

2005 Capitol Hill Intern Study

I. INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

the polling company™, inc. (“tpc”) is pleased to present to the Independent Women’s Forum (“IWF”) the results and analysis of a recent poll of interns working on Capitol Hill during the summer of 2005.

The objectives of the study were to:

- Gain an understanding as to the reasons for and benefits of interning on Capitol Hill from interns, themselves;
- Determine the extent to which “hook-ups,” “flirtation,” “dating” and “sex” were discussed or witnessed within the Capitol Hill offices;
- Distinguish the concerns, challenges, and priorities of Capitol Hill interns relevant to their personal and professional lives;
- Understand the differences, if any, between drinking alcohol beverages while at college, and while an intern; and,
- Discern their opinions and projections with respect to public policy issues and long term professional goals.

In order to qualify for participation, interns must have been age 18 or older, interning in one of the Senate or House office buildings, and having finished at least one year at a college or university.

Respondents were personally contacted by tpc staff members, each trained in data collection. All respondents completed the survey in the direct vicinity of Capitol Hill, and were asked to show their “Capitol Complex” intern identification and otherwise verify their current status and qualifications before participating.

Participants were recruited in several locations, including House and Senate office building cafeterias and hallways, in the offices of individual members and committees, on pathways between the Union Station and Capitol South Metro stations, and outside on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol. Interviews were secured in a variety of locations and over five consecutive business days in order to secure a representative sample.

The survey instrument included 28 questions. The questionnaire was designed and approved by the client prior to data collection. Interviews were conducted June 22- 28, 2005.

The margin of error for the survey is $\pm 5.9\%$ at a 95% confidence interval, meaning that in 19 out of 20 cases, the data obtained would not differ by any more than 5.9% in either direction were the entire population of Capitol Hill interns surveyed. Margin of error for subsets of the population is higher.

II. PROFILE OF SURVEY POPULATION

- Among the survey respondents, 54% are men and 46% are women.
- A full 46% of Capitol Hill interns are under 21 years old, 31% are aged 21, and 18% are 22 or older.
- 66% intern for either a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives or a House Committee, while 33% work on the U.S. Senate side.
- 58% of survey respondents work in a Republican congressional office and 42% intern for a Democratic leader.
- Two-in-ten (20%) attend college in the Northeast, 31% are schooled in the North Central region, 30% hail from the South, and 16% traveled to Washington, DC from the West Coast.
- This fall, 10% will enter their Sophomore year, 40% will be Juniors, and 39% will be members of the graduating class. Another 10% are recent graduates or post-graduate students.

III. KEY FINDINGS

Capitol Hill Interns Looking for More than Just a Good Time. There are numerous reasons why the nation's capital attracts hundreds of interns from across the country. One of the greatest assets of the city is the one-of-a-kind industry located here – the U.S. government. The lure of the Capitol building and the people and practices housed therein, is a pull many students cannot ignore.

Question:

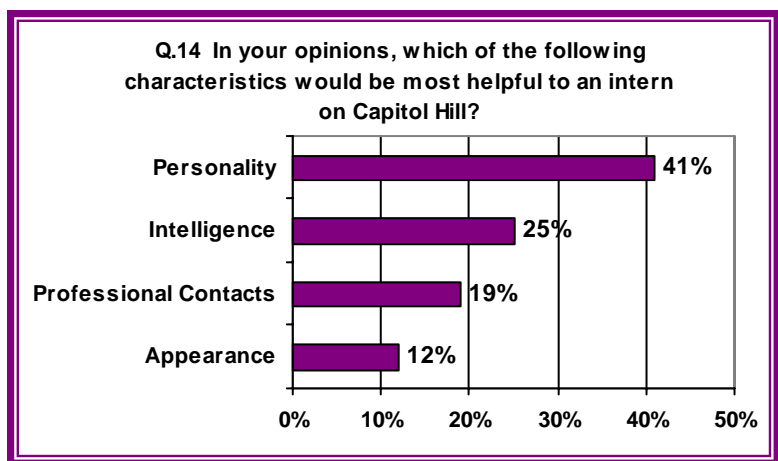
Thinking back to when you made your decision to intern in Washington DC this summer, which of the following was the most important factor in making that decision:

- 35% THE EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE I COULD GAIN FROM INTERNING IN DC.
- 24% THE ABILITY TO MAKE CONTACT WITH PEOPLE OR PLACES THAT MIGHT HELP ME IN MY FUTURE.
- 17% THE INTERN OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN DC THAT AREN'T AVAILABLE WHERE I LIVE.
- 12% THE DESIRE TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT THAN GOING HOME OR STAYING ON CAMPUS FOR THE SUMMER.
- 10% THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF INTERNING IN WASHINGTON DC.
- 1% DO NOT KNOW/DEPENDS/UNSURE/NO ANSWER

When asked specifically why they came to Washington, more than one-third of survey respondents (35%) note the opportunity to expand their minds and beef-up their resumes. An additional 24% cite making connections and 29% mention some aspect of the one-of-a-kind nature of the job. Only 10% placed the social component at the top of the list.

