

MALE CALL/WAEA MAI TANE MA



*A study of New Zealand
men who have sex with men*

Report two:
men in relationships
with men

*A research project of the
New Zealand AIDS Foundation
funded by the Health Research
Council of New Zealand.*

MALE CALL

Waea Mai, Tane Ma

Report Two Men in Relationships with Men

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Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report Series:

<i>Report 1:</i>	<i>Methodology and Demographic Characteristics</i>
<i>Report 2:</i>	<i>Men in Relationships with Men</i>
<i>Report 3:</i>	<i>Maori Men who have Sex with Men</i>
<i>Report 4:</i>	<i>Casual Sex between Men</i>
<i>Report 5:</i>	<i>Sexual Identity</i>
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<i>Report 8:</i>	<i>Men who have Sex with Men and Women</i>
<i>Report 9:</i>	<i>HIV Positive Men</i>
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<i>Report 11:</i>	<i>Men who have Sex with Men who Inject Drugs</i>
<i>Report 12:</i>	<i>Sexually Transmitted Diseases</i>

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Men in Relationships with Men

Heather Worth, Alison Reid, Peter Saxton, Tony Hughes
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Overview

Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma was the first nationwide survey of men who have sex with men in New Zealand. The Male Call survey was undertaken because at that time no large-scale data on men who have sex with men (msm) had been collected in New Zealand. While a number of other groups in New Zealand are affected by HIV, the virus is most significantly present in the group of msm, who account for over 80% of those with AIDS. At present, as there is no vaccine or cure for HIV infection, behaviour change remains the only strategy available to manage the HIV epidemic. In order to develop effective and efficient HIV prevention programmes, there has been a recognition of the need for up-to-date, accurate data on the socio-sexual characteristics of men who have sex with men. The aims of Male Call were to:

- describe men who have sex with men's HIV/AIDS knowledge and their sexual practices with a special focus on the adoption of safer strategies;
- examine the ways in which HIV/AIDS knowledge and safe sexual practice are related to a number of important demographic and contextual variables;
- provide baseline data on the sexual behaviour of men who have sex with men which can be used to assist in the planning and development of HIV prevention programmes; and
- develop a core set of baseline questions which could be used in future surveys of men who have sex with men.

Male Call was extremely successful in recruiting msm to take part in the survey, and 1852 men completed the questionnaire.

MALE CALL/WAEA MAI, TANE MA

Report No. 2: Men in Relationships with Men

Introduction

One of the most surprising findings of Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma was that over half the men who took part were, at the time of the survey, in a regular relationship with another man. This report will examine the sexual practices, the safe sex strategies and demographic data about these men. While the report will be mainly descriptive, some statistical analysis has been undertaken. For the main aims listed below we carried out multivariate logistic regressions. The details of these are given in Appendix 1 and the results are discussed alongside charts in the body of the text. Where it was more appropriate to carry out univariate tests, the results of chi square tests and t-tests are footnoted. The particular aims of this report are to:

- analyse the demographic variables of the sample of men in relationships, and to compare those in relationships with those not in relationships, and monogamous with non-monogamous men
- analyse the social milieu of men in relationships, and to compare those in a relationship with those not in a relationship and monogamous with non-monogamous men
- examine the sexual practices of men in relationships, and to compare those of non-monogamous and monogamous men
- compare condom use inside relationships by monogamous and non-monogamous men
- compare the safe sexual practices with regular partners and the safe sexual practices with casual partners of those men in relationships
- examine the predictors of unsafe sex of men in relationships

For the purposes of this study we have modified the SIGMA definition of a 'regular partner' to become 'one with whom you have had sex more than once and with whom you plan to have sex in the near future'.¹ Prior to Male Call there was very little research about relationships between men in New Zealand. There is no data on the number of men who were in couples before homosexual law reform legislation was passed in New Zealand and

¹ The SIGMA work defines a regular partner as one with whom you have had sex more than once, where the second and subsequent meetings were not accidental, and with whom you intend to have sex in the near future (Davies et al. 1993).

no surveys of the sexual practices of men who have sex with men were carried out until the mid 1980s.²

We believe that it is likely that the number of men in same sex relationships is growing, because Male Call recorded a substantially larger percentage of men in a relationship with another man than any previous New Zealand survey. For example, Parkinson's 1987 research on 172 gay men in Christchurch and Wellington found that 23.8% of the respondents had a 'primary' male partner.³ Two subsequent but small sample New Zealand surveys undertaken in the late 1980s showed 15.1% and 34% of men with a 'primary' partner.⁴ However, men may not have been willing until very recently to disclose that they had a male partner.

