

Roy moves his left hand to a scale that ranges from “no” to “yes” and taps his answer. The next question appears: “Would you slip a woman a drug to increase the chance that she would have sex with you?”

Again, Roy selects his answer, and a new question pops up. “Would you always use a condom?”

BERKELEY ITSELF IS a dichotomous place. It was a site of antiestablishment riots in the 1960s, and people in the Bay Area snarkily refer to the famously left-of-center city as the “People’s Republic of Berkeley.” But the large campus itself draws a surprisingly conformist population of top-level students. In a survey of incoming freshmen in 2004, only 51.2 percent of the respondents thought of themselves as liberal. More than one-third (36 percent) deemed their views middle-of-the-road, and 12 percent claimed to be conservatives. To my surprise, when I arrived at Berkeley, I found that the students were in general not very wild, rebellious, or likely to take risks.

The ads we posted around Sproul Plaza read as follows: “Wanted: Male research participants, heterosexual, 18 years-plus, for a study on decision making and arousal.” The ad noted that the experimental sessions would demand about an hour of the participants’ time, that the participants would be paid \$10 per session, and that the experiments could involve sexually arousing material. Those interested in applying could respond to Mike, the research assistant, by e-mail.

For this study, we decided to seek out only men. In terms of sex, their wiring is a lot simpler than that of women (as we concluded after much discussion among ourselves and our assistants, both male and female). A copy of *Playboy* and a