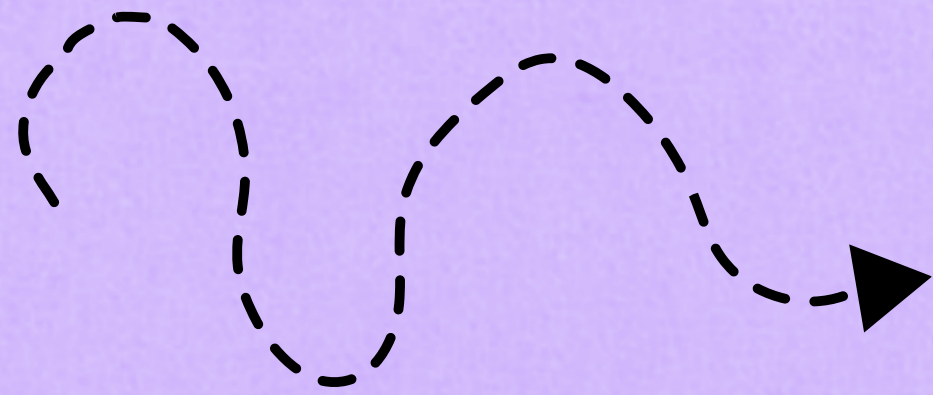
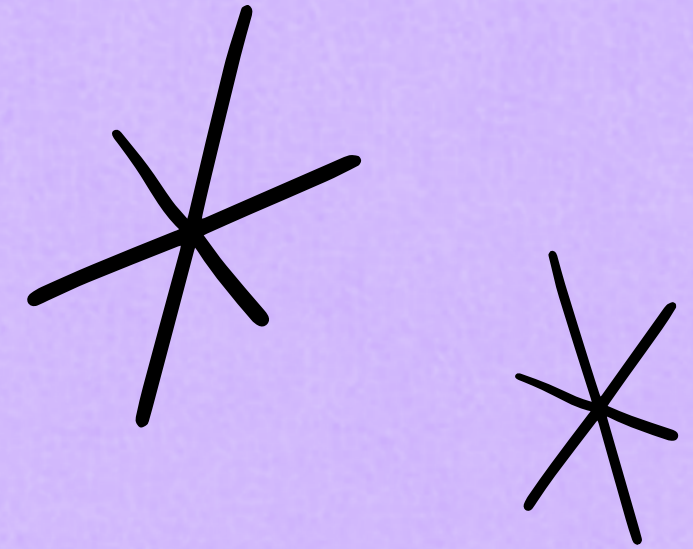


Asexualität x Christianity

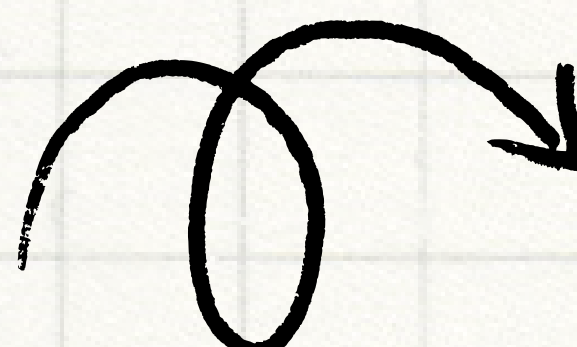
By Sarah Woodams



Background



- Asexuality definitions & related topics
- What does the Bible say? What can we infer from the Bible?



Asxuality



History



Definition

A sexual orientation where the person does not experience sexual attraction to others.

Common microlabels include demisexual (only feeling sexual attraction to a person after a deep emotional connection) and gray-asexual (experience very low or random levels of sexual attraction or only under specific circumstances).

Variety

Lots of variety within the community:

- Varying sex drives (from none to high)
- Openness to having sex (repulsed, indifferent, favorable)
- Openness to a relationship
- Masturbation habits & interest in watching porn

- First really mentioned at a large scale, especially within the U.S. during Alfred Kinsey's research on a scale of sexual orientation. Those who didn't fit on the scale from homosexual to heterosexual were labeled as X.
- Was (and still is to an extent) viewed as a mental disorder.
- Formation and growth of the modern day asexual community was on the internet in the early 2000s.
- Asexuality Visibility and Education Network (AVEN) founded in 2001. Still around today.