- Men express a higher interest than women in the **educational and professional experience** (40%-30%), as well as in the **ability to make contacts** (27%-21%), while women are more apt than men to have come for the unique opportunities only DC can offer (20%-14%).
- Interns aged 21 and older are more likely than their younger counterparts to admit to coming to the city for the **thriving social scene** it offers (15%-5%).
- College students entering their senior year and those who have already graduated—the interns most likely to have entering the job market on the brain, are more likely than others to be drawn to the **chance to make professional contacts** (31%). Those who attend college in the South are particularly keen on this opportunity, with more of them selecting it than any other DC draw (38%).

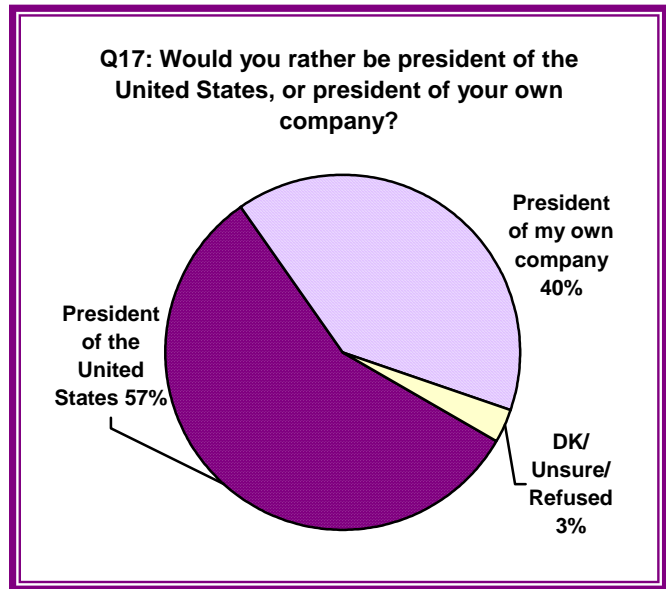
It's What's on the Inside that Counts. Capitol Hill interns do not hope to get by on looks alone. They stand firm behind their opinion that attitude and brains trump “how you look” and, to a lesser extent “who you know.” In fact, they are twice as likely to believe *personality* and *intelligence* would lead to greater success for future interns than *contacts* and *appearance* (66% compared to 31%).



- Men, those 21 and older and college seniors are the interns most likely to name **personality** their top choice.
- **Intelligence** is considered most important by Senate interns, sophomores, those under 21, and North Central students.
- Republicans are more likely to identify **personality** as essential, while Democrats suggest one's **intellectual capacity** is most helpful on the Hill

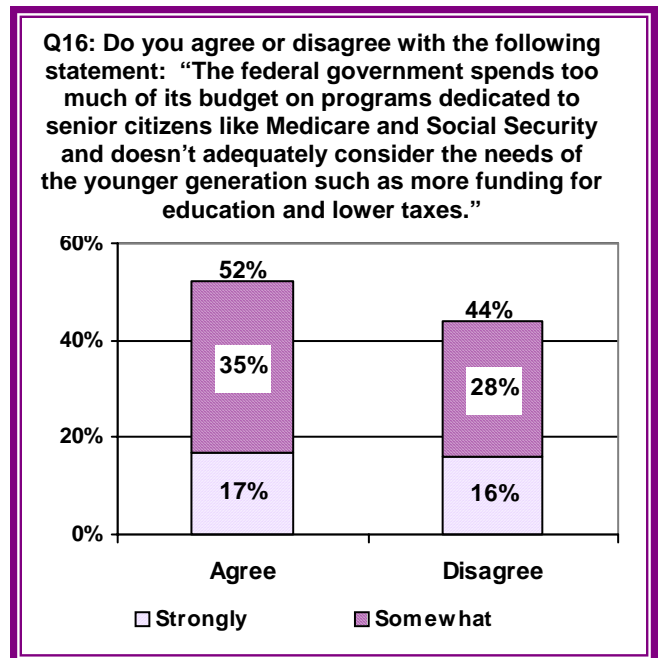
Wanted: W's Job. Men and women have markedly divergent hopes for their respective futures—**while men prefer the Oval Office to a corner office (69%-27%), women express a clear preference to be CEO than Commander-in-Chief (54%-43%).**

