Majority-induction erasure". This type of erasure does not necessarily entail marking the target as part of a minority, or that it is erasure done explicitly. However, when specific frameworks (such as that of heterosexuality / homosexuality) limit in advance the possible ways people can express themselves, it is reasonable to conclude that it reinforces majority/minority dichotomies in those frameworks.

Relating to this is point 2: Theoretical implications regarding relationships, the subjectification of relationships, and the processes by which social issues are constructed. As was mentioned above, in tandem with how fictosexuality has been made visible by web media outlets using the terms "romance" and "partner", there has been an increase in the number of posts from those who identify as fictosexual and prioritize intimate romantic relationships. In other words, the nature of "fictosexual" in the mainstream has been altered by its presentation by web media outlets. From this, it is reasonable to think that the directed target of categorizing people—

especially in the early days of newly created categories—is affected by the ways media outlets present and frame the agenda(s). That is to say, the framing and presentation used by media outlets do not only limit how things are understood, but can influence in what direction something "becomes". In this sense, the framing and presentation of agendas can be said to be one of the elements that contribute to "Conditions for Identity Segmentation" (Butler, 1990-1999:260).

Point 3: Information about societal criticism of Sexuality. Within this article, we observed that there were comments expressing doubts toward and denial of fictosexuality being considered "a Sexuality". The basis for those statements is the framework wherein one's innate "Sexual Orientation" is not simple "preferences", but is instead related to erotic and romantic interpersonal relationships and ought to be recognized as "a Sexuality". That framework was then utilized to exclude fictosexuality from being categorized as "a Sexuality". This is what implies the connection between "Sexual Orientation" as a part of strategic essentialism and the norms existing for eros and romance.

Finally, Point 4: Within comments and posts utilizing the term fictosexual, there were observed those that place the majority in a category termed the allosexual, criticizing norms of erotic and romantic relationships from the point of view of those who enjoy engaging in erotic expression. Included in that is the question of whether traditional arguments surrounding how ethical value is ascribed to erotic expression are themselves allonormative. It is not simply that the questions were asserted as "There's no issues at all with erotic content in 2D" (37); rather, a more fundamental issue brought up. That issue is the asymmetric way in which allosexuality and non-allosexuality are handled in discourse. In essence, the question was directed at the very shape of the framing of "Erotic expression is for some reason a problem / not a problem"—whether it, by turning the focus to the problematization of erotic expression, had foreclosed on the possibility that allosexuality could be problematized. To phrase slightly differently, implicit in the arguments was the question of whether allonormativity was something that had become taken for granted. Taking this into consideration with Point 2 allows us to suggest the possibility that the framing of traditional arguments about treatment and value-assignment of erotic expression have caused erasure of "non-allosexuality".

5 (2) Future subjects

This article focuses on those who do not fall under either the majority or minority definitions commonly involved with respect to "LGBT" and "Sexual Orientation", how their existences and experiences and personal accounts are marginalized, and thereby identifies the structural conditions and media use responsible for making those frameworks appear self-evident. It also investigates the use of phrases that have the potential to alter existing interpretive frameworks, including "fictosexual" and "allosexual".

However, this article does show its limits. Due to the constraints of collecting the data, it was not possible to analyze specific attributes of tweets. Additionally, as it is possible that comments and posts included in the analysis are weighted toward people who were already familiar with (even if just slightly) Sexuality, the responses of those who do not share the strategic essentialist concept of "Sexual Orientation" were largely absent during analysis.

As a final point, though this article details 2 aspects of fictosexuality, it should not be assumed that any individuals who match these aspects will self-identify as fictosexual (Matsuura, 2021). As to why one may place themselves as fictosexual or may not, there is a need to perform future interviews and research on that subject. Yet in that regard, as the Internet serves as the primary platform for disseminating information regarding fictosexuality, the research presented in this article can be considered significant as preliminary research that captures models and narratives related to fictosexuality.

Appendix

This paper is a revised version of an oral presentation given at the 11th meeting of the Society for the Sociology of Culture and the 140th regular meeting of the Japanese Association for Social Analysis. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who provided valuable comments on our report. This research was supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (Grant Number 21J11381).

Annotations

(1)

Neither foreclosure nor erasure are events that occur only once, however. They are repeated and reiterated (Butler, 1997-2015; Masuutra, 2020b). To that end, identifying something that is the target of some foreclosure or erasure does not mean that it remains fixed as that target. This self-evidence of daily life should be understood by combining this with the observation of A. Schutz that it is provisional in nature, namely "Until further awareness emerges" (Schutz, 1962-1983:144).^[20]

(2)

A term that refers to the region closer to asexuality, within the larger spectrum of asexuality to allosexuality.

(3)

As norms of eros only designate as desirable matters involving others in *physical* reality, it is presumed that any sexual attraction toward a *fictional* other will become marginalized. And, as

mentioned later, there are also those who experience no sexual attraction in the sense that they do not have any desire to participate in sexual activities with others.

