ISSN: 2995-326X

Research Article

Political Science International

Sexual Harassment in Professional Training: Faulkner's Precarious Mentorship and Joan Williams's *The Wintering*

Naoko Ohri*

Hitotsubashi University, Japan

***Corresponding Author**
Naoko Ohri, Hitotsubashi University, Japan.

Submitted: 2025, Apr 30; **Accepted:** 2025, Jun 07; **Published:** 2025, July 10

Citation: Ohri, N. (2025). Sexual Harassment in Professional Training: Faulkner's Precarious Mentorship and Joan Williams's *The Wintering*. *Politi Sci Int, 3*(2), 01-15.

Abstract

The close friendship that Joan Williams had with William Faulkner has been regarded as a romance beyond differences. However, this article suspects that it was more like that between offender and victim of sexual harassment. Williams's experience with Faulkner reveals her intellectual injury and psychosexual victimization, and her reproductions of their personal relationship indicate its sexually exploitative nature. In addition to her novel dedicated to his memory and other related writing, this article explores Faulkner's correspondence with Williams. Thereby Williams's account of her interactions with Faulkner is verified and supplemented by his side of the story. This article compares the relationship between Williams and Faulkner with that between the protagonists in her novel who are closely modeled on the two writers. Showing that each case involves the indulgence of professional privilege in a sexual manner, this article argues that the relationship between Williams's protagonists and that between Williams and Faulkner both constitute sexual harassment.

Keywords: sexual harassment, professional training, mentorship, higher education, William Faulkner, Joan Williams

1. Introduction

It has been four decades since sexual harassment in higher education was separated from the original, broader concept of sexual harassment[1]. Billie Wright Dzeich and Linda Weiner's *The Lecherous Professor* disillusioned general assumptions that romantic relationships on campus were free from sexual discrimination and disclosed that educational institutions were not immune to sexual harassment because they had a power structure as hierarchical as that in workplaces [1]. Distinguishing sexual harassment based on the places where it occurs proves that this misconduct is not peculiar to the workplace.

However, such categorization oversimplifies the distinction between the scenes of its occurrence. The public sphere, where sexual harassment arises, is not exclusively the workplace and campuses but extends to many other places. Undeniably, the place where those who pursue professional careers are trained is hardly separable from their workplace. These places sometimes overlap. For example, medical or law students serve their internship before formally joining the workforce. For these students or recent graduates in practical training, hospitals or law firms are schools and workplaces at the same time. Moreover, this is not confined to organizations because professionals are often self-employed. The dichotomous classification may overlook variants in high-skill professions.

The current study attempts to delineate the sexual harassment of professional women because the majority of victims are women, as shown in the rapid spread of the # I have been exercising since October 2017. The subject of analysis is the relationship between two American writers: William Faulkner (1897-1962) and his beloved disciple, Joan Williams (1928-2004). Their close friendship was scandalous, and whether it was an unusual romance or a mentoring relationship has long troubled Faulkner scholars. This study suspects, however, that the relationship was more like that between an offender and a victim of sexual harassment. Williams's reproductions of her memories of Faulkner, especially her autobiographical novel, *The Wintering* (1971), and Faulkner's correspondence with her reflect Williams's intellectual injury and sexual abuse by Faulkner [2].

The scholarly exploration of the relationship between Faulkner

and Williams was pioneered by Lisa C. Hickman [3]. Based on in-depth interviews with Williams in her later years, Hickman reveals that Williams's relationship with Faulkner was too complicated to be simply called love. According to her, Williams was not only one of Faulkner's young beloveds, but also his "soul mate" [3] (p. 17)[4].Moreover, only this relationship with Williams enabled Faulkner to pursue his twin desires simultaneously: to fall in romantic love and to mentor a talented young writer [3] (p. 9). Fully recognizing that Williams was herself a writer, Hickman successfully grasps rich nuances of the emotional interactions between them and presents a more multifaceted reality of their relationship. In Hickman's *William Faulkner and Joan Williams*, the relationship between the great writer and his youthful *protégée* assumes a fresh, romantic, and egalitarian aspect.

Hickman appreciates that Faulkner's love for Williams is exceptional, yet she does not sufficiently consider the power imbalance between women and men and neglects a truly unromantic aspect of that relationship. Agreeing with her attention to Williams's vocational aspiration and the identity of Williams's female protagonist as a prospective writer, this study draws a different conclusion from Hickman's and argues that the relationship between Faulkner and Williams can be better understood as that between a perpetrator and a victim of sexual harassment.

In the novelized version, sexual harassment characterizes the relationship between the two writers. Moreover, the element of sexual harassment in the actual relationship between Williams and Faulkner was more severe than in Williams's representation. Faulkner was making aggressive sexual advances despite Williams's unwillingness to get intimately involved with him. The Faulkner-Williams relationship was, in the view of this study, far from a romance. The fact that Williams survived it to be a writer is proof of her resilience as well as her talent, but her complicated apprenticeship presents a case of independent professionals' susceptibility to sexual harassment. The gender dynamics in "the romance of two writers" show how the relationship can be viewed differently.

The current study compares the relationship between Williams and Faulkner with that between the protagonists in *The Wintering* closely modeled on the two writers. Adopting the multiple methodologies of literary analysis and archival research informed by socio-psychological and psychoanalytically-oriented sociological theories on sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and mentorship and, the study explores Faulkner's correspondence with Williams in addition to *The Wintering* and Williams's other related writings. Williams's account of her interactions with Faulkner is verified and supplemented by Faulkner's version. The methodological approach differs from Hickman's because she focuses on a direct interview with Williams and the correspondence Williams exchanged with Faulkner and does not make a theoretical analysis.

Written in an epistolary style mirroring the correspondence between Faulkner and Williams, *The Wintering* is so vivid in its depiction that it can barely be read as fiction. The young heroine, Amy Howard, meets her admired author, Jeffrey Almoner, in the same way as Williams met Faulkner, and they build a close relationship following the traces of the events that occurred between Williams and Faulkner. Furthermore, several passages have almost precise counterparts in "Twenty Will Not Come Again" (1980), Williams's short memoir published nine years later,[5] and some of the letters. The memoir is also found in Faulkner's collected letters [7, 6].

This striking similarity between Williams's different publications Faulkner implies that *The Wintering* reflects her actual experiences with him. Indeed, Williams assures Hickman that "the book is an accurate reflection of those years I shared with Faulkner" [3] (p. 7). However, a novel is fiction; characters are not the same as real persons on whom they are modeled, even in a novel based on a true story. Hence, this study first explores Amy's relationship with Jeffrey and how their relationship reflects Williams's relationship with Faulkner.

The argument is structured as follows. First, this study clarifies the gender dynamics between Faulkner and Williams by showing that the relationship between Williams's protagonists faithfully represents her experience with Faulkner and that the participants' strong bond and multiple roles they assumed in their relationship were the results of professional boundary violations. Second, this study constitutes training for artists and writers in the broader category of professional training, in which mentorship is important for trainees' success. Therefore, the study suggests that the mentor-mentee relationship in the world of arts and letters be counted as a variant of the professor-student relationship, for which a modified framework of sexual harassment in higher education is applicable when professional boundaries are violated. The discussion closes with a proposition to modify the location-focused, organization-oriented definition of sexual harassment so that it is flexible enough to capture the subtler reality of sexual harassment.

2. The Bond of Loneliness

Whereas she was a twenty-year old, unmarried, college student aspiring to a literary career, he was a fifty-one-year old, married, and world-famous novelist. Across those differences, Joan Williams and William Faulkner formed a close friendship. Lisa C. Hickman suggests that "loneliness" held them together as it was a personality trait they shared [3] (p. 11). In *The Wintering*, this feeling holds Amy Howard and Jeffrey Almoner together. Similar to Williams and Faulkner, Amy and Jeffrey describe themselves as "soul mates" [8] (p. 140).[6] Noteworthily, according to Jeffrey, that bond of affection goes beyond the carnal: "Amy, it wasn't physical attraction that brought us together or kept us together, we had a stronger need, because it outlasted that long time when I had your hand and there was no more response than a child's" [8] (p. 296). That need is assumedly mutual empathy since they both have solitude. Amy complains that she does not want to live as others do, and Jeffrey replies that as an artist, he has lived as an outsider, nonconformist in a rural community of Oxford, Mississippi: "'Of course, I know. I turned my back on my past, too, didn't I? Isn't that is partially at least what brought you to me, that you sensed

it?' 'I guess so. I don't know exactly what brought me. Feeling in your books was the only name I had for it'" [8] (p. 108). Mingled with pride, the shared emotions of loneliness bring them together.

Loneliness is certainly their common personal trait. However, Amy's loneliness seems more complicated than Jeffrey's because Amy is not simply an artist but a female artist. Any woman cannot easily "turn her back on her past" because socially, women's behavior is more severely restricted and monitored than men's. That Amy's wishes to be a writer were a form of rebellion and find expression in a negative sentence suggests the cultural restrictions particularly inflicted on middle class women:

> " You never have the right thing like the other girls " […] Shaken, Edith said, "Who else gets themselves into situations like this. Oh, why couldn't you have been like…" "Because I don't want to be like the other girls." Amy spoke out at last, flatly and finally, before going out of earshot, her heart not beating too fearfully [8] (p. 157).