- Interns under 21 years old are unmistakable in their quest for the US presidency (62%-32%), while those aged 21 and older are more evenly divided between leading the country and helping their own business (51%-45%).
- Those who attend college in the Northeast are considerably less likely than their peers from other parts of the country to seek America's highest office with 49% setting their sights on the Presidency compared to 57% of Westerners, 59% of Southerners, and 61% of North Central dwellers.



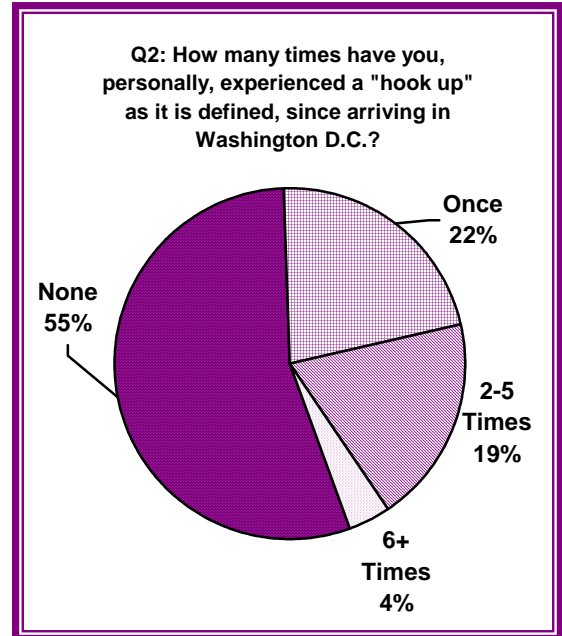
Budding Policy Buffs. Despite their relatively short time in the country's legislative hub, Capitol Hill interns are prepared to dole out advice to political leaders. A majority of respondents (52%) nod in assent when asked if the federal government's budget is disproportionately dedicated to seniors; 44% disagree. Only 4% decline to offer an opinion.

- Senate interns are more likely than their peers working in the House of Representatives to express discontent with the government's spending on programs for seniors (62%-46%).
- Interns who work in Republican offices are more likely than their Democratic counterparts to suggest that the needs of their generation are overlooked (55%-48%), while Democrats are 10-points more likely than young Republicans to disagree (50%-40%).
- "Seasoned interns" (those who have worked in Washington before) are similarly more likely than those here for the first time to agree that the budget priorities need balancing (62%-48%).



Extra-Curricular Activities. “Hooking up” is an oft-used, yet rarely defined, term among college students and young adults alike. Respondents were told that for the purposes of this survey, “a ‘hook up’ occurs when two people get together for a physical encounter that ranges anywhere from kissing to having sexual intercourse, and they don’t necessarily expect anything more from each other past that encounter.” While a majority of interns say they have not done so since arriving in Washington, a notable 44% report a first-hand experience of “getting to know” someone in this manner.

Two years ago, **the polling company™, inc.** asked this same question to Congressional interns¹ and found that only 26% of respondents reported they had hooked up during the summer of 2003. A full 70% said they had not been intimate with another while in Washington, DC (25-points more than those in the 2005 survey).



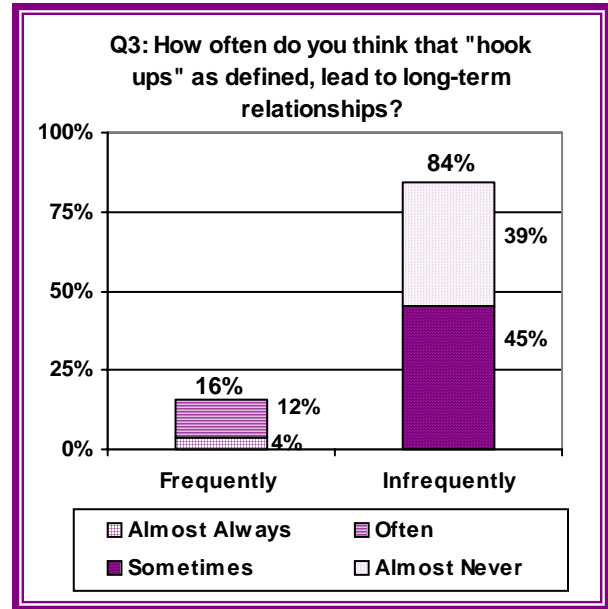
- **A House Divided:** House interns are much more likely than Senate interns to have never “hooked up.” While two-thirds of House interns have not hooked up (67%), nearly the same percentage of Senate interns admit to hooking up at least once (66%).
- Interns attending college on the West Coast are more likely than interns from any other region to have hooked up at least once (54%) since arriving in the nation’s capitol (46% North Central, 44% Northeast, 44% South).
- There was a correlation between an individual’s alcohol consumption and his or her propensity to hook up. Interns who report spending \$20 or less on alcohol per week are more likely than average to have not hooked up in Washington, D.C. (68% vs. 55% overall).
- Seasoned interns who have spent previous summers in DC are apparently “experienced” in other ways: they are 23-points more like to have hooked up this summer than those on their first tour of duty (63%-40%).

