

Chapter 1
Perspectives on Sexuality

Controversy and Diversity in Human Sexuality

Why do the authors attempt to bring an inclusive approach to *Our Sexuality*?

Sexual Intelligence

- **Four components of sexual intelligence:**
 - Understanding self
 - Having interpersonal sexual skills and integrity
 - Obtaining accurate scientific sexual knowledge
 - Having consideration of the cultural context of sexuality
- **Increasing sexual intelligence will allow for responsible decisions in sexual behavior**

Diversity in the United States

What factors contribute to diversity and similarity of sexual attitudes and behaviors within the United States?

Diversity in the United States



Studying Sexuality: From A Psychosocial Orientation

A **Psychosocial Orientation** takes into account:

- **Psychological factors**
 - Emotions, attitudes, motivations
- **Social conditioning factors**
 - Process which we learn our social norms
- **Biological factors**
 - Hormones, nervous system, genetics, etc.

Cross-Cultural Perspectives
Islamic Middle East

- **Based on beliefs of Muhammad**
- **Belief that sex should be enjoyed by both sexes**
- **Women viewed inherently more sexual than men (this power contained by veils, segregation, female circumcision)**
- **Oppression of women and many sexually related restrictions stem from patriarchal cultural traditions and fundamentalist sects, not from religion and the teaching of the Qur'an**

Cross-Cultural Perspectives
China

- **Sexual conservatism with communist rule (1949)**
 - Lack of basic information about sexuality
 - Sex outside of marriage and frequent sex within marriage discouraged
 - Almost no STDS
- **Current trends**
 - increasing rates of pre-marital sex
 - increasing STDS
 - slightly more open to homosexuality
 - still lack sexual knowledge and safe-sex skills

Our Cultural Legacy
Two Themes

- **Sex for Procreation**
 - Definition of sex and intercourse used synonymously
- **Male and Female Gender Roles**

What importance do the historical themes of sex for procreation and male/female gender roles have today?

Sexuality in the Western World
Judeo-Christian Perspective

- **Ancient Hebrews**
 - Gender roles highly specialized
 - Sex within marriage a necessity
- **Christianity**
 - Spirituality through celibacy
 - Sex outside of marriage as sinful
 - Contradictory images of women emerged
 - Virgin Mary: compassionate, pure, & unattainable
 - Eve: evil temptress

Positive Shift in Thinking

- **Protestant Reformation**
 - Enlightenment; scientific rationalism
 - Temporary increase in respect for women
 - Value of sex in marriage, goes beyond procreation

Sexual Attitudes
Victorian Era

- Women's role constrained; women as asexual
- Emotional & physical distance between husband and wife
- Prostitution flourished
- Continued polarized view of women as Madonna or whore
- Mosher's research contradicts prevailing view:
 - Victorian women experienced sexual desire, enjoyed intercourse, and experienced orgasm

20th Century Sexuality

- **Social Movements:**

- suffrage movement
- temperance movement
- civil rights movement
- lesbian & gay movement
 - Obama's acceptance speech "gays and straights"

- **World War II:**

- Roles were expanded & more flexible
- Postwar return to stricter roles

The Media and Sexuality

How have mass media reflected and influenced sexual norms?

What are elements unique to sexuality on the Internet compared with other mass media?

The Media and Sexuality

- **Television**

- News, advice, and educational programs
- Increased access to sexual material
 - Percentages of sexual content
- Cable and music videos
- Video games
- Determining of social norms

- **Advertising**

- **Magazines**

Sexual Taboos and Television

The Evolution of Broken Taboos on TV

1952	1972	1974	1975	1978
First pregnancy: I Love Lucy Lucy Ricardo (Lucille Ball) gives birth.	First prime-time abortion: Maude Forty-seven-year-old Maude opts to terminate her pregnancy.	First graphic rape scene: Born Innocent Linda Blair plays a runaway who is raped in a detention center.	First interracial couple: The Jeffersons Tom and Helen raise social issues on the show.	First transgender character: Quark Gene/Jean can switch genders at will.

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The Evolution of Broken Taboos on TV

1981	1997	2000	2001	2006	2007
First time for the F-word: Saturday Night Live Charles Rocket ad-libs the F-word and is fired.	First openly gay sitcom lead: Ellen History is made when Ellen DeGeneres and her character come out.	First romantic male-male kiss: Dawson's Creek Jack and Ethan, two teenagers, kiss after months of anticipation.	First female ejaculation: Sex and the City Samantha's girlfriend makes a splash.	First gay marriage: Brothers & Sisters Kevin and Scotty get married.	First transgender actress in ongoing transgender role: Dirty Sexy Money Carmelita is William Baldwin's mistress.

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Cyberspace and Sexuality

- 1.5 billion Internet users worldwide
- 80% of people obtain health information from Internet
- Source of sexual expression
- MySpace, Facebook, Twitter
- Availability on hand held devices
 - PDA, iPod, Cell phones

Sexuality

Where the Personal is Political

- Impact of social norms
- Freedoms and responsibilities today
- Controversies facing human sexuality

How can something as personal as sex be political?