Rebellious attitudes are forgivable and encouraged in men but less tolerable and can jeopardize the civil status of women. This is because likability is demanded from women more than from men in both fiction and real life [10] (p. 88). An unlikable man can be an antihero, earning a special term to explain his deviation from the norm of likability. In contrast, unlikable women attract utter displeasure and denouncement and are condemned for flouting convention. Unlikability in men is excusable as idiosyncrasy, but that in women, it is inexpiable and unacceptable.

Likability here is a synonym of conformity. Roxane Gay resents the social convention that conformity is more demanding for women than for men. Though in high spirits, her resentment expresses greater difficulty for women to be nonconformist or rebellious than for men. Writers and artists who are also women have to spend greater energy standing alone than their male counterparts do. Accordingly, female writers and artists are led to feel loneliness not only among lay people but also among colleagues who consist mostly of men. They are more likely to be isolated and friendless in both companies. Probably, loneliness is experienced differently between Amy and Jeffrey.

Moreover, Amy's loneliness is different from Jeffrey's in seriousness because Amy does not yet have a field of activity outside the limits in which her family and friends are satisfied. She is not exactly a writer but a writer-to-be. Separating herself from the familial sphere before gaining a foothold toward the literary world would put her in a state of limbo and make her defenseless and helpless, even if she chooses it with spirit. The transitional stage doubtlessly arouses a sense of alienation in her and deepens her loneliness. Jeffrey tries to comfort Amy who is complaining about the pangs of loneliness:

> "No one," she said, "understands me here, but you. I've got to go somewhere else."
> "Don't keep running," he said. "There's not any other place. Places don't matter, don't count. It's all inside you."
> "But I'm so lonely," she said, sitting up. […]
> "I've told you, writers have to accept loneliness," he said [8] (p. 144).

This is contrary to his words, *places do matter*. As an accomplished writer, the loneliness Jeffrey has suffered comes from the lack of understanding of people close to him, such as his wife. However, Amy is agonizing not only over the lack of understanding of her family and friends. She must endure double loneliness because of her isolation from the familial domain she is leaving and of the distance from the literary world she is going to enter. Therefore, Amy's loneliness is much deeper than Jeffrey's. This is why She empathizes with him and is candid with him beyond their differences. Amy's loneliness is not simply her native trait. It is also replenished by her minority status as a female artist and transitional insecurity as a developing artist.

3. Jeffrey and Amy: Mentor and Protégée

The relationship between Jeffrey and Amy is that between mentor and mentee. Out of loneliness and a hope that he shares the same feeling, Amy asks Jeffrey for advice about becoming a writer. The fact that loneliness is what brings them together, however, foreshadows the danger that when it assumes a sexual aspect, their connection can constitute sexual harassment because, ranked with secrecy, a feeling of isolation is one of the characteristics of romantic relationships between teachers and students, especially faculty-student sexual involvement in universities [11] (pp. 67-69).

As Billie W. Dzeich and Linda Weiner reveal, most sexual relationships that occur between faculty and students involve male faculty and female students [1]. Behind this scenario, female students in the university have a particular vulnerability. Admittedly, Title IX of the Educational Amendments in 1972 prohibits sex discrimination across all levels of education. In the United States, the population of female students is now almost equal to that of male students and the majority of undergraduates are women [8]. However, research on sexual harassment suggests that the university is not yet a safe learning space for women.

Although sexual harassment has been considered a form of sex discrimination and accordingly unlawful for several decades, it remains a serious problem in universities [13, 14, 15]. Similar to the situation in workplaces, the majority of perpetrators are men, while the victims are mainly women similar to the situation in workplaces [14, 15, 16].

Women are not a mainstream faction or powerful enough to eliminate sexual harassment in universities. According to the American Association of University Professor (AAUP), women are under-represented in full-time faculty ranks and still less in full-time tenured faculty [17]. Universities remain a male-dominated, hierarchical domain, where women, alongside other minorities, are vulnerable [11,13, 19]. Power disparity among the constituencies of universities is maximized between faculty and students; however, gender-related dynamics contribute to the vulnerability of female students [11,20]. Whereas privileges and power afforded to tenured faculty, who are typically men, may make it easy to seek sexual affairs with students female students are more likely to feel powerless and isolated than male students, especially in graduate school or in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and

Mathematics (STEM) fields, where the ratio of women is still low [13,14].[7] Moreover, those from ethnic, cultural, or sexual minority groups, with less recognition, may crave attention from faculty.[8] This increases the likelihood of female students' emotional dependency on powerful others who seem to understand them, leading to sexual involvement with male faculty.[9] Additionally, romantic relationships between faculty members and students are kept secret, leading to further isolation and vulnerability of the students [11] (pp. 67-69). Thus, isolation and secretiveness are marked features of faculty-student sexual involvement.

The sexual vulnerability of female students to male faculty is not exclusive to universities. Outside the classroom, female students or women who have intellectual aspirations are liable to sexual involvement with male teachers. Hannah Arendt's relationship with Martin Heidegger illustrates this tendency.

As a first-year student at the University of Marburg, eighteen-year-old Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) met thirty-five-year old associate professor Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) in his philosophy course in 1924. According to Elżbieta Ettinger, they soon fell in passionate love, but a year later, Heidegger decided to transfer Arendt from Marburg to the University of Heidelberg to reduce the risk of detection of their love affair [21] (pp. 9-22). He had a wife and two young sons and feared that a scandal might ruin his starry career. Giving up staying near Heidegger and studying with him was hard for Arendt, and she was disappointed that he did not seem to care much about her well-being. However, she did not leave him but continued to see him when he wanted. Their relationship, which lasted for about four more years, remained a secret even to Karl Jaspers, a friend of Heidegger and Arendt's new advisor at Heidelberg.

Arendt's obedience or passivity toward Heidegger was more than absolute, Ettinger notes, though at a German university early in the twentieth century, it was normal for students to treat their professor as a master [21] (p. 23). Technically, although already out of his tutelage, Arendt was still willing to behave as Heidegger's apprentice. Despite her suspicion that he only found her sexually attractive, she made every effort to meet his demands and follow his often changing instructions regarding their meetings, while "she was uncomplaining, undemanding, available when he wanted her, patiently waiting when he did not" [21] (p. 19).

Ettinger's thorough research into the correspondence between the two great philosophers clarifies why their relationship was so compelling to Arendt in her youth [21]. It was based on a sense of forlornness that had haunted her since childhood. Arendt was brought up in a series of loss of familial love [21] (p. 2). When she was seven, her grandfather and father died successively. Her mother was frequently away from home and remarried when she was thirteen, but Arendt never became close to her stepfather and stepsisters.

That semi-orphanage at an early age caused feelings of insecurity, defenselessness, and helplessness in her. Consequently, the "young Arendt needed love, protection, guidance" [21] (p. 2). When she encountered Heidegger, Arendt was ready for a romantic relationship with someone who was also her teacher and protector. Heidegger made an opportune appearance in her life and fascinated her with seductive promises of forever love, help, and guidance [21] (p. 3). Thus, behind the young Arendt's devotion to Heidegger was her deep-rooted forlornness. With crucial elements of loneliness and secretiveness, Arendt's relationship with Heidegger exemplifies the sexual vulnerability of female students to male teachers in and beyond the university.

Similar dynamics are true of the relationship between Jeffrey and Amy, though unlike Arendt, Amy was not passionately in love with her master. Profound loneliness makes Amy vulnerable and emotionally dependent on anyone who understands her. Now, under the tutelage of Jeffrey Almoner, a great writer she admires, Amy has every reason to depend on Jeffrey and cling to his attention. Whatever advice he gives her, she would be willing to follow. Jeffrey and Amy never consummate the relationship with sexual intercourse, but Amy's virginity is repeatedly discussed as a problem. Furthermore, their meetings are to be held secretly to escape detection by his wife and her parents. Evidently, their mentoring relationship is rife with sexual implications.

While she finds it difficult to accept Jeffrey's sexual advances, Amy is forced to comply to attain sexual maturity. Although there is no reason for his assertion that it is necessary for her artistic growth, Jeffrey urges Amy to throw off the yokes of the sexual norms of the Southern middle class, contending that otherwise she would be unable to break out of her shell as a writer. Then, he claims that he can personally lead her to that maturity: "'I only thought,' he said, 'that it would be easier for me to help you if there were no more barriers between us. You know I'm not going to force you, and I'm not going to beg either'" [8] (p. 143).[10] As part of his professional advice, Jeffrey persuades Amy to accept him sexually. Though it sounds a bizarre idea, Jeffrey inculcates into Amy that once sexual maturity is achieved, an artistic breakthrough will be made and she can count on his initiation into that new territory. To put that instruction into practice, Amy seeks to achieve sexual maturation.