¹ 2003 Survey of Capitol Hill Interns, June 25-30, 2003, N= 221, Margin of Error +/- 5.9%

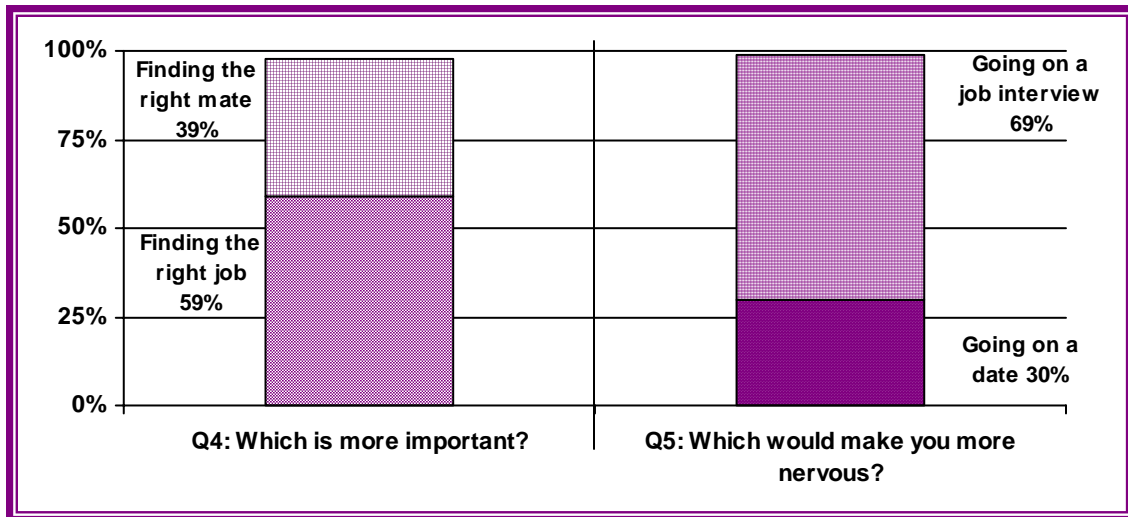
A Brief Encounter. Hill interns do not generally believe that hook ups are a gateway to remaining up close and personal. An eye-popping 84% said that hook ups only sometimes (45%) or almost never (39%) lead to long-term relationships. This is more than five times the combined number that purport that they almost always (4%) or often (12%) evolve into something more permanent.

Notably, one's age has little influence on the belief about the sustainability of a relationship that began as a hook up, while gender and region are more poignant indicators.

- Male interns are more likely than their coed counterparts to say that hook ups frequently lead to long-term relationships (19% compared to 12%), while females are even more skeptical than men about the prospects for relationship longevity (88%-80%).
- Republicans are more inclined than Democrats to believe that hooking up leads to love (18% compared to 12%), while Democrats have a more cynical outlook on the matter (88%- 82%).
- Almost one-quarter (24%) of Western students believe a long-term relationship can be born from a hook up: students who were more likely than any other region to hook up in the first place. In contrast, 17% of those learning in the North Central states, 15% of Southerners, and 10% of Northeasterners agree.
- One-quarter (26%) who have hooked up since arriving to Washington, DC believe that such an experience frequently leads to a longer romance, compared to only 9% of interns who *have not hooked up*.



What I Can Earn Versus How I Might Feel. At the current stage in their lives, Capitol Hill interns are more concerned with careers than canoodling. Almost six-in-ten (59%) report that it is more important to them to find the right job rather than the ideal mate (40%). To further illustrate the importance they place on employment, 69% are likely to get sweaty palms from going on a job interview compared to only 30% would be nervous on a date.



