

# BROTOPIA

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BREAKING UP THE BOYS' CLUB OF SILICON VALLEY

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EMILY CHANG

PORTFOLIO / PENGUIN

and women lying close together, kissing and massaging one another. In a Facebook comment, Jurvetson referred to one snapshot of the scene as “deep cuddle.” One venture capitalist, dressed up as a bunny (it’s unclear how this fit into the edge-of-the-earth theme), offered Jane Doe some powder in a plastic bag. It was Molly. “They said it will just make you feel relaxed and you’re going to like being touched,” Doe recounted to me.

Nervous, she dipped her finger into the powder and put it in her mouth. Soon, her guard dropped. Then, the male founder asked if he could kiss her. “It was so weird,” she said. “I’m like, ‘Your wife is right there, is she okay with this?’” The founder’s wife acknowledged that, yes, she was okay with it. Jane Doe, who considers herself fairly adventurous and open-minded, kissed the founder, then became uncomfortable, feeling as if she had been pressured or targeted. “I don’t know what I’m doing, I feel really stupid, I’m drugged up because I’d never taken it before and he knew I’d never taken it,” she recalled. She tried to escape to a different area of the party. “I felt gross because I had participated in making out with him and then he kept trying to find me and I kept trying to run away and hide. I remember saying to him, ‘Aren’t people going to wonder?’ And he said, ‘The people that know me know what is going on and the people that don’t, I don’t really care.’” Before dawn, she jumped into her car and left. “What’s not okay about this scene is that it is so money- and power-dominated. It’s a problem because it’s an abuse of power. I would never do it again.”

While this particular woman felt ambushed, at more private affairs, if it’s your first time, a friend might fill you in on what you’re signing up for, and you are expected to keep it to yourself. You know that if you do drugs with someone you work with, you shouldn’t mention it to anyone, and the same goes with sex. In other words, we’re not hiding anything, but, actually, we kind of are. You get invited only if you can be trusted and if you’re going to play ball. “You can choose not to hook up with [a specific] someone, but you can’t not hook up with *anybody*, because that would be voyeurism. So if you don’t participate,