Although it is unacceptable for Amy to let Jeffrey make changes in her work ignoring her originality,[11] it is unthinkable to accept this way of "help" from him, not merely because of her good upbringing but, more importantly, Jeffrey is not sexually attractive to Amy. Whenever he presses for sexual union with her, she excuses herself from acceptance: "'I'm sorry, but I can't. I just don't feel that way. And it's not,' she said, looking up, 'because you are too old. I just don't feel that way'" [8] (p. 143).[12] However much she admires him and accepts his advice, Amy would not accept Jeffrey as a sexual partner. Out of fear of disappointing Jeffrey, Amy is thrown into a dilemma between artistic growth and satisfying sexual self-actualization.

Jeffrey might be unaware, but his behavior is manipulative and whether he really makes that suggestion genuinely for the benefit of Amy is open to doubt. It is he who desires her; nevertheless,

Jeffrey insists that Amy needs to accept his sexual *offer* for her artistic development. Yet Amy does not have the slightest suspicion that Jeffrey's proposition is selfish and that he just wants her to serve his sexual desire. Her emotional dependence on him and vulnerability to his attention prevents Amy from doubting Jeffrey's good will. Consequently, faced with his sexual advances, Amy has few options but to comply with Jeffrey. While Jeffrey does not seem to be aware of how much power he wields over her, Amy's possibilities for progress as an artist are effectively in his hands. Taking to the road is Amy's desperate recourse to avoid Jeffrey's aggressive advances. She seeks sexual maturation on her own.

Hickman wonders at Williams's perseverance in continuing to see Faulkner for nearly five years, given all the complications such as the necessity of secrecy, deception, and the pressure he placed on her [3] (p. 9). However, the fact that Amy does not stop seeing Jeffrey despite the complications discussed earlier suggests that their relationship constitutes sexual harassment because the incompleteness of consent in that relationship is evident in the difficulty of withdrawal from it for Amy. According to psychologists Virginia Lee Stamler and Gerald L. Stone, incomplete consent is a structural characteristic of teacher-student sexual involvement [11] (pp. 66-69).

Amir Karami et al. observe that when professors who have sexual involvement with students disguise these relationships as consensual. Professors sometimes groom students into a relationship and suggest that they would leave their spouse [14]. However, Dzeich and Weiner conclude that sexual relationships between faculty and students can never be consensual, due to the inherent power differences [1]. With their expertise and authority, faculty overwhelm students, while students depend on faculty and look up to them. Moreover, faculty have legitimate power to award or refuse good grades to students and effectively influence their future [14, 12].

Adjusting the definition of sexual harassment beyond the typical form of what Catherine A. MacKinnon terms "the *quid pro quo*, in which sexual compliance is exchanged, or proposed to be exchanged, for an employment opportunity" [24] (p. 140), Dzeich and Weiner argue that given the inherent power differences between faculty and students, seemingly consensual relationships cannot be actually consensual [1] (p. 140). As Stamler and Stone concur, "[s]tudents are in vulnerable positions with faculty, and what may be perceived as consensual in fact could be the result of direct or indirect pressure. These power-differentiated relationships can lead to anticipated and unanticipated exploitation of the student" [11] (pp. 6-7). This power difference is specifically prevalent in graduate education, where a professor can often build or ruin a student's career [13]. Studies have found that graduate students are more likely than undergraduates to name those in a position of power, such as faculty members or supervisors, as offenders of sexual harassment [17].

That the exploitation can be unanticipated on the part of the teacher requires further attention. It suggests that faculty who entering into sexual relationships with students are often unaware of the damaging effects of their behavior and these relationships on the students.[13] Intention is not always necessary for exploitation to occur. Faculty "inadvertently might take advantage of the student's more vulnerable position in meeting their needs" [1] (p. 61). The interaction of student vulnerabilities with the needs of faculty creates a unique environment with a potential for intentional or unintentional exploitation (p. 54). Thus, consent in unequal relationships, if not the result of manipulation, cannot help but be exploitative. This is how the incompleteness of consent, or "exploited consent" determines the structure of the faculty-student sexual involvement [23] (p. 92).

Jeffrey's *offer* to help Amy attain sexual maturity would partly be an altruistic pretense. In his interaction with her, he prioritizes his need for intimacy over her education. Her indecisiveness should not be treated as her consent or be reproachable for arousing him. Admittedly, this teacher-student relationship between Jeffrey and Amy does not have a power dynamic based on institution. Notwithstanding, since the unequal footing of their relationship hinders her from refusing him as a lover, it is undeniable that their erotic involvement constitutes sexual harassment in the instructional context.

The result of Amy's sexual wandering demonstrates the damage Jeffrey's behavior caused. She loses her virginity to a young, penniless painter she encounters in New York City, and even reaches her first orgasm with Billy Walter, her childhood boyfriend who comes to take her back home at her parents' request. Nevertheless, she does not achieve a breakthrough as a writer or find relief from loneliness. Her loneliness grows more intense in the morning after she sleeps with Billy [8] (p. 288). Feeling worse than ever, she cannot gain confidence as an artist and almost gives up writing altogether. Hearing the news of his hospitalization for aggravated alcoholism,[14] Amy comes over to see Jeffery again at his bedside:

> "You want friends and no enemies. To take only what you want and to give only what you want, and when. That's not the way the world works. An artist must----"
> "I'm not an artist," she said, taking away her hand. "I won't fool myself about that any longer. I just kept promising you to write."
> "I never wanted you bound to me by promises," he said, "about writing, or anything else. That promise should have been made to yourself, anyway. I liked you as you were. I never cared whether you became a writer." [8] (p. 295).

The conversations betray that while feeling stressed by his intrusiveness, Amy still emotionally depends on Jeffrey. The problem lies here. His remarks on the promise are irresponsible. It is not her fault that her sexual exploration for an artistic breakthrough ends in disappointment. Instead, the disappointment is better understood as a natural outcome of his belief that sexual maturation and artistic breakthrough are intimately connected. Her failure to attain that breakthrough discloses that his exhortation has no basis; sexual maturation has little to do with artistic development. Despite that, because she took his encouragement faithfully, she embraced exaggerated expectations. What prompted her to seek sexual maturation is her desire to show her potential to

him. Nonetheless, she takes her failure as the result of her lack of talent as a writer.

How seriously distorted Amy's view of reality is! Why did she swallow Jeffrey's unwarranted assumption without question? One reason is her mental insecurity. Because of her transitional vulnerability and desire for dependence, it is hard for her to get out of the mindset he instilled in her. Her solitude intensifies in the process of her development as a writer and makes her so vulnerable to his attention that it impedes her mental maturation and intellectual independence.

Judith Bryant Wittenberg explains the magnitude of Faulkner's influence on Williams during her apprenticeship: "he played a role in her life alternatively of father, Pygmalion, and ardent lover. He offered her valuable advice and inspiration, but in some imaginative way created a trap from which she has had difficulty escaping"[25] (p. 277).[15] Although this study focuses here on the interaction of the characters in *The Wintering*, Wittenberg's insight into the relationship of Williams with Faulkner applies to Amy's relationship with Jeffrey. Indeed, Wittenberg captures the nature of Amy's wandering journey elsewhere: "In struggling with him as lover, Amy is unable to avail herself of his tutelage as fully as she might, and she spends an enormous amount of time and energy in petty rebellions" [26] (p. 108).

Amy continues to seek a breakthrough, but not until Jeffrey is approaching his end from self-destructive alcoholism does she get serious about writing. Once out of his tutelage, she is able to step toward artistic independence. Her career as a professional writer begins with the death of her admired mentor. The disappointing result of Amy's sexual quest thus illustrates the damage Jeffrey's behavior inflicted on her. Her depression is an example of damage to a student caused by teacher-student romantic involvement.

4. Multiple Roles Jeffrey and Amy Play in Their Relationship

Considering the dual role of mentor and lover Jeffrey wants to play with Amy, his behavior is a violation of professional boundaries between teacher and student because the dual or multiple roles that participants take on characterize relationships with violated professional boundaries [11] (pp. 7-11). Professional boundaries delineate the relationship between the professional and the client, typically between a psychotherapist and a patient. These boundaries are defined as "limits that allow for a safe connection based on the client's needs" [22] (pp. 74-75). Regarding the relationship between faculty and students as a type of the relationship between professionals and clients, in which professional provision is education instead of psychotherapy, Stamler and Stone argue that students are in vulnerable, dependent positions compared with the position of faculty, similar to patients or clients in relation to therapists or lawyers.

Appropriate professional boundaries are essential to maintaining the professional-client relationship, and violating those boundaries damages the relationship and makes it difficult to meet the client's needs [11, 22]. Boundary violations hamper the professional relationship from pursuing its objectives, such as the recovery of the patients' health and providing legal solutions to clients' concerns. Thus, professional interactions replaced with other kinds of interactions. Therapists refrain from getting personally involved with their patients, and lawyers with their clients. Likewise, faculty should do so with their students to guide the students' learning [11] (pp. 13-17). As Stamler and Stone conclude, "[s]exual interactions with students are violations of appropriate educational boundaries within the instructional context" [11] (p. 7).