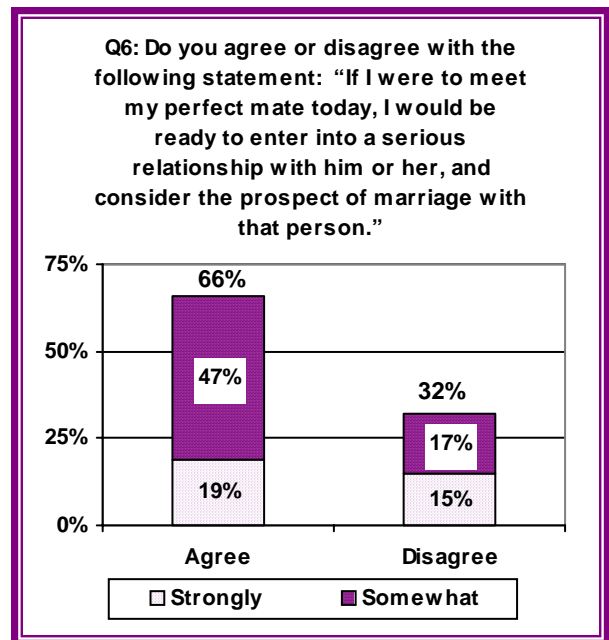
- In comparison to the 2002 IWF Capitol Hill Intern Study,² the polling company™, inc. reported that respondents were more interested in finding the right mate over the right job (55%- 44%), illustrating a significant shift in priorities over the last three years.
- **There is a clear difference between men and women when it comes to the importance of securing the best job and finding your better half. Male interns are twice as likely to focus on the former (66%-32%). Female interns, on the other hand, are evenly split in their concerns about pursuing both employment and relationships (51%-48%).**
- **Both sexes are more likely to feel nervous going on a job interview than on a date, but with different margins (62% of men and 78% of women).**
- Republicans are slightly more likely than their Democratic brethren to suggest finding the right mate is more important than finding the right job (41% -36%). However, those leaning left are more interested in their professional career than an intimate relationship (62%- 57%).

² 2002 Survey of Capitol Hill Interns, July 1-9, 2002, N= 207, Margin of Error +/- 5.9%

- Proximity to the “real world” colors one’s view: finding the right job is more important to interns 21 and older (62%) than those under 21 (56%). The younger interns believe finding the right mate is more crucial than the older folks (43%-37%). This may also explain why interns under 21 are much more likely to be nervous on dates (36%) than their more experienced peers (26%) and why those over 21 are more apt to get butterflies before job interviews (73%) than those under 21 (63%). The immediacy of the situation informs the relative level of trepidation (e.g., jobs for those about to graduate college).
- Those who attend college in the South think differently from the rest of the country when weighing the relative importance of career and romance—they were more likely than average to say that the right mate is more important compared to the average (51%-39%). Additionally, interns from the genteel South were more likely than most to be nervous on dates (39%-30%).

Open to Love. While Washington interns may be generally more focused on their careers than relationships at this point in their lives, that does not mean they would pass up true love if cupid’s arrow were pointed their way. Their tender ages and professional ambitions notwithstanding, a **full two-thirds (66%) agree that they would begin a serious relationship and consider tying the knot if they were to meet right person.**

- Notably, men—often characterized as less willing to commit—are actually more likely than women to be open to starting a serious relationship (69% compared to 64%). Younger interns are also more likely than their older coworkers to consider marriage in the near future (70% versus 65%).
- North Central students are among the groups to be most likely to be mulling their romantic futures (73%), while those on the West Coast are least likely to consider the possibility (55%).
- Republicans are 6-points more likely than Democrats to be passionate about commitment if the right mate enters their lives (69%- 63%). Democrats, however, were less inclined to enter a serious relationship so soon (37%- 27%).



Around the Water Cooler. Co-workers often blossom into friends when office life includes long hours, fast paces, and close quarters. These interns admit, however, that conversations in the workplace are not all tax reform and terrorism. To wit, nearly three-in-five (59%) Capitol Hill interns say they discuss sex with co-workers.

- Washington interns who have spent time in the city before are 22-points more likely than political newbies to have loose lips when discussing their escapades (78%-56%).
- Men and women are similar in the amount of private information they share, while Senate interns are more open at the office than their House counterparts.

Flirting: All in a day's work. Flirting is as common as a navy suit on Capitol Hill, according to these interns. Whether with other interns, full-time staff members (regardless of age) or elected officials themselves, batting one's eyes is a popular sport on the Hill. Intimate relationships with other interns and liaisons between interns and their superiors have also been observed.

