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Film Review: *[A]Sexual*, Why Are We Annoyed?

I could not help but roll my eyes. I didn’t want to but I did. Someone in the class was vocally angry, why?! The common public in *[A]Sexual* was for the most part was taken aback by the protagonist’s lack of interest in physical or sexual intimacy. Why this strong reaction? Western culture is no doubt sex obsessed. Sexual identity is of huge importance in this day and age. Sex is at the forefront of popular culture, more disturbingly at a younger and younger age. It makes sense then that people could also be obsessed with *not* having sex. *[A]Sexual* is really just a film about young kids overly wrapped up in figuring out their own lack of sex drive. I think a film about kids overly wrapped up in figuring out their excess of sex drive would make me equally uneasy. David the founder of AVEN, just seemed a conflicted and immature kid whose “outreach” around his identity as an [a]sexual reeks of narcissism. I couldn’t help it; it was all just so awkward. But David can’t help it, for whatever reason this consumes him.

When the concept of the [a]sexual identity was revealed in the beginning of the film and before he came on screen, the first person I thought was, Morissey, second was, Ralph Nader. Two very different people I have an enormous amount of respect for. I do not know these people well; they are merely public figures to me. They must have inner conflict. They must feel pain, but they don’t seem to be completely absorbed by some sort of search for their sexual identity. They are two of the most prolific talents in their respective realms of expertise. Morissey is, in my eyes, one of the greatest songwriters and performers of our time. Nader is a genius and maybe the most supremely devoted public servant I know of. Maybe I just want these folks to do something else with their time!?

I am lucky I suppose; my sexual identity and gender and race all hold privilege in the world. So I have really no room to criticize. I *do* have gay friends that absolutely cannot stand taking part in the gay pride movement. They are not unaware of the history of Stonewall or are not indifferent to the need for change. In fact they are for the most part very politically involved people. What they can’t stomach is the apparent need to turn their sexuality into their only and all encompassing identity. One’s sexuality makes up a part of ones identity, but does it also have to be their passion and hobby? Another issue that comes to mind is, just what is the struggle for equality? Jack Halberstam makes strong cases against the campaign for gay marriage, for example. Why push so hard to take part in a social construct that has left you out in the cold for so long and may well be completely flawed and a cornerstone for the social architecture that has victimized us for so long. The urge to strive to be part of the dominant power structure halts us from forging ahead to find new truths.

I hated to see these young people mocked and shunned at the gay pride parade. That should not have happened. They seemed well adjusted and took it well. I wish them the best. I see no need for those of us who don’t understand them, to question their sincerity. Everyone has the right to find a fulfilling and happy life for themselves and their community. What this film may well expose is some flaw I can’t put my finger on, or at least articulate at this moment, that exists in my own pursuit of what a healthier society looks like.