Importantly, the professional relationship is fundamentally unequal, and this inequality is indispensable to the function of that relationship [23]. Professionals are the haves but clients are the have-nots in skills and knowledge. While clients are in need and helpless and dependent on professionals, professionals are powerful with expertise, resources, and authority. Otherwise, professionals are unable to provide clients with the services the clients need.

Due to this power disparity, the responsibility to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries lies entirely on professionals. "The professional roles involve power, therefore, responsibility not to abuse that power," as Stamler and Stone state [11] (p. 8). Professionals are accordingly obliged to restrict their individual rights to the extent that it is necessary to fulfill professional responsibilities. Hence, using the power and position of the professional to meet personal needs such as sexual intimacy constitutes professional boundary violations and the exploitation of clients [11] (pp. 26-29). It constitutes the abuse of the trust people place in professionals, "based on the assumption that their interests will be placed ahead of the professional's interest by the nature of the professional relationship" [11] (p. 63).[16]

Putting the dynamics of the faculty-student sexual involvement into the perspective of the violation of professional boundaries, Stamler and Stone emphasize the professional responsibility of faculty for students: "It is the responsibility of the faculty member to establish and maintain an optimal educational environment. This requires appropriate relationship boundaries" [11] (p. 11). Therefore, "Sex with students within the institutional context violates these faculty duties, much like sex with consumers in medical, psychotherapeutic, and legal settings represents boundary and ethical violations leading to negative consequences" [11] (p. 28).

In relationships with violated professional boundaries, participants are known to fill two or three roles simultaneously. When a student and a professor become intimately involved, "the student is in a dual role of student and sexual partner, and the faculty member is in the dual role of professor and sexual partner" [11] (p. 64). Accordingly, "relationships in which individuals are involved in multiple roles with one another often are difficult," because interactions in multiple roles "create ambiguity and confusion regarding appropriate behavior and expectations" [11] (p. 10).

Multiple roles also blur interpersonal boundaries and make the

relationships ambiguous and indefinite in expectations. Once a relationship boundary is blurred, "the individuals in the relationship need to adjust to the nature of the new relationship. This requires redefining the relationship" [11] (pp. 65-66). The result is that through redefinition, which is often stressfully or excitingly confusing, blurred boundaries increase the vulnerability of the less powerful participant. Elżbieta Ettinger astutely detects in Arendt's excessive submissiveness to Heidegger, even after technically leaving his tutelage, her confusion deepened by the complexity of dealing with "a lover and a professor in one person" [21] (p. 23).

This confusion brought by multiple roles into the teacher-student relationship is not always confined within the institutional setting. Sex with students can confuse individuals in informal educational relationships and adversely affect the dynamics of the appropriate relationship between mentor and mentee. American poet and novelist Janet Lewis's relationship with Yvor Winters provides a telling example of this probability.

Yvor Winters (1900-1968) and Janet Lewis (1899-1998) are known as a happily married couple, with successful writing careers. They first met in 1921 at the University of Chicago and married five years later. Their marriage, which endured forty-two years until the death of Winters in 1968, appears to have been a blessed one not only in terms of personal happiness but also in artistic fulfillment [28] (pp. 88-89). On one hand, as Winters's devoted wife and proficient homemaker, Lewis supported Winters, a poet and graduate student who was to join faculty at Stanford University in a few years, and reared their two children. On the other hand, she published volumes as productively as he did during their time together, which facilitated his reputation for creative and theoretical expertise [28] (pp. 123-124).

Falling in love as undergraduates at the same age, the two writers seem to have enjoyed an ideally equal partnership in private life that contributed to their professional accomplishments. Interestingly, their bond of affection was definitely determined as a relationship between master (Winters) and apprentice (Lewis) [28] (pp. 96-97). Thomas Simmons unearths from the remarkable changes of styles and drastic movement between genres in Lewis's work her ambivalence toward Winters's mentorship and quiet resistance against his influence [28] (pp. 124-126).

Dividing an artist's development into three phases is a common critical practice; however, it does not apply to Lewis's case perfectly because there is a distinctive hiatus in her career as a poet between the middle and the latter phases. During this long hiatus from 1944 to 1970, she turned to fiction. Paying close attention to the fact that Lewis resumed writing poems in her later years after Winters died, Simmons clarifies that her work during this period shows striking thematic similarities with her early work in her maidenhood, characterized by formalistic experimentation and exuberant vitality [28] (p. 153).

Simmons argues that this apparently unexpected return to poetry with the revived early style represents a manifestation of her genuine individuality as an artist, which had been repressed over three decades with Winters [28] (pp. 147-153). Even though her talent made it fruitful and rewarding for novelist Lewis,her silence of twenty-six years as a poet was Lewis's clumsy measure to evade Winters's advice that she found difficult to follow as she matured professionally [28] (pp. 136-146). The differences in personalities between the two poets were gradually irreconcilable to her; however, Winters did not have liberality to celebrate his protégée graduating from his "school" [28] (pp. 92-97). Consequently, she was forced to struggle for her artistic autonomy. However, rebelling against him was even more difficult for her because she not only respected him as a mentor but loved him as a husband. Moving to fiction from poetry was Lewis's non-confrontational solution to continue working as a writer outside Winters's mastery and free from his direct control [28] (pp. 135-138).

Although Winters was to become a university professor, the master-apprentice relationship between Winters and Lewis was completely informal and without institutional authorization. It could be inferred that if that relationship conflicts with another kind of relationship such as a romantic one, they could have resolved it at will. However, once it was changed to involve sexual intimacy, new roles of lovers and then spouses complicated the voluntary educational relationship. Replacement of the different types of relationships was not made by the pair, and adjustment to and redefinition of the new relationship created stressful confusion. The result was, as the less powerful partner, Lewis sacrificed her life as a poet for a quarter of a century for the love of her mentor-husband. Thus, the confusion caused by multiple roles in the teacher-student romantic involvement is not always confined within the university environment. Sex with mentees can confuse participants in informal instructional relationships and disrupt the function of the instructional relationship between mentors and mentees.

The spontaneous yet binding mentoring relationship between Winters and Lewis shows that the triple role of mentor, lover, and father that Jeffrey desires to play with Amy qualifies their relationship as another example of violation of educational boundaries. Moreover, the phenomenon of the formation of special relationships as a result of the adjustment of boundaries and the redefinition of the relationship between faculty and students applies to the powerful inter-relatedness between Amy and Jeffrey. Stamler and Stone observe that the interaction within a special relationship gives both parties a feeling of exaltation: "Being involved in a special relationship with a powerful person whom one admires can feel wonderful" [11] (p. 66). The student feels special as she is selected from a large number of students available to the professor. The professor also feels special because a young student is attracted to him, confusing the student's admiration of his role for her admiration of him as a person.

> Being involved with an individual who admires your knowledge and power can be exciting and validating to the professor's self-esteem. These feelings of specialness are true of most faculty-student relationships that have become sexualized [11] (p. 66).

In a metaphor of "fate," Jeffrey conveys this sense of specialness

to Amy, who is anxious to know why he chose her: "'I think you were chosen for me,' he said, his arm tightening against hers. 'Didn't you know that? Call it fate or destiny or God or whatever you will.' Her face glistening with cold was bent toward him intently" [8] (p. 115).[17]

Whether her youth is the only reason that attracted Jeffrey is a serious concern for Amy from beginning to end. An age difference is of antinomic significance to the specialness of their relationship. Though an obstacle in their relationship, it also makes it is exceptional.

> "If only we were closer in age. Should I have been born sooner, or you later?" He caught the hand that had touched his cheek and held it again at his overcoat for warmth; she wore no gloves. "At your age, I was too busy working. Amy, I wouldn't have paid any attention to you if we had met then. It had to happen now, as it has" [8] (p. 116).[18]

Whereas what drew Jeffrey to Amy is keenly discussed, it is also striking that he is pathetically flattered to be admired by her. He feels special, having probably confused her admiration of his role with her admiration of him as a person:

> "I think your wanting to be a writer makes what's between us stronger. You understand me in a way not many have. No one else has ever called me before—" He stopped shyly.
> "What?" she said.
> "A great man," he said, his voice even softer.
> "All your awards must have convinced you of that!" she said.
> "They are not like having someone you care about tell you," he said. "Someone who hopes to gain nothing from it" [8] (p. 138).

Thus, the formation of a special relationship as a result of the alteration of boundaries and the redefinition of the relationship between teacher and student to involve dual roles aptly applies to the powerful inter-relatedness between Amy and Jeffrey. The multiple roles he wants to play with her suggests that their closeness is created by a violation of appropriate boundaries in the teacher-student relationship. Therefore, even if it does not reach consummation, their relationship can be considered a teacher-student sexual involvement and a case of sexual harassment in the educational context.

