

BROTOPIA

BREAKING UP THE BOYS' CLUB OF SILICON VALLEY

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don't come in," says one frequent attendee, whom I'll call Founder X, an ambitious, world-traveling entrepreneur. This is the same general spirit at play in the orgy dome at Burning Man, popular among techies. "No spectators" is the slogan out on the playa, and so it is back home.

They don't see themselves as predatory, of course. When they look in the mirror, they see individuals setting a new paradigm of behavior by pushing the boundaries of social mores and values. "What's making this possible is the same progressiveness and openmindedness that allowed us to be creative and disruptive about ideas," Founder X told me. When I asked him about Jane Doe's experience, he said, "This is a private party where powerful people want to get together and there are a lot of women and a lot of people who are fucked up. At any party, there can be a situation where people cross the line. Somebody fucked up, somebody crossed the line, but that's not an indictment on the cuddle puddle, that's an indictment on crossing the line. Doesn't that happen anywhere?" It's worth asking, however, if these sexual adventurers are so progressive, why do these parties seem to lean so heavily toward male heterosexual fantasies? Women are often expected to be involved in threesomes that include other women; male gay and bisexual behavior is conspicuously absent. "Oddly, it's completely unthinkable that guys would be bisexual or curious," says one VC who attends and is married (I'll call him Married VC). "It's a total double standard." In other words, at these parties, men don't make out with other men. And, outside of the new types of drugs, these stories might have come out of the Playboy Mansion circa 1972.

Regardless, a select few at the very top believe it's their *obligation* to tear down traditional sexual expectations. They are just expressing who they are. Founder X summed it up this way: "You build your own team and you get to build your own reality. Why wouldn't that mentally spill over into your sexual life?"

I had a wide-ranging conversation with Twitter co-founder Evan Williams about the peculiar mixture of audacity, eccentricity, and wealth that swirls in Silicon Valley. Williams, who is married with two