What does the Bible say?

Genesis 1:28

“God said to them [Adam and Eve]
‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the
earth and subdue it...’”

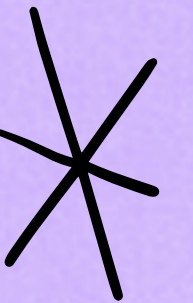
1 Corinthians 7:7

“I wish that all were as I myself am.
But each has a particular gift from
God, one having one kind and
another a different kind.”
(Paul, in reference about marriage)

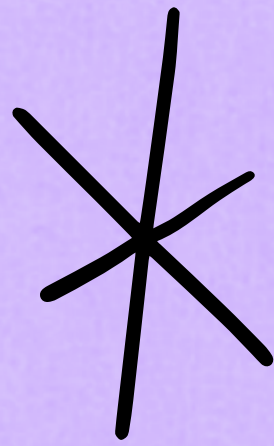
1 Corinthians 7.1–6

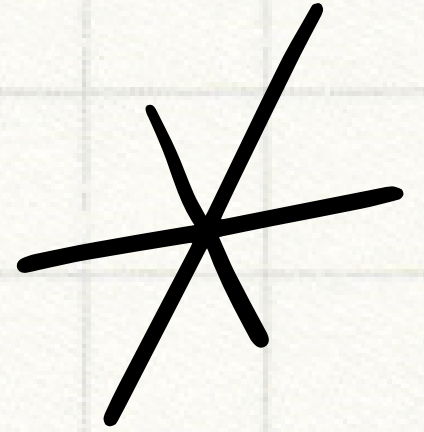
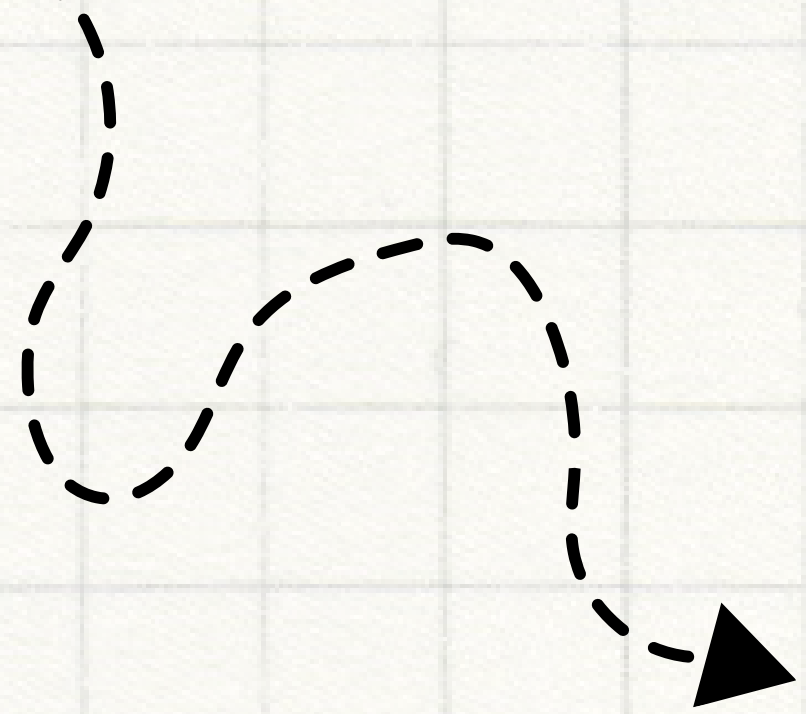
“It is well for a man to not touch a woman.’ But because
of cases of sexual immorality, each man should have his
own wife and each woman her own husband.... Do not
deprive one another [of sex] except perhaps by
agreement for a set time, to devote yourselves to
prayer, and then come together again, so that Satan
may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
This I say by way of concession, not of command.”
(Also written by Paul)

If we were to pull straight from the Bible and from Queer theologians we've studied, asexuality at its core appears to be a perfectly acceptable sexual orientation. Paul would likely say being asexual is actually preferred (given you devote plenty of time to the Lord).



However, as we've learned, Bible verses can be cherry-picked to support different positions and their meanings twisted (e.g. the story of Sodom and Gomorrah). Or they can be ignored all-together in favor of broader societal norms.