Admittedly, Amy's apprenticeship with Jeffrey does not take place within a university setting. Having no job of teaching, he is neither a professor nor her advisor in an official sense. However, in the same way as faculty are often looked up to as a role model for students, especially at the graduate level, all mentors provide a model for mentees. Training through the mentoring relationship has great significance for professionals because of a high degree of specialization required to practice a profession. Any therapist, lawyer, or physician would not be able to embrace the profession without undergoing apprenticeship. Therefore, among various kinds of instructional relationships, the mentor-mentee relationship can be located beside the professor-student relationship in graduate education. Training for artists and writers might seem more individualistic and at the discretion of trainees than that for medical, psychotherapeutic, or legal practitioners. Nevertheless, unless artists and writers are excluded from the profession, having a mentor would be important for arts and letters students, even if this area is not institutionalized as much as others.

Sociologist Bonnie D. Oglensky does not distinguish between delineative organizations and less institutionalized fields where the mentoring relationship takes place. Her study on mentorship suggests that medical, psychotherapeutic, or legal professionals are only a few instances of those who are trained through mentorship. Professional people experience mentor-mentee relationships "across a broad spectrum of professions in business, academia, the arts, health care, finance, journalism, computer technology, and civil service" [29] (p. 6). Therefore, the mentor-protégée relationship between Jeffrey and Amy can be dealt with in the same concentric framework as that used for professor-student relationships.

5. Sexual Harassment: The Reality of the Faulkner-Williams Relationship

It is unlikely that sexual harassment did not occur between Faulkner and Williams, being assured that the relationship between Jeffrey and Amy is a teacher-student sexual involvement. That is not only because the contents of *The Wintering* are surprisingly in accordance with Williams's account of her experiences in her memoirs such as "Twenty Will Not Come Again" and "Faulkner's Advice to a Young Writer" [7, 30] and also in journalistic interviews with her including those by Elizabeth Mullener and Mississippi Educational Television (Joan Williams Interview About William Faulkner) [32, 38]. More importantly, Faulkner's voluminous correspondence with Williams corroborates the sincerity of her recollection. Williams's memory is free from exaggeration. Compared with Faulkner's actual treatment of her, it is not so much explicit as restrained. Faulkner's letters to Williams are full of his infatuation for her, erupting with his jealousy toward young men with whom she was going out, and many express a fiery attachment with highly sexual, even ribald remarks. It is evident that Faulkner ardently desired Williams and eventually made love to her.

Culminating in two of his letters (Faulkner, 1949-1961, W. Falkner to Williams, December 2, 1952, August 5, 1953), [31] Faulkner's vocabulary gets close to "the F word" [3] (p. 30). His pining for Williams is fiercely glowing. However, Williams shows a curious tendency to emphasize a romantic, gallant aspect, neglecting the passionate, erotic one in Faulkner's infatuation. She even says in an interview: "He never suggested that we go to a hotel or motel or anything like that. So you see, he had his own peculiarities or hangups. Propriety meant a lot to him. And he was also very afraid that he would cause me harm. This was part of his romantic nature" [32] (p. 12). Williams's comments seem to excuse Faulkner's sexual appetite. Their sexual relationship was finally consummated in June 1952 [3] (p. 116). Nevertheless, as Hickman concludes, "Joan insists that Faulkner's letters depict a sexual union more imaginary than actual," [3] (p. 28) and effectively "She downplayed Faulkner's fervent sexuality" [3] (p. 6).

Similar to that between Jeffrey and Amy, the relationship between

Faulkner and Williams was characterized by sexual harassment. First, since Faulkner's sexual advances were even more ardent than those of Jeffrey to Amy, it is logical to conclude that his behavior involves sexual harassment against Williams since her reluctance to enter into a sexual union with him is above suspicion. Secondarily important is that Amy reverses roles with Jeffrey sometimes. This phenomenon is created by the feelings of ambivalence that clients develop toward therapists when they become sexually intimate with one another [11] (p. 63).

According to Stamler and Stone, "When a relationship between a therapist and a client becomes sexualized," "the roles of two individuals may become reversed. Therapist may confide in the client, placing the client in the therapeutic role" [11] (p. 64). This reversal is illusory. A fundamental inequality between the professional and the client might fade but cannot be nullified [23]. Clients who have been sexually exploited by therapists feel guilty about the relationship and, out of feelings of regret, wish to be in control of the behavior of their therapists [33].

Stamler and Stone found similar responses among students intimately involved with faculty. The first date of Amy and Jeffrey provides a striking example of this role reversal. When seeing him off at the station in the evening, she is seized by a strange sense of responsibility for him.

> "I feel responsible for Almoner. You've got to get safely on that train." "Yes, that's what I've needed," he said, looking happily. Someone to take care of me. Perhaps our roles are to be reversed. You're to be the teacher." "Oh, no," she said. "You're the teacher, but I can see to your safety for the world" [8] (p. 89).

Amy and Jeffrey are confused and think their roles can be inverted despite the obvious disparity in both their ages and writing careers.

This hallucinational inversion of roles is not only recognized between Amy and Jeffrey, but is a reproduction of the feelings Williams often had in her interactions with Faulkner. Williams's statement in "Twenty" highlights her ambivalent feelings toward Faulkner in her eagerness to play the caretaker role. "I had been appointed by something called Fate to take care of William Faulkner, and for the whole world. It was my duty. And I would come to love the man, Bill" [9] (p. 372).

Williams's "love" for Faulkner would have actually been her gratitude for him. She was probably in the mental state that Dziech and Weiner find in sexual harassment victims in universities. They note that the ambivalence female victims frequently show sometimes takes a form of sympathy for the harasser. A victimized student "may also feel guilty because [she was] flattered by the professor's interest in [her abilities or potential, and] she may have a certain amount of gratitude for the interest he has in her" [1] (pp. 83-84).

Interestingly, playing the role of *caretaker* prevails as part of the emotional work protégées engage in mentoring relationships. According to Bonnie D. Oglensky, "as a *gatekeeper*," protégées sometimes "manage delicate situations for mentors," and other times, "protégés act as *emissaries* when mentors have reputations of being difficult to deal with" [29] (p. 90, emphasis in original). What drives protégés to such performance is their "sense of debt embedded in their one-down position" [29] (p. 88). They oblige themselves to display devotion to mentors to compensate for the lack of reciprocity in their relationships. Although it is incredible that role reversal is common among mentorships of various professions, all the roles Oglensky describes alarmingly coincide with Amy's conduct toward Jeffrey and also Williams's conduct toward Faulkner: "Protégés try to protect mentors" [29] (p. 90).

The final proof of this study's argument that the sexual relationship between Williams and Faulkner was sexual harassment is that Faulkner perceived that his attachment to Williams was figuratively incestuous [19]. This is crucial because in a symbolic sense, incest is known to lurk behind professionals' sexual exploitation of clients. A connection between the roles of parent and professional provides a luminous explanation for this revelation.

Incest is understood as an abuse of power by adults over children to make them serve their sexual needs. In *Father-Daughter Incest*, psychiatrist Judith L. Herman identifies incest as the prototype of sexual abuse of children [34]. Revealing its exploitative nature, she demonstrates that sexual contact between adults and children is a misuse of adult privilege. Since the appearance of her pathbreaking work jointly with Lisa Hirschman, the notion of sexual abuse has redefined violence so that it includes immaterial, psychological exertions of power [11] (p. 62). Notably, this notion made it possible to consider sexual involvement in relationships with a high power disparity exploitative and unethical, even if the involvement is not between parent and child but between unrelated adult and child, or even between adults.

As discussed earlier, the professional relationship is one of those unequivocally unequal relationships with the potential for exploitation. Just as children depend on adults, clients trust professionals completely. As with parents who protect children and nurture them until they grow up, professionals help clients to improve their welfare. Although professionals serve clients for fees, researchers recognize that the professional-client relationship imitates the parent-child relationship. In other words, the professional temporarily stands as a foster parent of the client.

Examining professional relationships with respect to their pseudo-parent role and their potential for boundary violations, Glen O. Gabbard states: "Most fundamentally, professional relationships are characterized by the development of a powerful transference element in which a parent-like relationship is unconsciously reestablished. Hence, sexual relationships under such circumstances are always symbolically incestuous" [35] (p. xi). According to him, incest victims and those who have been exploited by professionals show similar symptoms, such as shame, the feeling of responsibility for their victimization, and discounting of the seriousness of the abuse. Stamler and Stone detect the same parental role in the relationship between faculty and students [11]

(pp. 61-62) and are concerned with Gabbard's observation that "The victims of this form of professional incest have placed their trust in a person whom they assume will place their interests above his or her own by the very nature of the professional relationship. When this trust is betrayed, the impact is often as damaging as familial incest" [35] (p. xi). If the educational relationship is counted among professional relationships, students intimately involved with teachers can suffer as severely as incest victims do.

