

**Sapiro, Chapter 11**  
**Consenting Adults: Personal and Sexual Relationships**

1. Relationships (chosen, not familial) are a central part of human life; men's and women's are different. Relationships are our political universe writ large. How? Why?
  - a. Theories: men are competitive; women cooperative.
    - i. Tiger: male bonding occurs over competition, for control of government and resources
    - ii. Gilligan: women have a web of relationships based on cooperation and lack competitive instinct
2. Friendship definitions are historically, culturally specific.
  - a. Same-sex relationships can be enriching; gender integration - tendency to have opposite-sex friends - hides fact of women's rich separate sphere.
  - b. Institutional constraints shape friendship; behaviors are adapted to demands of workplace (for example, that men can't have close friends because they're competing with each other).
3. Opposite-sex friendships in western cultures have traditionally been defined as sexual.
  - a. Workplace relationships have changed this somewhat - the spheres have merged.
  - b. The definition of "sexual" is subject to change; since irrational, it's often misinterpreted, and involves many emotions besides eroticism and love (like aggression, power, fear, etc).
  - c. "Sexuality" and "sexual orientation" are also subject to redefinition, a process that may go on throughout our lives.
    - i. Sexual "self schemas" are how we use our past behavior and inclinations to define ourselves sexually.
4. Homosexuality, heterosexuality, bi-sexuality: sexual orientation.
  - a. Sexual orientation correlates with gender identity around heterosexuality: "real men and real women" are highly gender schematic.
  - b. Homosexuality is difficult to define; people are pan-sexual, especially at different times in their lives (as Freud's developmental theories suggest).
  - c. Homophobia is rampant in our culture, but is also culturally specific (example, the ancient Greeks).
  - d. Homophobia is an important issue in WS because lesbians often contradict gender norms and live outside patriarchal constraints, and are thus constantly testing gender schemas.
5. Sexuality, love, power.
  - a. In the realm of sexuality, issues of power and love also intrude.
  - b. Partners, regardless of orientation, often assume dominant and submissive roles.
  - c. Dominance, companionship, and sexual needs shift over time and development of the relationship.
  - d. Dependency of one partner (often female) leads to vulnerability to abuse.
  - e. Double standard rules reported sexual conduct.
6. Sexual violence against women - sex is about power and violence.
  - a. Sexual right-of-way parallels communication right-of-way.
  - b. Rape and sexual violence are traditional means of war and territory-claiming.

- c. Rape is not cross-culturally universal, and thus must be learned.
  - d. Double standard means that women's "no" is meaningless because it is the only appropriate and "virtuous" answer.
  - e. Issue is always consent and how it is articulated or withheld.
  - f. Instrument of terrorism against women - fear of the stranger, of outdoors, of being independent and unaccompanied.
7. Sexual harassment - use of sexuality as a tool of power or dominance - is like a less overtly violent version of rape.
- i. Private - workplace; can be
    - (1) exclusionary - you can't get this job because you don't belong here;
    - (2) exploitative - give me sex or I'll fire you
    - (3) evaluative - you're not attractive enough to work here, or you're being hired because of your breasts.
  - ii. Public - catcalling - a smaller version of the private sphere. But see rape, below - a kind of implicit sexual harassment.
8. Marriage as means of social control of women.
- a. Statistically married men are happy; married women are least happy.
  - b. Contract often enforces state control of relationship.
  - c. Marriage often impoverishes women; our labor is not viewed as labor; our property is subject to husband's control; our wage-earning capabilities are often diminished; marital rape.
  - d. Women become radicalized by age, while men become more conservative.
  - e. Feminists and highly educated women are less likely to get/stay married; feminist men are more likely to stay married. Go figure!