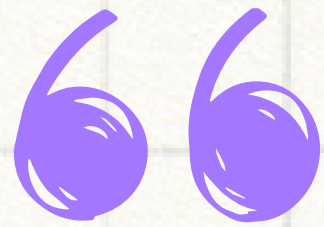


How would modern day conservative Christians react to asexuality?

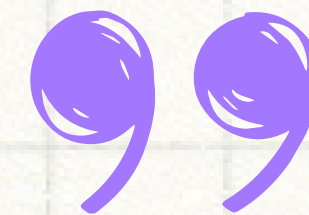
I've created 5 personas of hypothetical white cisgendered asexual people in the U.S. who are some level of Christian and made assumptions based on Bible verses, church teachings, and societal norms in the U.S. on what a more conservative, less accepting of LBGTQIA+, Christian would think of them.

Disclaimer I want to acknowledge that there is a growing number of Christians are accepting of LBGTQIA+ identities. For the purpose of this project we will be focusing on the more unaccepting.

I'm keeping them cis and white to align with the fact that for a long time the vast majority of Christians in the U.S. were white (now a little less than half) and the fact that conservative Christians are unlikely to be supportive of trans people in general. I wanted to keep the discussion centered around their sexual orientation and heteronormative gender roles. However, I do want to note that there is a ton of intersectional discussion to be done with asexuality and race, disability, gender identity, etc.



Yet, every sermon, book, and small group study on marriage, dating, and sex furthers that dehumanizing rhetoric, generalizing romantic and sexual attraction (and subsequent temptation) as essential aspects of being human.



Jenna DeWitt



Especially within purity culture, Christians emphasize resisting lust and enduring the struggles of waiting until courtship for romance and until marriage to have sex as vital marks of holiness on the path to inevitable marriage.

Waiting, not abstaining forever, was the mark of true love – and true love was always defined as romantic and sexual.



Jenna DeWitt

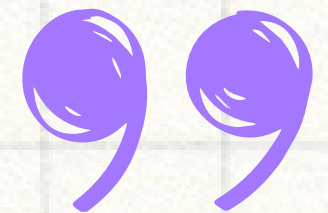
Recent Examples

Concerns from far-right anti-LGBTQIA+ think tanks about the Respect for Marriage Act

- Worried about a rise in “platonic marriages”
- Eroding what marriage means, sex must be at the core
- Some convinced that asexual people are just mentally ill, it’s not a real orientation



“I think it matters deeply that we continue to define marriage as a sexual union,” the Witherspoon [conservative think tank] piece argues. “This ongoing thinning of marriage’s meaning leaves less and less of the concrete conjugal elements that can bind marriages together. Also, it seriously erodes the legal justification for the benefits, responsibilities, and protections with which the law endows marriage.”





Personas

fran



- 37 years old
- Aromantic asexual woman
- Doesn't ever want to get married
- Tried sex when she was younger but stopped after discovering the term asexuality and realized why she wasn't enjoying it
- Is not too involved with her local church – only shows up for big holidays

Potential Problems

- Is not fulfilling her Biblical duty as a woman to marry a man and have children.
- Has had premarital sex.
- Is not using her sex-free life to devote herself to scripture.

