

years about the importance of condoms, they were 25 percent more likely in the aroused state than in the cold state to predict that they would forego condoms. In all these cases they failed to predict the influence of arousal on their sexual preferences, morality, and approach to safe sex.

The results showed that when Roy and the other participants were in a cold, rational, superego-driven state, they respected women; they were not particularly attracted to the odd sexual activities we asked them about; they always took the moral high ground; and they expected that they would always use a condom. They thought that they understood themselves, their preferences, and what actions they were capable of. But as it turned out, they completely underestimated their reactions.

No matter how we looked at the numbers, it was clear that the magnitude of underprediction by the participants was substantial. Across the board, they revealed in their unaroused state that they themselves did not know what they were like once aroused. Prevention, protection, conservatism, and morality disappeared completely from the radar screen. They were simply unable to predict the degree to which passion would change them.*

IMAGINE WAKING UP one morning, looking in the mirror, and discovering that someone else—something alien but human—has taken over your body. You're uglier, shorter, hairier; your lips are thinner, your incisors are longer, your nails are filthy, your face is flatter. Two cold, reptilian eyes

*These results apply most directly to sexual arousal and its influence on who we are; but we can also assume that other emotional states (anger, hunger, excitement, jealousy, and so on) work in similar ways, making us strangers to ourselves.