In fact, this parent-like role in professional relationships is not monopolized by medical, therapeutic, and legal professionals. It is more generally observable in mentoring relationships in various professions and occupations. In *Ambivalence in Mentorship*, Oglensky confirms with a psychoanalytically-oriented insight that this type of professional relationship resembles the parent-child relationship in structure that generates ambivalent feelings in the less powerful partner toward the authority figure in the relationship [29]. Just as children love and admire their parents, protégées often admire their mentors. However, as children unconsciously hate and wish to get rid of their parents, protégées also do the same toward their mentors. "Mediated by unequal power and strength," as Oglensky concludes, "the emotional tie to parents, teachers, and mentors is ambivalent from the start because it is linked simultaneously to a desire to identify with and a desire to replace the authority figure" [29] (p. 4). It is worth noting that she recognizes that these dynamics are also observed between students and teachers. The parent-like role in professional relationships is thus widely shared among a range of fields.

Faulkner perceives an incestuous tinge in his commitment to Williams. In his hand-written letter from Saint Moritz, Switzerland to Williams in New York City, dated December 21, 1953, Faulkner compares the complexity of their relationship with incest between father and daughter. As with many of his letters, the confession is adapted with exquisite precision in "The Wintering" as Jeffrey's confession to Amy: "There's a bond that nothing can break. There's been love between us, but sin. No, I'm not talking about morality. I know I was the father you wanted. We've committed incest, then. That alone will always hold us together" [8] (pp. 306-307).

Williams ascribes the reason Amy was not passionately in love with Jeffrey to differences in age and marital status, but later she became aware that Jeffrey's surrogate fatherhood was also problematic, just as Faulkner's was to herself [32] (p. 13).[20] The scene in which Amy's repulsion against Jeffrey asserts itself in her involuntary motion reveals the nature of the taboo that prohibits their sexual union:

> But how much, Amy thought, clenching her teeth against the feel of Jeff's hand, she had never told anyone. Was she now responsible for feeling nothing? He was older and married and everything in her past told her what was happening was wrong. She cried silently, Don't! with her teeth gritted, her soul and her spirit were unmanageable and ungiving.
> He said, unexpectedly, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry" [8] (p. 244).

Gritting one's teeth is a manifestation of a visceral aversion. Amy's response of this kind to a caress from Jeffrey may even indicate her hatred toward incestuous union, when comparing it with the reaction of Williams's other protagonist to her father's intrusion in "The Contest":

> Something dead had come back to life. Another memory surfaced: she thought long gone and knew now it never had been. Hands holding her child's thighs went creepy-crawly up in a way she knew even then was wrong. "Don't Daddy," she had said, wobbling above the crowd. The fingers went on up, touching the biting, elastic edges of her lace panties. […] A thick finger separated with a scratchy hangnail, probing toward the warm, soft, moist, pink hole belonging only to herself, offering comfort in the night. "Your girl self," he whispered [47] (p. 28).

Unlike Amy, Mary Virginia was only a child when she was sexually abused under a fatherly pretense. The shock apparently blacked out all memory of the incident, but many decades later, she suddenly and spontaneously recovered those previously inaccessible memories. This phenomenon is called traumatic amnesia and the return of traumatic memories in psychotherapy. In this psychological mechanism, individuals who experienced fatal accidents or catastrophic events temporarily lose memory of the experience; however, the memories lie dormant deeply inside the mind and sometime in the future they return involuntarily and without fail [37] (p. 227).

On that fearful flashback moment, Hickman elicits a single comment from Williams: "She said simply that, as far as the story's protagonist was concerned, 'It only happened once'" [3] (p. 37).

Although Hickman refrains from articulating her speculation at this suggestive remark, it implies the kind of revulsion in which Williams's apparent reluctance against sexual intimacy with Faulkner was rooted. The striking similarities in responses between the two different heroines of Williams exemplifies that there is little difference in the magnitude of traumatic impacts between professional incest and familial incest.

Symbolic incest haunts not only William's writing, in a way that is reminiscent of her relationship with Faulkner, but her reality. Sexual harassment is present in her recreation of her connection with Faulkner, though Amy experiences it to a lesser degree than Williams does. This means that Faulkner's sexual advances toward Williams were even more ardent than Jeffrey's to Amy. Since Williams found it difficult to evade sexual union with Faulkner, there is little reason his behavior did not constitute sexual harassment against her. The incestuous tinge in their involvement provides convincing evidence that Faulkner overstepped boundaries in the professional relationship of teacher and student. Therefore, the relationship between Faulkner and Williams was characterized by sexual harassment as well as that between Jeffrey and Amy. A television interview with Williams suggests that she might possibly have perceived, even though years after their affair and even after the publication of *The Wintering*, this exploitative nature in her mentor's courting:

> He said, 'I only thought that it would be easier for me to help you if their (sic) were no more barriers between us. You know I'm not going to force you and I'm not going to beg you either.' (the old professor ploy) And she kept saying 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry' hopelessly [38] (p. 15).

6. Conclusion

What is Amy Howard's relationship with Jeffrey Almoner in Joan Williams's *The Wintering*? How does it reflect Williams's experience with Faulkner? The current study found answers to those questions through the multiple methodologies of literary criticism and historical research with sociopsychological consideration on sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and mentorship. The summarized results are as follows. First, the relationship between Amy and Jeffrey can be deemed a teacher-student sexual involvement, and thus a relationship between a victim and an offender of sexual harassment. Second, the interactions between Amy and Jeffrey moderately reflect what happened between Williams and Faulkner; therefore, the relationship between Williams and Faulkner also constitutes a case of sexual harassment in the instructional context.

This study is significant in the following ways. First, the study clarifies gender dynamics between Williams and Faulkner through those between Amy and Jeffrey, and that the ties that bind them together and multiple roles they assumed in that involvement were a result of a professional boundary violation; thus, it fills the gap in the literature. Second, this study situated training for artists and writers in the broader category of professional training, in which the mentor-mentee relationship is important for a trainee's success. The study suggests that the mentor-mentee relationship in the world of arts and letters be counted as a variant of the professor-student relationship in graduate school, as well as the mentoring relationship in more institutionalized professions, to which a modified framework of sexual harassment is applicable when the relationship involves a violation of professional boundaries.

These findings do not diminish the value of Williams's work. Instead, they help understand the depths of struggle that led her to create strong novels such as *Old Powder Man*, in which she reconstructs the life and work of her own, distant father, P. E. Williams [39]. Seen in the examples of Artemisia Gentileschi in the 16th century Florence and Camille Claudel in the 19th century France, female artists have threaded a thorny path for several centuries. Williams's intimate involvement with her mentor was two decades before the advent of the second wave of feminism but offers food for thought for professional women today because, across various career fields, the process of socialization for women professionals still involves the risk of sexual exploitation. The fact that Williams survived the problematic apprenticeship to be a writer is proof of her admirable resilience as well as her writing talent.

What was stunning in the #Mee Too campaign was that it revealed not only the persistence but also the pervasion of sexual harassment in every aspect of life. Many learners and trainees joined women professionals typically in the film industry in speaking out about their victimized experiences. Training in the fields of sports and arts including performing arts is not necessarily provided in institutional settings, but amateur athletes and artists who have been sexually exploited called their coaches and instructors sexual harassers. A Japanese aspiring journalist Shiori Ito preceded all other survivors in the US in accusing her offender in September 2017.[21] She was raped by an influential journalist of a major TV station in Japan, right after her private meeting with him looking for a job. Journalism, like the entertainment industry, has a lot riding on freelance workers like her, and therefore the logic of power can work violently between individuals beyond organizations. She was assaulted in informal professional relationships. Though from outside the US, Ito's experiences revealed that sexual harassment permeated throughout society. It occurs not exclusively in workplaces and academia but also in the spaces between the two realms, particularly in professional training and the transition from school to full-time work.

An increase in the number of women at the entrance and middle levels is not enough to close the gender gap in academia and other worlds of intellectuals and artists. Presumably, there still exists an undercurrent that incites female students, trainees, and junior partners to reconcile themselves to sexual exploitation by teachers, mentors, and superiors in the process of socialization into a profession. This partially explains why, despite all the efforts of four decades to eradicate it, sexual harassment continues, especially in the form of seemingly consensual sexual involvement. Although this study is not exhaustive but explorative, it provides a case examination that affords a glimpse of that undercurrent. Rules and regulations are not a panacea, but for effective prevention, the problem of sexual harassment must be described in all its complexity [40] (p. 406). This study hopes to contribute to solving the issue of female under-representation in the intellectual and artistic circles. As well qualified members, women could be integrated more fully in the professional world.

Acknowledgement

This article is based on my thesis, submitted to the City University of New York in May 2019. A different version of this article was read at World Women Forum 2023 Paris, France hosted by Star-Icon Conferences held on 8-9 March in 2023.

I wish to thank Dr. Lisa C. Hickman, not merely for her inspiring work from which I drew many of my ideas at an early stage of this project but also for kindly introducing me to Dr. Matthew Williams Bowen, individual holder of Joan Williams's copyright. I am grateful to Dr. Bowen for granting me the permission to quote his mother's words. Aside from Faulkner's massive correspondence with Williams, I was fortunate to find a typescript of an unattended interview with Williams in archives at the University of Virginia Library. I would like to acknowledge efficient and informative assistance including advanced digitization services provided by librarians at the library's Special Collections Department. Access to the valuable material from home proved a real advantage, given the distance between New York City and Virginia State.