Deborah

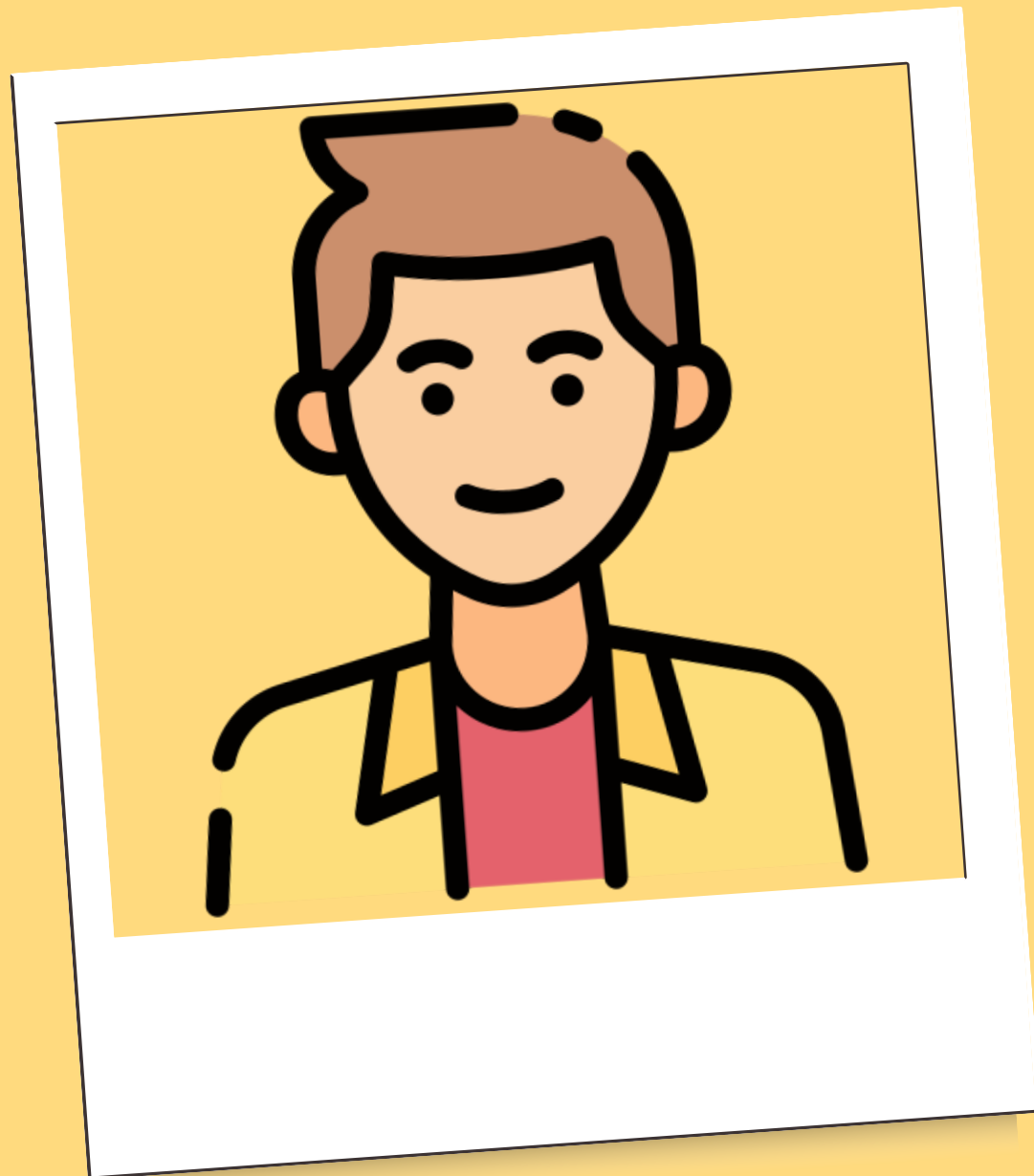


- 72 years old
- Lesbian ace (not out)
- A nun (unmarried, celibate life), joined in her early 20s to avoid questions from her family and church community on when she was going to get a husband.

Potential Problems

- None, Paul would be a big fan.
- If she came out as being romantically attracted to women there could be some challenges to continue her career as a nun.