(4)

For more information on the equivalent word of "amatonormativity", please see the articles written by 夜のそら in 2020.^[21]

(5)

For example, by making the distinction between sexual attraction and romantic attraction, accounts of not experiencing romantic attraction are placed within the term aromantic (in Japanese, this is written as "アロマンティック", "A ロマ", or other similar terms) (Miyake, Hiramori, 2021).

(6)

Likewise, an asexual/allosexual dichotomy erases the territory defined as the ace spectrum (Matsuura, 2020b).

(7)

Though, among those who self-identify as fictosexual, there are those who have reported that since early childhood they have only experienced sexual attraction toward characters from manga and anime (comics and cartoons)^[22] (Matsuura, 2021).

(8)

The tweets that were the subject of analysis in this article span a relatively large segment of time, and since the total number of them is not very large, data was gathered through manual use of Twitter's search functions. Bot accounts and their tweets were excluded from this process. The breakdown of individual terms is as follows: 1217 instances of "フィクトセクシュアル", 907 of "フィクトセクシャル", 134 of "F セク", 5 of "フィクセク", 64 of "fictosexual" (includes repetitions). The total number of individual accounts that contributed to this data is 1406.

(9)

Analysis performed using KH Coder involved user-generated posts from the data, and excluded URLs and the titles of frequently-appearing web articles.

(10)

A co-occurrence network is a method for statistically visualizing data that shows frequently used terms and phrases as well as connections between them within the dataset

(11)

As terms within ㊦ and ㊩ appear frequently throughout various divergent topics, they have been excluded from the summary.

(12)

The 3 pieces of from web media outlets that received over 1000 retweets are listed here.

① 漫画でわかる LGBTQ+ (Learn With Manga: LGBTQ+) / palettalk (Dec. 10 2019) "My Story: Fictosexual and Living With Atypical depression. #ThisYear'sYou'veWorkedHardAwardisyours" (https://twitter.com/palettalk_/status/1204369601003343874)

② nlab (ねとらぼ) (Oct. 6 2020) " "My life turned around once I met Furuya Rei" - What Romance and Marriage Are Like for the "Fictosexual" Who Falls in Love with 2D Characters" (<https://nlab.itmedia.co.jp/nl/articles/2007/09/news133.html>), however the post that cross 1000 retweets was from YAHOO! News)

③ 漫画でわかる LGBTQ+ (Learn with manga: LGBTQ+) / palettalk (Sept. 3 2020) "My Story: Unease at the Trend that "Having sex is what makes you an adult!" #palettalk" (https://twitter.com/palettalk_/status/1301462336981446656)

(13)

Period I (September of 2017 to November of 2019) contains 247 tweets, and Period II (December of 2019 to October of 2020) contains 2045 tweets. For accounts, Period I totals 72 and Period II totals 1356.

(14)

All tweets without annotation originate from February 6, 2021.

(15)

Dated 2020-05-08.

(16)

A term coined by A. Bogaert, to describe what he referred to as a paraphilia defined by "sex without (choris) one's self/identity (auto)"^[23] (Bogaert, 2012:1513). In terms of identity labels, there are also cases where the term aegosexual—prefixing the self (ego) with a negation (a)—is used. Within asexual communities, these people are also included in the ace spectrum.

(17)

"I was always trouble, like I'm basically aroace, but when it comes to 2D I'm less sure... So it was a weight off my chest when I heard that ficsexual (フィクセク) falls in the ace umbrella."
(Dated 2020-09-03)

As this comment shows, dialogue appears that it is because the categorization for fictosexual exists that it has become possible for these people to identify within the area of the ace spectrum.

(18)

Dated 2020-08-09.

(19)

Dated 2020-01-23.

(20)

Dated 2018-07-27.

(21)

Dated 2019-02-05.

(22)

Dated 2020-02-05.

(23)

Dated 2020-06-02.

(24)

Dated 2020-06-02.

(25)

Dated 2020-09-06.

(26)

Dated 2020-08-09.

(27)

Dated 2020-09-04.

(28)

Dated 2020-10-07.

(29)

Dated 2020-09-05.

(30)

Dated 2020-09-04.

(31)

Dated 2020-09-12.

(32)

And while there are many cases where "Romance" is a proper explanation in practice, it is by no means something that is always possible to visualize with that term. It should also be noted that posts expressing the "shared fanbase rejection" of being possessive toward the target or jealous of other fans, as well as posts that declared they do not experience shared fanbase rejection were both made by those who identify as fictosexual (even if in small number).

(33)

Dated 2020-08-15.

(34)

Dated 2020-09-04.

(35)

Dated 2019年12月11日投稿。ただし2021年2月6日時点では非公開。

(36)

Dated 2020-09-04.

(37)

For example, a tweet "In favor of age restrictions and segregation" for erotic expression, but that worried about "what reasons will drive them and what shape will they take" was also observed. (Dated 2018-09-13.)