Question:

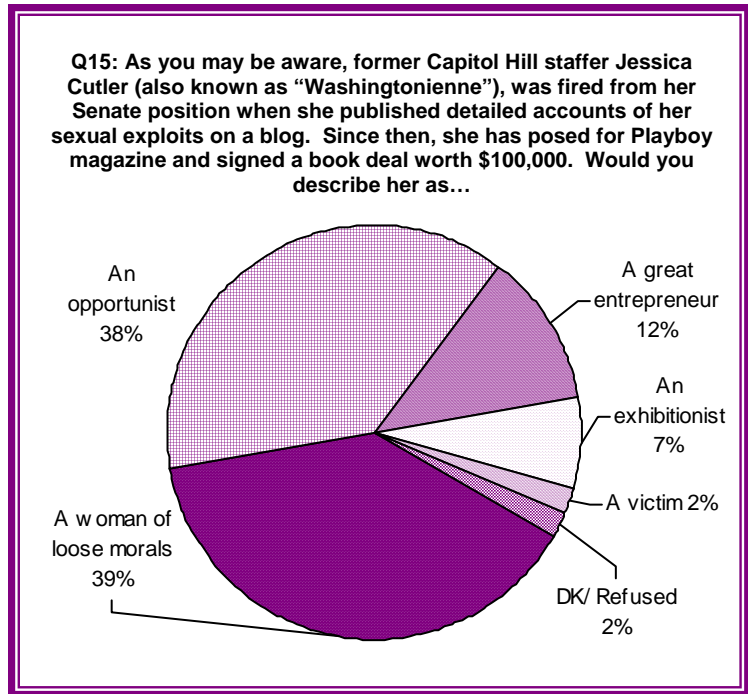
Thinking about your work environment on Capitol Hill this summer, which of the following have you either observed or experienced in the office where you are interning? (MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED)

- 74% INTERNS FLIRTING WITH OTHER INTERNS
- 50% INTERNS FLIRTING WITH STAFFERS WHO ARE CLOSE TO THEIR OWN AGE (WITHIN 5 YEARS)
- 24% STAFF MEMBERS FLIRTING WITH INTERNS.
- 20% INTERNS FLIRTING WITH STAFFERS WHO ARE MUCH OLDER THAN THEM (5 YEARS OR MORE OLDER)
- 16% INTERNS HAVING AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER INTERNS
- 9% INTERNS FLIRTING WITH AN ELECTED OFFICIAL
- 7% INTERNS FLIRTING WITH SOMEONE IN THEIR OFFICE WHO IS MARRIED.
- 7% ELECTED OFFICIALS FLIRTING WITH INTERNS
- 6% INTERNS HAVING AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFFERS WHO ARE CLOSE TO THEIR OWN AGE (WITHIN 5 YEARS)
- 2% SOMEONE WITH AUTHORITY PROPOSITIONING INTERNS IN A MANNER THAT IMPLIES SEXUAL CONTACT.
- 1% INTERNS HAVING AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFFERS WHO ARE MUCH OLDER THAN THEM (5 YEARS+)
- 1% INTERNS HAVING AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH AN ELECTED OFFICIAL
- INTERNS HAVING AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE IN THEIR OFFICE WHO IS MARRIED

- 19% DO NOT KNOW/DEPENDS/UNSURE/NO ANSWER

Washingtonienne. Former Hill staffer Jessica Cutler rocked the nation's capitol two years ago with a no-holds-barred online account of her sexual escapades while working in the Senate.

Current Hill interns are aware of Ms. Cutler's story, and freely pass judgment on her. An almost equal number agree that she was "a woman of loose morals" (39%) and "an opportunist," (38%) accounting for more than three-quarters of all respondents (77%). Twelve percent believe her to be an entrepreneur, and 7% an exhibitionist. A paltry 2% pity her as a victim.