In Male Call, 51% (or 940) of the 1852 respondents were in a regular relationship with a man. This figure is lower than the frequency of regular relationships reported in the fourth wave of the British SIGMA cohort study, in which 58.4% of the respondents were in a regular relationship (Davies et al. 1993:150), and higher than the Male Call Australia study with 42% in a regular relationship (Kippax et al. 1994:20).

The definition of a regular partner that we adopted in no way expresses the enormous variations in the types of longer-term relationships that men form with each other, but it avoids any assumption that such relationships are closed or monogamous, or that they replicate heterosexual coupledness. However, while men's sexual partnerships do not always fall neatly into the categories of 'regular' or 'casual', few men (14%) reported that their partner was an 'occasional' regular partner (someone with whom emotional or romantic attachment was negligible).⁵ The men described their partners in a variety of ways, the most common terms being 'boyfriend', 'husband', 'partner', 'lover' or 'de facto'.

The fact that half of the men in our study have a regular male partner is likely to be an indication of socio-cultural changes that have taken place in New Zealand over the last twelve years. These include the passage of the Homosexual Law Reform Bill in 1986, which decriminalised consensual sex between men, and the addition of sexual orientation to the Human Rights Act 1993 which addressed specific concerns of job loss, unequal access to accommodation and discrimination on the grounds of HIV status.

² The first New Zealand survey of men who have sex with men was carried out by Phil Parkinson in 1985.

³ A 'primary' partner is a more exclusive term than our 'regular partner'.

⁴ See Richards 1991; Rosser 1991.

⁵ The term 'fuck buddies' was used in the questionnaire to describe this type of relationship.

Both pieces of legislation were carried with a high degree of agreement from the general public.

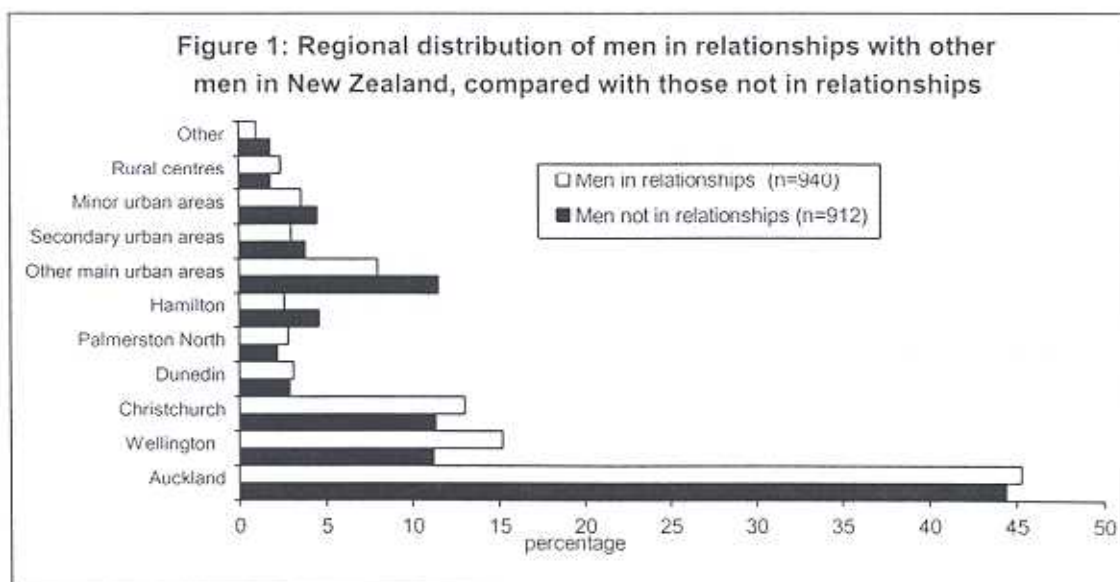
An AGB McNair poll taken in August 1992⁸⁹ registered public support for the inclusion sexual orientation amendments to the Human Rights Act at 85%, providing a good measure of the extent to which the 'social environment' in New Zealand is now accepting of gay people.