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1. Taken verbatim from the first page (pg no. 67). The upper half of the page is the same Abstract and title contents in Japanese. ←
 2. The kanji is 関わらず, with the furigana over 関 reading ママ. I have not been able to figure out what this means. The closest lead I have is the specific kanji meaning connections or architectural portals (among other things), which might then have some form of motherly aspect ascribed to it? But that doesn't particularly seem to mean anything within the sentence as a whole, or even the paragraph. ←
 3. "それ以外". I have taken the meaning that this is referring to any state where claims are not being made in the rhetorical/discursive sense, though I am not the most familiar with those terms. ←
 4. 岡真. I am not particularly good at discerning name readings, so this comes from a quick search and seems legitimate. Though on that note, in academic writing, is it more correct to use names as written locally or to swap the surname (Oka, in this case) position to the language of writing (making it Shingo Hori and Makoto Oka)? I have stuck to using names as written in all cases here. ←
 5. "出会い損ない". I am still not happy with how this is translated, but I have yet to find a better phrasing. ←
 6. This sentence and the later ones in this paragraph included English parentheticals next to the Japanese terms, and as such, I have elected to flip that. ←
 7. "実在". "...in reality..." has the effect of reading awkwardly, but to a more general point I cannot refer to this merely as "reality" or "other people that really exist" in these contexts as it feels too opinionated on what "real" is and thus counter to points of the article. Additionally, phrases such as "in real life" have less meaningful use in a time when life is equally on- and off-line. I would like to find a better shortening for this phrase. ←
 8. It passed without note in the paragraph above, but a small highlight that "eros" here is used to join both the literal meaning of 性愛 as sexual love (the activity or inclination) and the contextual weight of "sexual" referring to a societal default assumption. "Erotic" sees similar use throughout the rest of the article for consistency. ←
 9. "Sexuality", as the capitalized noun, here and elsewhere in the translation refers to the topic and categorization under discussion. This is partially stylistic echoing from the existing Abstract and title, partially to reflect that the word being used comes from the loanword "セクシュアリティ" and not other terms with similar meanings, but also because the word is sometimes used in contexts where "Sexuality" and "Sexual Orientation" encompasses romantic orientation as well—a general term for a classification of identity labels. ←
 10. "Natural", as in, "Having to do with the nature of someone or something". The kanji 性 translates to both sex and gender in different contexts, so another possible translation would be "Sex/Gender Diversity". There is the double issue of needing to encompass sex *and* gender as seen in the rest of this sentence, and determining if the framing of the article as a whole justifies defaulting it to "sex". ←
 11. While one can translate "夢" as "Dream" literally, the existence of Yume-related culture in English-speaking communities (yumeshipping etc.) leads me to phonetically translate this as a term that has an existing equivalent. ←
 12. "Dreamer" is a temporary term as of writing, as there does not seem to be an existing shorthand in English-speaking circles that encompasses **both** options—between OC and self-insert—of who is placed in yume scenarios. There is the possibility that 夢主人公 could be translated as "Insert Protagonist" or something similar, but that stretches the meaning in a direction I'm not a fan of and there isn't enough justification with Yume already being the equivalency. ←

13. Included as written and as collected. The representation of text in this section will be different, with parenthetical translations as needed, to make it easier to reference the graph. ←
14. Figures included un-translated for now, thus the name is also included as written. ←
15. "...「夢女子」という趣味 ...". I've taken this to mean the general shared area of accounts that participate in or mention Yume activities. The phrasing is a bit odd. ←
16. "対人セックス", a discrete phrase from "対人性愛". Sex, but allosexual sex, hence "allosex".
asdasd ←
17. "[...] having the preference for [...]": 志向. Intentionality. Shares one character (向) with "Sexual orientation" (性的指向). "[...] a preference, [...]": 嗜好. Tastes, used in "Sexual preference" as translated elsewhere. This translation was chosen to best represent the rhetoric that one "preference" is equivalent to the other. ←
18. "処女、童貞 (素人童貞含む)". As written, that is "Female virgin", "Male virgin", and "Including men who have only had sex with sex workers" (translated as "amateur virgin" as seen in Japanese dictionary sources). The gender distinction (and for the latter, the implications inherent to the term) is impossible to replicate in existing English to my knowledge, and I have not been able to devise appropriate terms to convey that meaning outside of this lengthy footnote. ←
19. While "different" would serve well on its own, the existing context and phrasing of "mixing together" fictosexuality with the LGBT leads me to emphasize that aspect of incompatibility in the rhetoric, hence "heterogeneous". ←
20. The translation is accurate, but I am left wondering if I should directly improve the readability of the line. It is my understanding from parsing this that the point being made is roughly: Daily life sustains a self-evident aspect about certain things that have been foreclosed on or erased, but only until the general awareness of those things changes. ←
21. 夜のそら is the display name of the account authoring the referenced posts on amatonormativity and other similar topics on the Note platform. This is effectively the name of the author, and as such is preserved. ←
22. The differences between using "Manga" and "Comics" are minute but sometimes important when it comes to research and data collection due to format differences and influence spheres. While these terms do all translate, the trends of content within them varies by region, all the more so with younger age groups as is sometimes the focus of a topic. As such, I have elected to include both translations as often as they make sense, and to default to either makes more sense where having both would produce an awkward sentence. The same goes for Anime/Cartoons. ←
23. I have not obtained any of Bogaert's writing myself, so this line comes from the English Wikipedia page on Aegosexuality (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aegosexuality>) in order to display this quote as accurately as I can. ←