I am indebted to the Women's and Gender Studies Master's Program at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York for financial aid to do archival research at a low cost. An uncompetitively available fund for multiuse of this kind is invaluable, especially for master's students.

In conclusion, I owe my great improvement in writing to Dr. Andrea Parmegiani, the then Associate Professor of English at Bronx Community College of The City University of New York. His writing tutorial is not simply effective but illuminative. It inspired me to persist in writing beyond cultural differences between East and West.

Finally, although a few professors made helpful comments on earlier drafts or proposals of my thesis, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Matt Brim, the then Assistant Professor of Queer Studies and English at College of Staten Island of The City University of New York, for his insightful criticism and heartfelt encouragement. He admirably showed me how much a gifted teacher could do.

I dedicate this work in memory of Kazuko Takemura, 1954-2011, Professor at Ochanomizu University and my advisor as well for her frustrated mentorship by her premature death.

References

1. Dziech, B. W., & Weiner, L. (1990). *The Lecherous Professor: Sexual Harassment on Campus*. University of Illinois Press.
2. Williams, J. (1971). *The Wintering*. Harcourt, Brace & World.
3. Hickman, L. C. (2006). *William Faulkner and Joan Williams: the romance of two writers.* McFarland.
4. Wilde, M. C., & Borsten, O. (1976). *A Loving Gentleman: The Love Story of William Faulkner and Meta Carpenter*.
5. Blotner, J. (1984). *Faulkner: A Biography. 2 vols.* Random House.
6. Blotner, J. (Ed). (1977). *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*. Random House.
7. Williams, J. (1980). Twenty Will Not Come Again. *Atlantic Monthly, 245*, 58-65.
8. Williams, J. (1997). *The Wintering* (Reprinted ed.). Louisiana State UP.
9. Williams, J. (1997). Afterword: Twenty Will Not Come Again. In *The Wintering* (pp. 371-389) (Reprinted ed.). Louisiana State UP.
10. Gay, R. (2014). *Bad Feminist: Essays*. HarperCollins Publishers.
11. Stamler, V. L., & Stone, G. L. (1998). *Faculty–student sexual involvement: Issues and interventions*. Sage Publications, Inc.
12. Mooney, C. Editor notes. (2012, November 2). *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* B3.
13. Tenbrunsel, A. E., Rees, M. R., & Diekmann, K. A. (2019). Sexual harassment in academia: Ethical climates and bounded ethicality. *Annual review of psychology, 70*(1), 245-270.
14. Karami, A., White, C. N., Ford, K., Swan, S., & Spinel, M. Y. (2020). Unwanted advances in higher education: Uncovering sexual harassment experiences in academia with text mining. *Information Processing & Management, 57*(2), 102167.
15. Cipriano, A. E., Holland, K. J., Bedera, N., Eagan, S. R., & Diede, A. S. (2022). Severe and pervasive? Consequences of sexual harassment for graduate students and their Title IX report outcomes. *Feminist criminology, 17*(3), 343-367.
16. Rosenthal, M. N., Smidt, A. M., & Freyd, J. J. (2016). Still second class: Sexual harassment of graduate students. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 40*(3), 364-377.
17. Cantor, D., Fisher, B., Chibnall, S., Harps, S., Townsend, R., Thomas, G., .Lee, H., Kranz, V., Herbison, R. & Madden, K. (2020). Report on the AAU campus climate survey on sexual assault and misconduct. *We state for the Association of American Universities (AAU), 362*, 2019.
18. Curtis, J. W. (2014). The employment status of instructional staff members in higher education, Fall 2011. *American Association of University Professors*, 2011-12.
19. Wilson, R. (2004). Where the elite teach, it's still a man's world. *The chronicle of higher education*, A8.
20. Gardner, S. K. (2009). Coming out of the sexual harassment closet: one woman's story of politics and change in higher education. *NWSA Journal, 21*(2), 171-195.
21. Ettinger, E. (1997). *Hannah Arendt/Martin Heidegger*. Yale University Press.
22. French, J. R., & Raven, B. (1959). The bases of social power. *Studies in social power, 150,* 167.
23. Archard, D. (1994). Exploited consent. *Journal of Social Philosophy, 25,* 92-101.
24. Mackinnon, C. A., (1979). Sexual harassment of working women: A case of sex discrimination. In Francis, L. P. (Ed.). (2001). *Sexual harassment as an ethical issue in academic life.* (pp. 129-145). Rowman & Littlefield.
25. Wittenberg, J. B. (1984). The career of Joan Williams: Problems in assessment. In P. W. Prenshaw (Ed), *Women Writers of the Contemporary South*. (pp. 273-282). University of Mississippi Press.
26. Wittenberg, J. B. (1990). Joan Williams: The rebellious heart. In T. B. Inge (Ed), *Southern Women Writers: The New Generation* (pp. 97-113). University of Alabama Press.
27. Peterson, M. R. (1992). At personal risk: Boundary violations in professional-client relationships. Norton.
28. Simmons, T. (1994). *Erotic Reckonings: Mastery and Apprenticeship in the Work of Poets and Lovers.* University of Illinois Press.
29. Oglensky, B. D. (2023). *Ambivalence in Mentorship: An Exploration of Emotional Complexities.* Routledge.
30. Williams, J. (1992). Faulkner's Advice to a Young Writer. In E. Harrington and A. J. Abbadie (Eds), *Faulkner and the Short Story: Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha* (pp. 253-262). University of Mississippi Press.
31. Faulkner, W. (1949-1961). *William Faulkner Papers*, Accession #9394, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA, United States.
32. Mullener, E. (1982, September 19). Joan Williams and William Faulkner: A romance remembered. *Times Picayune, Dixie Magazine*, 8+.
33. Pope, K. S. (1989). Teacher-student sexual intimacy. In G. O. Gabbard (Ed), *Sexual Exploitation in Professional Relationships* (pp. 163-176). American Psychiatric Press.
34. Herman, J. L. with Hirschman, L. (1981). *Father-Daughter Incest.* Harvard UP.
35. Gabbard, G. O. (Ed.). (1989). *Sexual exploitation in professional relationships.* American Psychiatric Pub.
36. Hickman, L. C. (Ed.). (2015). *Remembering: Joan Williams' Uncollected Pieces.* Open Road Distribution.

37. Herman, J. L. (2000). *Father-Daughter Incest.* (2nd ed.). Harvard UP.
38. Williams, J. (1976). Joan Williams Interview About William Faulkner/Interviewer Unknown. Mississippi Educational Television, Accession #10224-a, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA, United States.
39. Williams, J. (1966). *Old Powder Man*. Harcourt, Brace & World Inc.
40. Bondestam, F., & Lundqvist, M. (2020). Sexual harassment in higher education–a systematic review. *European Journal of Higher Education, 10*(4), 397-419.
41. Richards, T. N. (2019). No evidence of "weaponized Title IX" here: An empirical assessment of sexual misconduct reporting, case processing, and outcomes. *Law and human behavior, 43*(2), 180.
42. Alberstein, M., & Rosenberg-Lavi, S. (2024). In the Shadow of the Law: Applying Therapeutic Approaches to Sexual Harassment Conflicts in the Context of# MeToo. *Pepp. Disp. Resol. LJ, 24,* 227.
43. Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders.Psychological review, 109(3), 573.
44. National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). Sexual harassment of women: Climate, culture, and consequences in academic sciences, engineering, and medicine. National Academies Press.
45. Paludi, M. & Paludi Jr., C. (Eds.). (2003). *Academic and Workplace Sexual Harassment.* Praeger.
46. Wasti, S. A., & Cortina, L. M. (2002). Coping in context: Sociocultural determinants of responses to sexual harassment. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 83*(2), 394.
47. Williams, J. (2015). The Contest. In L. C. Hickman (Ed), *Remembering: Joan Williams' Uncollected Pieces* (pp. 21- 52). Open Road Distribution.
48. Williams, J. (1995). The Contest. *The Chattahoochee Review. 15*(4). 1-28.
49. MacKinnon, C. A. (1979). *Sexual harassment of working women: A case of sex discrimination*. Yale UP.

Notes

[1]The concept of sexual harassment originated with Catharine A. MacKinnon (1979).

[2]As apparent in, for instance, *Academic and Workplace Sexual Harassment* edited by Michele Paludi and Carmen Paludi Jr. (2003), the dichotomous classification has the solid support of researchers and administrators.

[3]Former White House intern Monica Lewinski's experience with the then President Bill Clinton in 1995 to 1996, known as the Clinton Lewinski scandal, can be considered a case of sexual harassment of professional women in practical training.

The most well-known of Faulkner's loves is Meta W. Carpenter. Their extramarital relationship continued intermittently for fifteen years [4] [5].

For example, these passages are similar. The former passage is quoted from *The Wintering* and the latter is from "Twenty:"

"[...] *And yes you were right guessing twenty. But I've become twenty since seeing you. Twenty will not come again and take from seventy springs a score, it leaves me only fifty more* [8] (p.69; emphasis in original)."