Jeremy

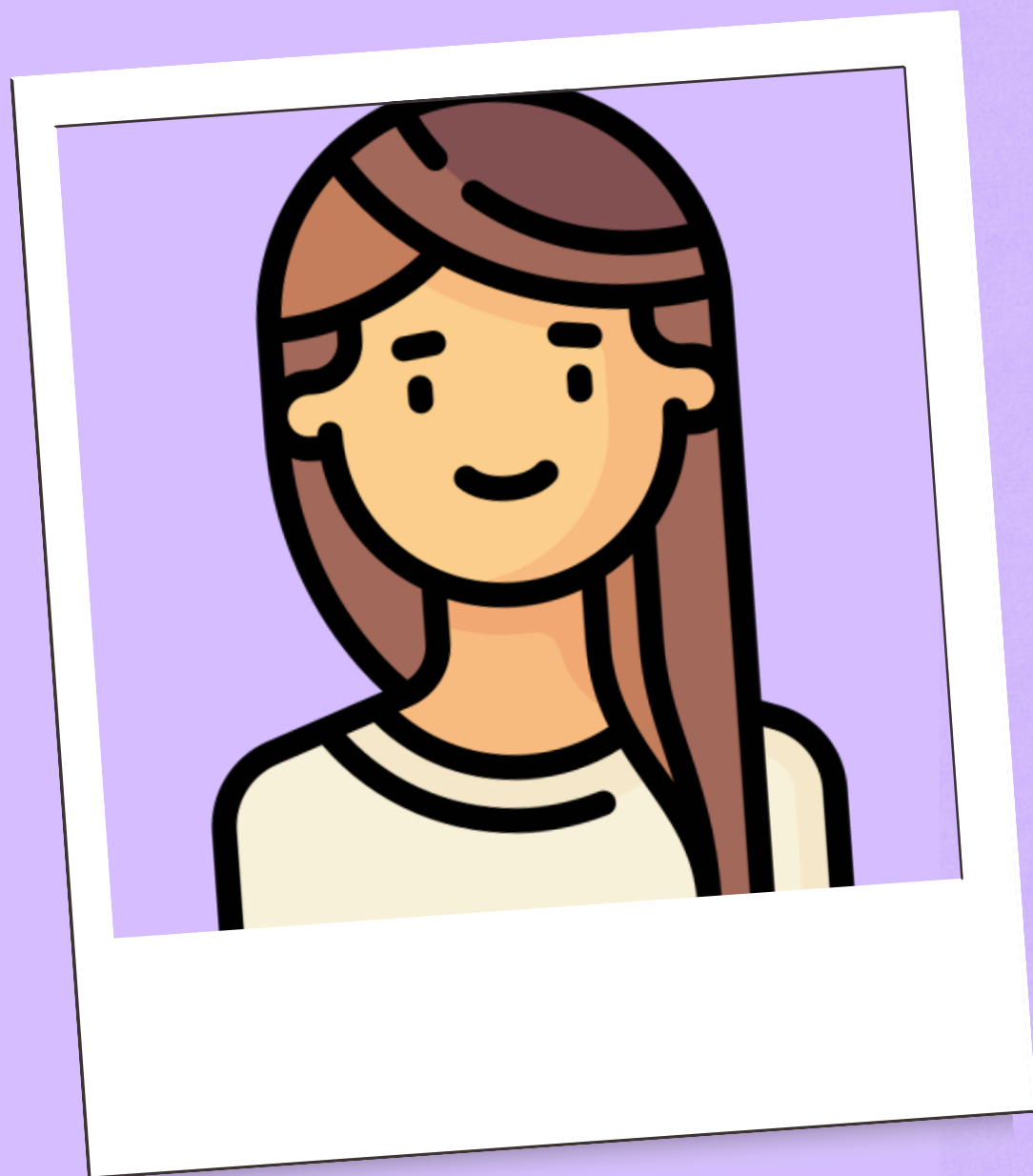


- 28 years old
- Biromantic asexual man
- Married to a demisexual woman
- Have sex so they can have biological children (have 1 so far)
- Heavily involved in his local church

Potential Problems

- If Jeremy and his wife got a divorce and he started dating/married a man.
- Otherwise, he is likely to be fully accepted by the church. He is being fruitful and multiplying AND is into the church.

Amber



- 32 years old
- Aromantic asexual woman
- Married to an aromantic asexual man.
- Both have low/no libidos and vaguely sex repulsed, so they have never had sex.
- Got married because they really enjoy each others' company and could see spending their lives together (and get some nice tax benefits out of it!)
- Occasionally attend church with extended family for big events.

Potential Problems

- Some would consider their marriage not real, possibly fraud.
- They have not “consummated” it nor will they have biological children.

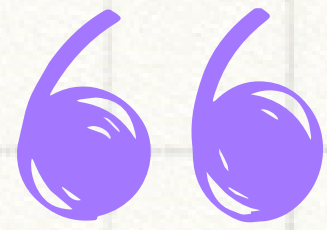
Aidan



- 22 years old
- Homoromantic asexual man
- Very sex repulsed
- Dating a homoromantic and homosexual man, currently not having sex
- Considering having an open relationship

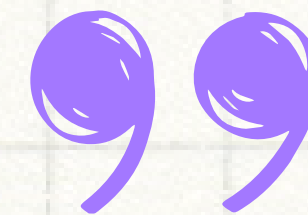
Potential Problems

- Is it still considered a sin if you're romantically into the same sex but don't ever have any same-sex sexual interactions?
- Open relationships are not looked upon very kindly by more conservative societal standards.
- Will not marry a women, will not likely have biological children.