Section I: Demographic Variables of Men in Relationships

Relationships occur in social contexts and settings in which men not only interact with each other but with the community in general. This report indicates that there is no unitary object, the 'New Zealand gay couple'. Within the sample of men who were in relationships with men there was a wide range of backgrounds. This presents a challenge to the stereotype of male to male couples as gay, white, middle class and living in suburbs like Ponsonby. For example, some couples do not identify as gay at all and many do not live in the 'gay' suburbs in Auckland. But while they are demographically diverse, they show remarkable similarities to the Male Call respondents who were not in relationships.

Regional Distribution

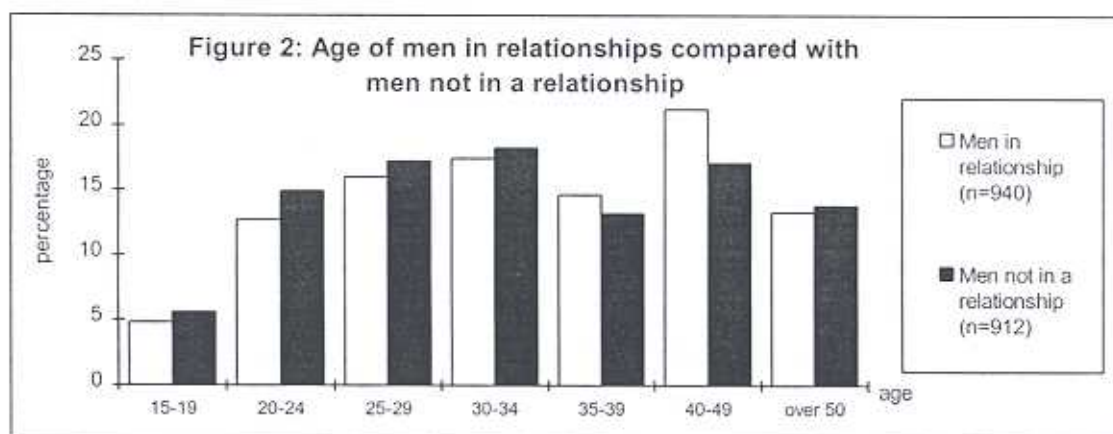
Just under half (45.3%) of the men in relationships live in the Auckland area. But they also live in all other parts of New Zealand - in cities, towns and rural areas.



While this was not shown to be statistically significant (see Appendix 1), as Figure 1 indicates, Wellington and Christchurch showed a slightly higher ratio of men in relationships compared to those who are not in relationships. The ratio of men in relationships was lower in Hamilton and other provincial urban areas such as New Plymouth, Hokitika, and Invercargill. This may be explained by the need to move from less tolerant provincial towns and cities, where their sexual identity is less acceptable, to larger cities which embrace diversity. On the other hand, proportionally more men in relationships lived in rural areas. It may be that those that live in the country are integrated into their local communities in ways that men in provincial towns find more problematic.

Age

As Figure 2 shows, the age range of men who have a regular partner also mirrors those without. Men began getting together at a very early age (for example, there were forty five men in a relationship who were under the age of twenty).