"'Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs score,
It only leaves me fifty more.'
See, I always listen to you [9]. (p. 377)"

This pair of passages provide a good example of the agreement between Williams's and Faulkner's expressions:

"The point of writing, he had said, was to make something passionate and moving and true, and the story was moving and true. It made him want to cry a little for all the sad frustration of solitude, isolation, aloneness in which every human being lives, who, for all the blood kinship and everything else, can't really communicate, touch. [9] (p. 385)"

"It is moving and true, it made me want to cry a little for all the sad frustration of solitude, isolation, aloneness in which every human being lives, who for all the blood kinship and everything else, can't (sic) really communicate, touch. [6] (p. 297)"

[6]The same designation appears in "Twenty:" "We were soul mates, and if that was sentimentality we were not against it. What's wrong with sentimentality? I asked. Faulkner said, "People (sic) are afraid of it" [9] (p. 384).

[7]As Rosenthal et al. argue, sexual harassment in graduate school is an understudied problem [16]. It is widespread, yet hidden because victims are generally unwilling to report their experiences (Karami et al., 2020). Moreover, reports to Title IX offices seldom result in formal investigations or perpetrator sanctions [41]. Cipriano et al. locate the reasons why most reports are deemed unactionable in Title IX offices' stereotypical, narrow views of sexual harassment [15]. On the other hand, research has suggested that academic women are most likely to experience sexual discrimination in STEM fields.

As the qualities needed in STEM are typically ascribed to men rather than women, women pursuing those fields challenge traditional gender roles and undergo sexism (Eagly & Karau, 2002) [46]. According to the survey by the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, sexual harassment in those fields involves many victims among female faculty and staff too (National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018) [44].

[8]The campus climate survey by Association of American Universities (AAU) recently revealed that LGBTQ individuals indicate experiencing sexual harassment more substantially than their heterosexual peers, while the reported rate of sexual harassment for Asians is less than that for Whites [13]. It has also been found that women from traditional, patriarchal cultures are more likely to deny their experiences regarding sexual harassment than their Western counterparts (Wasti & Cortina, 2002) [46]. Though a kind of self-deception, denial is one of coping strategies that victims often employ. Not seeing sexual harassment for what it is, they disengage themselves from the unpleasant experiences. This "motivated blindness" results in the delay of the detection of a misconduct and the perpetuation of the harassing behavior [13] (p. 257).

Karami et al., found that having love affairs with professors was still outstanding as a form of unwanted sexual attention endured by students and in some cases, affairs were so pervasive that they were almost the norm (2020).

[10] The surname of Jeffrey is full of implications. According to Dr. Matthew Williams Bowen, one of Williams's sons, it was Faulkner who recommended Williams to adopt this name. He told her that he chose the word Almoner because it signified "one who begs" (based on Dr. Bowen's reply to my e-mail on the sixth March in 2019). Meanwhile, it was once used to mean medical social worker. I would like to thank Dr. Nancy K. Miller, the then Distinguished professor in English, Comparative Literature, and French at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York,for calling my attention to this thought-provoking detail.

[11]Amy's attempts to defend her autonomy is explicit in this conversation:

"I had a speech all arranged," he said, "in case you were mad about the changes I made in the story you sent me […]

"[…] I know that story's not good. And how could I be mad at any corrections you make? I only get mad at myself, for not being able to do better. And for not making myself work more."

"Before, when I've made corrections in your things, you said you were afraid the work wasn't yours then. I keep telling you it is. We've all learned from someone else, you know. Maybe only by reading, but we learned somehow." [8] (pp. 142-143)

Just as Amy gets angry at Jeffrey for making corrections in her manuscripts, Williams regrets with anger that Faulkner made changes in hers when he should have guided her to do so. "He didn't really teach me a lot. […] I think he could have, but maybe not, because most really good writers are probably not really good teachers. Mostly he would take things and rewrite them and then I would feel it wasn't mine. You see, he couldn't tell me what to do: he could just rewrite it." [30] (p. 16).

[12]The conversations reappear on pp. 172-173. "'I thought I could help,' he said. 'I know you're not frigid. You only need to have something frozen inside you melted. Something your past did to you. But I guess I'm the wrong one. ' Miserable, she said, 'I'm sorry.'"

[13]The detrimental effects of exploited experiences are very diverse. In addition to decline in academic performance, many survivors develop mental health problems after their victimization, including anxiety, depression, and/or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) [14,15,16]. Furthermore, female graduate students who have been sexually harassed suffer from fear for their safety [16] even to the extent that they find it difficult to continue to participate in their graduate programs [15].

[14]Faulkner was a perfect model of Jeffrey also in alcoholism. Curiously, Williams often went to pains to minimize Faulkner's notoriety for alcoholism. Compare [9] (pp. 372-373) with [32] (p. 16).

"I always thought his drinking was sort of emphasized" [32] (p. 16). She repeats the same assertion in her memoir that Faulkner had not been alcoholic: "He was a binge drinker and no daily tippler, and could leave alcohol alone at will, and often did" [9] (p. 372). "The binges were always bad enough that he had to go to the hospital" [32] (p. 16), she recalls, and there "were many binges while I knew him" [9] (pp. 372-373). Her tolerance is amazing. "My father had these drinking binges, so I was prepared for that kind of thing" [32] (p. 16), and whenever he got drunk, she handled that beautifully and dutifully. Contrary to what she intended, Williams did not notice the very fact that she "never drank except when he was so drunk that you had to take him to the hospital" testifies to the acute disposition of Faulkner's alcoholism [32] (p. 14). It can be safely surmised that Williams had little knowledge of acute alcoholism.

[15] "Pygmalion" is Faulkner's own word in his letter to Williams dated on the seventh of January in 1950 preserved in William Faulkner Papers. "Twenty" includes an almost identical sentence to the original by Faulkner. "He wished to be a father I had had in name only; to be more; to make me a writer: to get the good stuff out of Joan Williams; Pygmalion, not creating a cold and beautiful statue in order to fall in love with it, but taking his love and creating a poet out of her [9] (p. 373).

[16]Given the reality that sexual harassment continues despite the spread of prevention policies, various researchers begin to distrust the reliability of the legal frame of sexual harassment [13, 40, 41,42]. Tenbrunsel et al. propose an alternative view of sexual harassment as an ethical issue. What sexual harassment violates is the moral foundations of care, fairness, loyalty, authority, and purity [13].

[17]As I show in the fifth section, this sense of specialness expressed as fate is shared also between Williams and Faulkner.

[18] The conversations reappear on p. 107.

She said, testingly, "Maybe you just like me because I'm younger."

"It wasn't your face in the training station that day," he said. "I wouldn't have recognized you if you hadn't spoken first. I never really think that, in actuality, you are a schoolgirl [...]."

Significantly, whether her youth is the only reason that attracted him is also Williams's concern in relation to Faulkner. "Twenty" reveals the way in which Williams felt special that she had been selected among a number of young women available to Faulkner.

"But I worried it was simply my age that drew him. *It wasn't your face in the Memphis bus station that day. I would never have known it if you had not come up to me*. And didn't I realize I was not the only young woman to write to him? I could imagine that, and knew there was a multitude of young women who would like to be in Faulkner's company; and in New York girls far more worldly than I" [9] (p. 383; emphasis in original).

"If only, I said, I could have been born earlier, or you later. No, he said. Earlier I was too busy writing to have had time for you.

I knew instinctively I had come along in his life at the right time: when he needed something, a catalyst to start him writing again […] he needed something, someone, to write not to but *for"* [9] (p. 383; emphasis in original).

Williams quotes the same words by Faulkner as for what the catalyst means also in "Faulkner's Advice to a Young Writer," saying "His own big book [A Fable], he wrote in 1952, is 'going well. I just need something, someone to write not to but *for'"* [30] (p. 258; emphasis in original).

[19]Incest is a familiar issue to Faulkner readers as one of his idiosyncratic motifs. Not a few protagonists in his oeuvres such as *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) and *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) show an obsession with incest.

[20]In an interview by Elizabeth Mullener, reporter of *Times Picayune, Dixie Magazine,* Williams relates the reason she was not madly in love with Faulkner as her "wanting to make him [her] father" [28] (p.13). She did not have a father close to her.

"You have romantic dreams and things, but 31 years is a big difference between people. Especially when you're 20 and you've never been married. I felt a lot of affection for him, which I think is part of love, and it's something that doesn't die as quickly as love. And also, there was something of

wanting a father mixed up in there, too, because I did not have a father who was close to me. And I was looking at an older man and wanting to make him my father. [32] (p. 13)

Williams's father, P. H. Williams, was a self-made, successful business man who introduced the extensive use of dynamite into flood control of the Mississippi river. In *Old Powder Man,* Williams reconstructs the life and work of him who was so often out that remained emotionally distant from her.

[21]For her contribution to empowering women in Japan who have been put into silence on sexual violence, Shiori Ito was listed by *Time* magazine on the 100 most influential people in the world in September 2020. She was also selected for the most respected Japanese 100 by *Newsweek* in 2019.