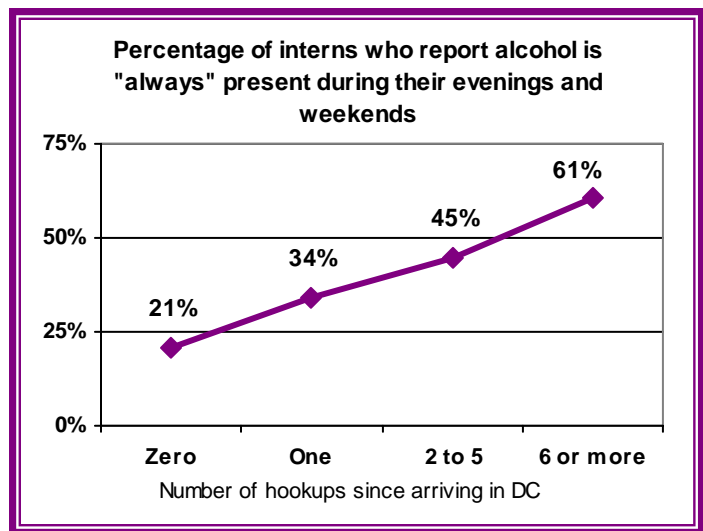


- Interns more likely than most to label her a "woman of loose morals" are Republicans, those under the age of 21, Senate workers, and Southerners.
- Those more likely than average to finger the Washingtonienne as "an opportunist" are Democrats, men and students from the Northeast.
- Interns who work in Democratic offices were twice as likely as Republicans to classify Ms. Cutler as "a great entrepreneur" (17%- 8%).

It's 5 o'clock Somewhere. Alcohol, it appears, is an equal opportunity staple of the summer intern experience. Interns of both genders, chambers, political persuasions, and of all ages and regions are exposed to alcohol this season. More than 8-in-10 say that alcohol is "always" (30%) or "sometimes" (54%) present during their weekend and evening hours. Just 11% report that spiked drinks are "rarely" around and a miniscule 4% claim their nights and weekends are alcohol free.

- The legality of drinking (age) has little impact on the propensity of interns to be within arms length of a beer: 81% of those younger than 21 say alcohol is often a part of their after work activities, compared to 87% of those of legal drinking age. However, the older interns are twice as likely as their younger counterparts to report that alcohol is "always" present (41%-20%).

- Interns who attend school in the North Central and Southern regions seem to party a bit harder than those from New England or the West (87% and 85%, respectively said alcohol is “always” or “sometimes” at hand compared to 78% and 80%). It is interesting to note, however, that interns from the West (who were among those most likely to report hooking-up) are 16-points more likely than any other group to say alcohol had a near ubiquitous presence in their social lives (45%).
- More than 9-in-10 (91%) Democrats suggest that alcohol are always or sometimes around after hours, while 80% of Republicans said the same.
- Hooking up and alcohol appear to be partners in crime for these summer interns. Nearly nine-in-ten (89%) of those who have had at least one amorous encounter while in DC revealed that alcohol is often around, while 81% of those who have not hooked up this summer admit the same. Even more revealing is the fact that as the number of an intern’s hook ups increase, so too do the likelihood that libations are “always” within reach.
- The amount of cash interns dedicate to purchasing alcohol also plays a major role in how often it is nearby—an eye-popping 92% of those who spend \$50+ on alcohol per week indicate that alcoholic beverages are “always” a part of their leisure time.



College Affords More Time for Drinking. While there seems to be no shortage of booze in the lives of Washington interns, the summer is actually a time of reduced consumption. One-third (33%) of respondents report drinking more while at college than they do now as interns. Just 19% say they drink more this summer than when they are at home hitting the books. The plurality (36%) of interns suggests their drinking habits have not changed between on-the-campus and on-the-Hill.