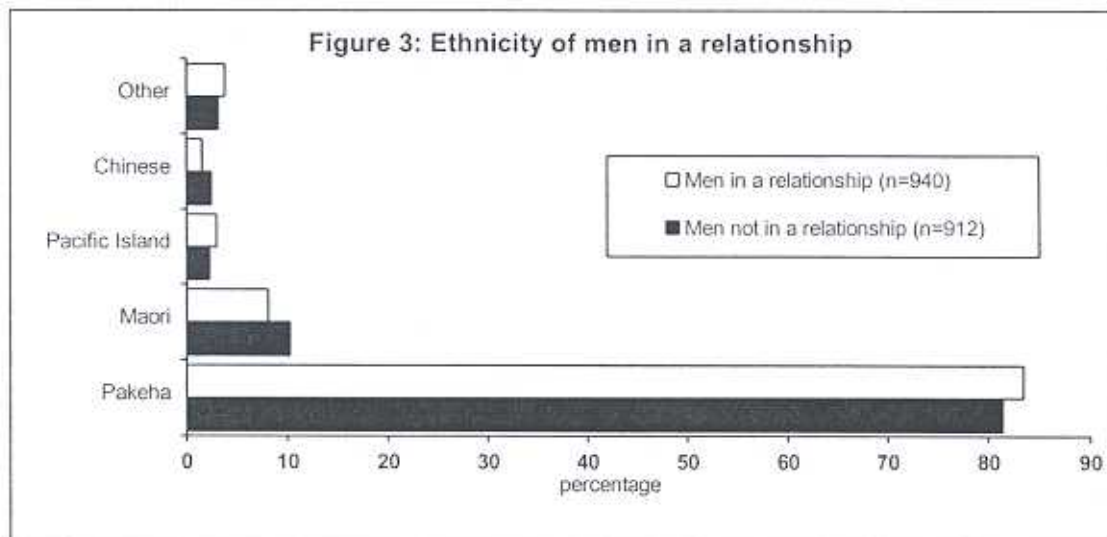


Coupledness peaked in the 40-49 year age group. Those in the 40-49 year age group were slightly more likely to be in a relationship than other age groups, as Appendix 1 shows.⁶ Men over thirty are more likely to be in a relationship than those under 30. While this may be indicative of a stage in men's life where there is a desire to 'settle down', the fact that there are fewer over 50 year old men with a male partner may be due to the lack of social acceptance of homosexuality at the time in which these men were forming permanent relationships.

⁶ $p = 0.1$

Ethnicity

Figure 3 on ethnicity shows that while numerically there were far more Pakeha in relationships (reflecting the ethnic distribution of the total sample), ethnicity is not an indicator of relationship status (see Appendix 1). However, there were slightly fewer Maori and Chinese in a relationship with another man than not, and slightly more Pacific Islanders or those from other ethnic groups than not.



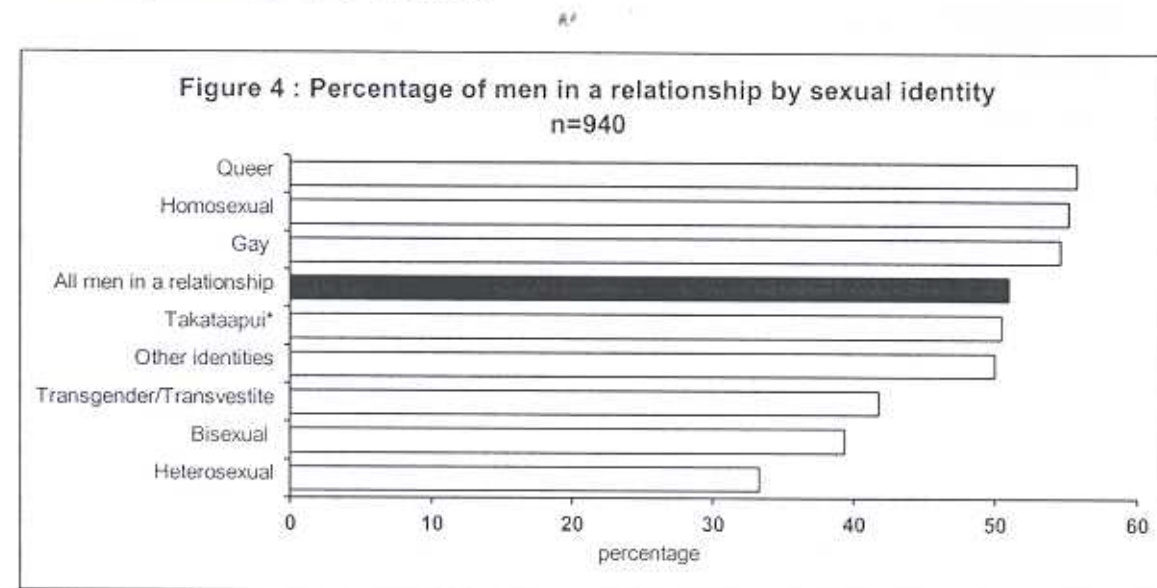
Section II: Social Milieu

Men who have sex with men live in social contexts which affect many aspects of their lives. These contexts make a difference to how open men are about their relationships and their sexual orientation in general. Like Kippax et al. (1994) we have defined these particular social attributes as milieu variables.⁷ These milieu variables include sexual identity, involvement with the gay community, disclosure of their sexual orientation, and contact with the HIV epidemic. In this report we have chosen four milieu variables which we believe are important to men's relationships with men. These are: sexual identity, gay community attachment, disclosure of sexual attraction to men and length of relationship.