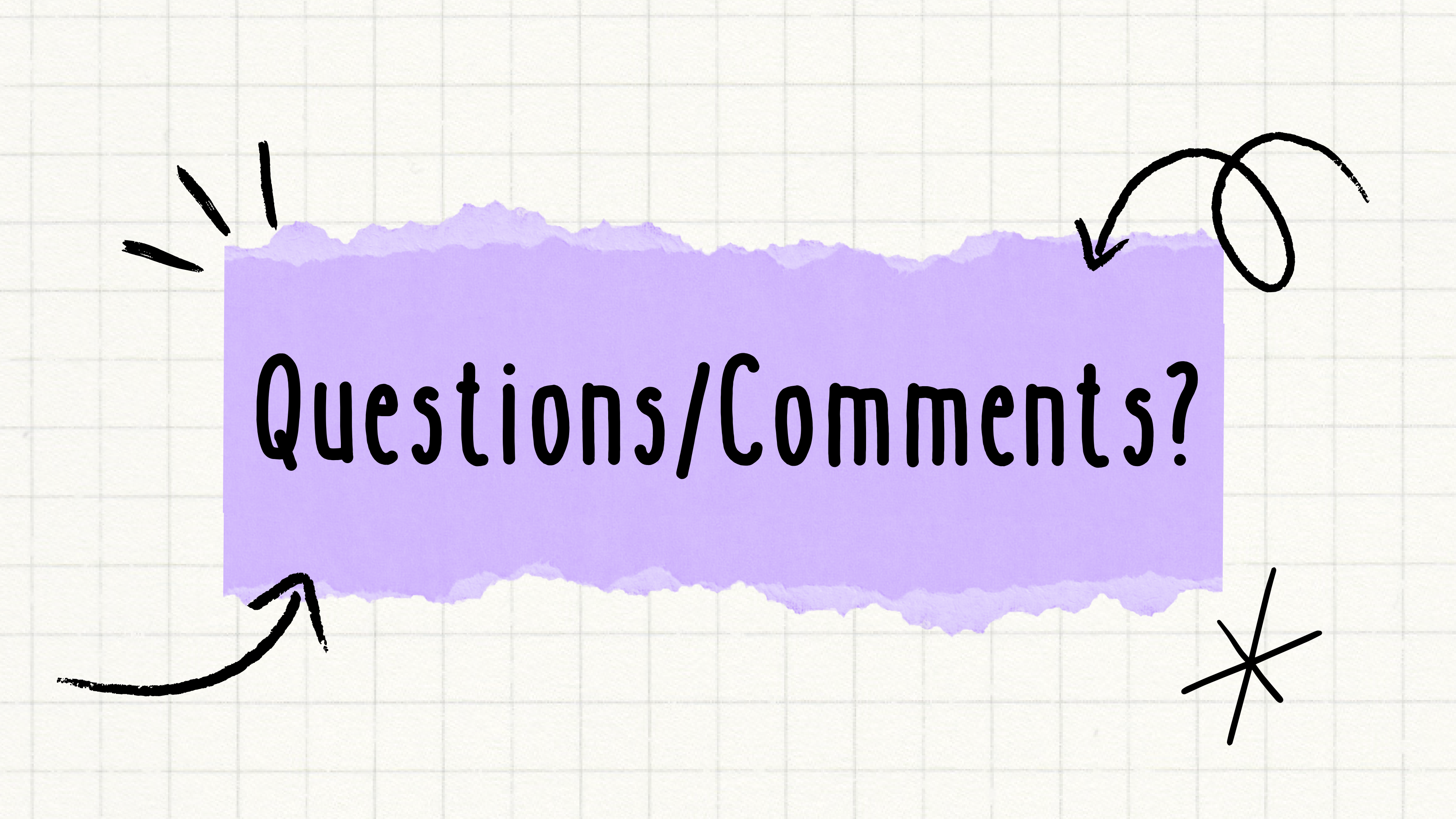
“

“Normal is often treated
as a moral judgement,
when it is often simply a
statistical matter.”



”

Angela Chen



Questions/Comments?

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