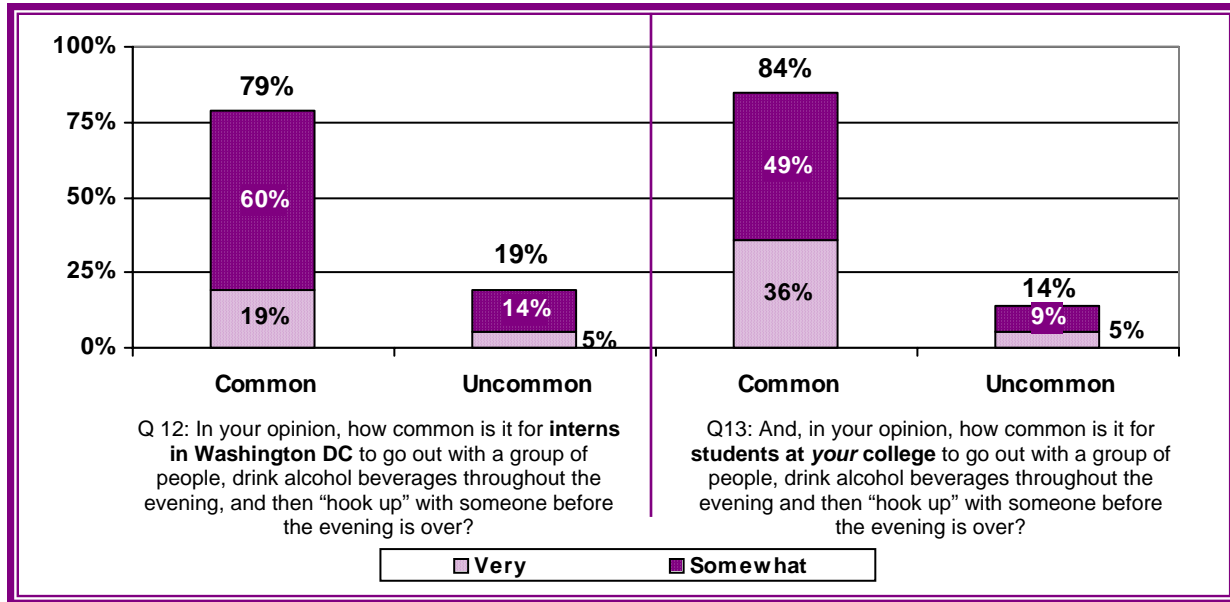
- A gender gap exists with respect to summer vs. school year drinking habits. Women are 7-points more likely than men to claim they down more alcohol during the summer months (23%-16%), while men are more likely than women to say more of their drinking is done while at on campus (37%-29%).
- Interns working in the Senate are 9-points more likely than their House counterparts to say they drink more now than they do during the school year (25%-16%). On the other hand, 39% of those interning for a Representative say they down more cocktails while college compared to 23% of those working in the Senate.

- Democrats are twice as likely to party as Republicans to party harder this summer than they do at college (26%- 13%). Those on the right, however, aren't always so button-down, as they admit to socializing more than their counterparts during the school year (41%-23%.)
- Only 8% interns who are using their savings to finance their summer drink more during their summer in DC than back at school. Whether they are financially responsible or simply low on funds is not clear.
- North Central and Western students were more likely than those attending college in other regions to increase their alcohol consumption over the summer (24% and 38%, respectively drink more now compared to just 14% of Northeasterners and 9% of Southerners who reported the same).

Summer Libations May Lead to Summer Lust. Conventional wisdom says that the first thing alcohol impairs is a person's judgment. A number of summer interns can personally attest to that fact, **with 40% admitting to engaging in "intimate activities" that they otherwise may not have participated in while under the influence.** A more responsible 51% claim they have not found themselves in such a situation after drinking and 9% note they do not drink alcohol at all.

- Respondents are ***twice*** as likely as those who interned during the summer of 2002 (40%- 18%, respectively) to admit they hook up under the influence. Seven-in-ten (71%) from the Class of 2002 reported they never engaged in such behavior.
- While men and women are equally likely to have abstained from drunken hook-ups (both 51%) and to have given into beer-clouded lust just once (17%-20%), men are more than twice as likely as women to admit to having engaged in these intimate activities "a few times" (21%-10%).
- The under-21 crowd seems to have a tighter reign on their alcohol fueled hook-ups than their older counterparts: 56% of interns under legal drinking age reveal they have ***not*** had any ill-advised romantic encounters this summer compared to 50% of those 21 and older.
- Northeasterners are most likely to report zero hook ups while under the influence of alcohol (68%), while Westerners are most apt to allow liquor to hijack their judgment—59% say they have had one or more hook-ups they might otherwise not have participated in because of alcohol.
- "Newbie" interns are more cautious than their "native" brethren: more than half (52%) of the rookies say that they have not participated in any compromising activities as a result of alcohol, compared to 44% of those who have interned on Capitol Hill before.

College a Hot Spot for Carousing and Canoodling. While few interns claim that it is rare for a night of drinking with friends to lead to a hook up no matter what the setting, they are more emphatic in their assessment of their classmates than of their coworkers. As demonstrated in the chart below, roughly eight-in-ten respondents note that it is common for their peers to “go out with a group of people, drink alcoholic beverages throughout the evening, and then ‘hook up’ with someone before the evening was over”—79% say this was the case among DC interns and 84% reveal the same about students at their college. However, while just 19% report this situation is a “very” regular happening for interns, 36% deem it so for their fellow students back on campus.



- Interns hailing from Western schools are more likely than all others to deem both of these situations common (90% said so about summer interns and 93% about college students). Interestingly, West Coasters are also among the interns most likely to have experienced a hook up themselves during their time in Washington.
- Those of legal drinking age are more apt than their under-21 cohorts to say an evening ending in a hook up in either setting was not an eyebrow raising event.