⁷ Kippax et al. (1993, 1994) include place of residence as a milieu variable. While understanding being 'out' is correlated to place of residence we have decided to keep place of residence as a demographic variable.

Identity

Many men in the study chose more than one sexual identity. On average men in relationships selected two identities.



It is perhaps not surprising that a greater ratio of those men identifying as 'gay', 'homosexual', or 'queer' were in a relationship with another man. Whilst around 55% of these men had a regular partner, only 33% and 39% respectively of men who identified as heterosexual or bisexual were in a relationship. However, as Appendix 1 indicates, it is only those who identify as bisexual that are significantly less likely to be in a relationship with another man than those who do not.⁹ Even though a lower percentage of those identifying as heterosexual are in a relationship, there is a correlation between this variable and other milieu variables, for example disclosure.

Gay Community Attachment

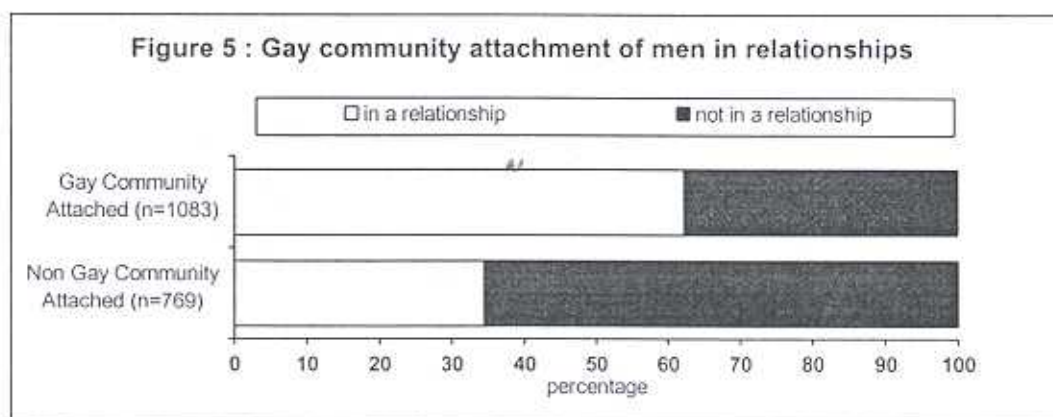
Men were also far more likely to be in a regular relationship if they were gay community attached as we see in Figure 5 (see Appendix 1).¹⁰⁻¹¹ Over 60% of the total men who were gay community attached were in relationships.

⁸ 'Takataapui', meaning intimate friends of the same sex here has been restricted to men who also identify as Maori

⁹ $p = .07$.

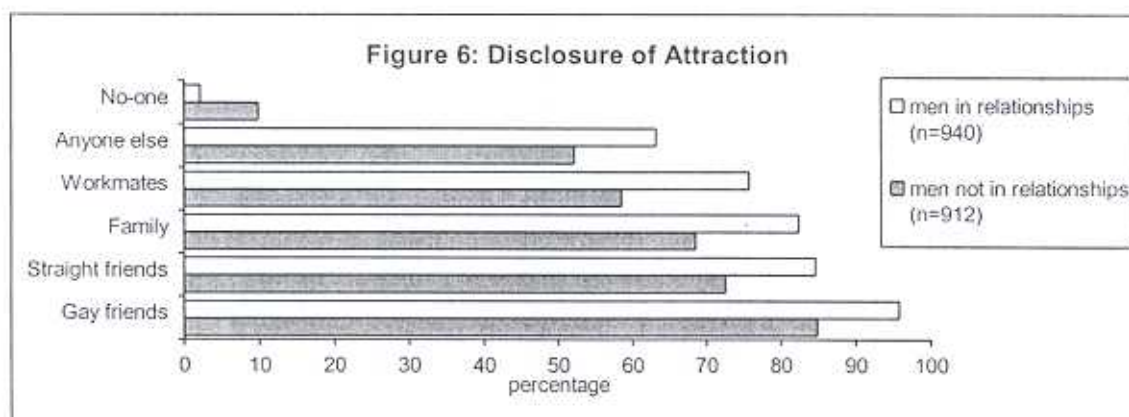
¹⁰ Gay community attachment was measured on a 12 point scale which consisted of questions relating to where men socialised, the number of gay friends they had, and whether they belonged to gay community organisations (see Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report No 7).

