



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: SCOTT JENNINGS

THE ELEPHANT IN THE BEDROOM Surveys finds that men tend to inflate the number of sexual partners they've had, while women tend to underestimate. Brown says his research may call into question the usefulness of self-report studies.

Research finds both men and women lying between the sheets

SEX TALK • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Dr Brown's results come from a massive telephone and Web survey of random Americans. He has yet to finish analyzing the telephone data, but the Internet results confirm the data that they had already collected from U of A students several years ago.

"There was about a three- or four-to-one ratio between the numbers that men and women were reporting," said Brown. "We also replicated the finding about the strategy they used. Men were twice as likely to use rough approximation."

Some of the more surprising results

from the Web survey reflected the influence of age on respondents' estimates. The difference between men's and women's reported numbers was much higher in individuals over 40 than those in their 20s and 30s.

"It's not an attitude thing," Dr Brown said. "I think that it's because as people get older they tend to fall into monogamous relationships, and lose track of their numbers."

"Another reason might be that the divorced guy in his sports car and comb-over is picking up 25-year-old secretaries. That would account for the high numbers that young women are

reporting, and the fact that older guys' numbers are too high for enumeration," he offered.

According to Brown, this type of research is useful because it highlights the weakness of all self-reported data, which is used in many fields. For example, epidemiologists have to ask people how many people they have slept with to study the progress of sexually transmitted infections.

"In a certain sense, the discrepancy in self-reporting is an Achilles' heel for the whole survey business," Brown said. "We need to know the limitations of the data and their implications."

SU fiercely debated U-Pass prior to vote

Despite motion's passing, some councillors still have unanswered questions

U-PASS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"[The subsidies] will bring the price of the U-Pass down to \$75 per student per semester, which is a great deal compared to what students are paying now for a transit pass [which is \$54 a month]," Cournoyer said.

While the cost is considered a mandatory fee for undergrad students, Cournoyer said that some would be exempt from having to take part in the program, specifically students who use the Disabled Adult Transportation Services (DATS) or belong to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)—both of which have their own agreements with ETS.

An amendment added to the motion Tuesday night also would allow co-op and practicum students, who may not be in Edmonton over the semester, to opt out of the program. Other amendments outlined that the U-Pass issue would go back to referendum if any of the contributors pulled out of the program after it was established, as well as clarifying that the price of the U-pass would rise with the Consumer Price Index. Setting further price increases in the question was particularly important, Cournoyer remarked.

"We've seen in a lot of other jurisdictions with universal passes ... a lot of the price increases were worked out after the referendum had passed, and

students got kind of a bad deal. So, I think it was important to have this all nailed down," he said.

"I think that the U-Pass is a good idea. I just don't think that the principles that are in front of us are really nailed down. I don't feel comfortable putting them in front of students just yet."

SYLVIA SHAMANNA, SU SCIENCE COUNCILLOR

At the end of the night, Council voted 20-12 to approve the referendum question. Some of those who voted against the question, such as Science Councillor Sylvia Shamanna, supported the idea of the pass, but was worried that Council was not given enough time to look over the proposal before voting on it.

"I think that the U-Pass is a good idea. I just don't think that the principles that are in front of us are really nailed down. I don't feel comfortable putting them in front of students just yet. I think there are still some unanswered questions," Shamanna said.

Cournoyer explained that the decision was made to add the referendum question to the late additions of this week's Council, because waiting until the next meeting, on 7 November, would delay the motion, which still needs to be sent to Bylaw Committee before being read a second time.

"Now that it's passed through Council, it has to go through the Bylaw Committee, which has to go through things very carefully. It's a long process to make sure that all the ducks are in a row, that all of the questions and language are very clear," Cournoyer said.

Shamanna, however, disagrees that rushing the issue to Council was necessary.

"I just don't think that the idea that we [had to vote for] it because of the Bylaw Committee. I think that we should be telling the Bylaw Committee what to do, not having their meetings dictating us," she said.

While the SU decision would only apply to undergraduate students at the U of A, the Graduate Students' Association President Christine Delling said that the GSA has definite plans to have a referendum early next year on the U-Pass question.

"We don't have [a referendum question] now, but it is in the works. [We will have] one ready for our Council by December, at the latest," Delling said.

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