¹¹ $p < .0001$



Disclosure of Sexual Attraction to Men

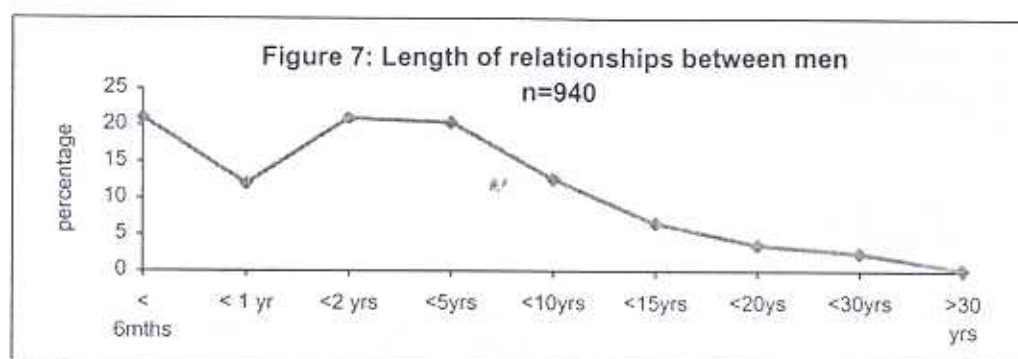
The disclosure of sexual attraction to friends, workmates and family is an indication of the levels of social support men feel for their sexual orientation. In all of the groups listed, there are more men in relationships who have disclosed than single men (see Figure 6). Those who disclosed their sexual attraction to men were significantly more likely to be in a relationship with a man than those who didn't (see Appendix 1).¹²



Length of relationship

Men who took part in the study had relationships of varying lengths (see Figure 7 over). Many have known their partner for a long time, may have lived together for decades, or have been friends for a long time. While forty eight men had been with their partner for a month or less, one man had been with his partner for 44 years. The number of men in relationships dropped sharply between six months and a year in length. The median length of relationships was two years, the mean was 4.2 years.

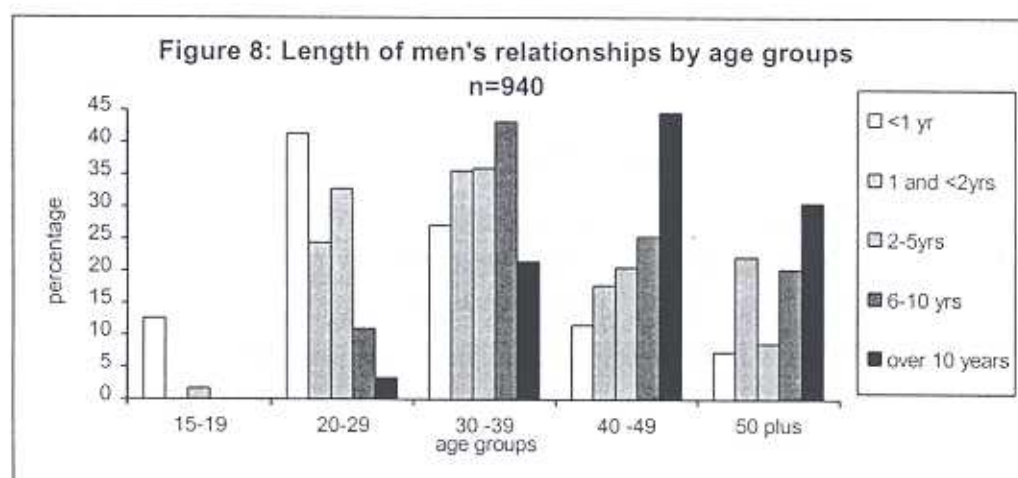
¹² p=.0004



Male Call length of relationship data is remarkably similar to that of the British SIGMA cohort. Davies et al. (1993:159) report that in the third wave of interviews with gay men in England and Wales, the median length of a relationship was 21 months, the mean about four years, and the longest relationship in the survey was 38 years.¹³

Length of Relationship by Age

As might be expected, the older men were the longer their relationships tended to be, as Figure 8 shows.

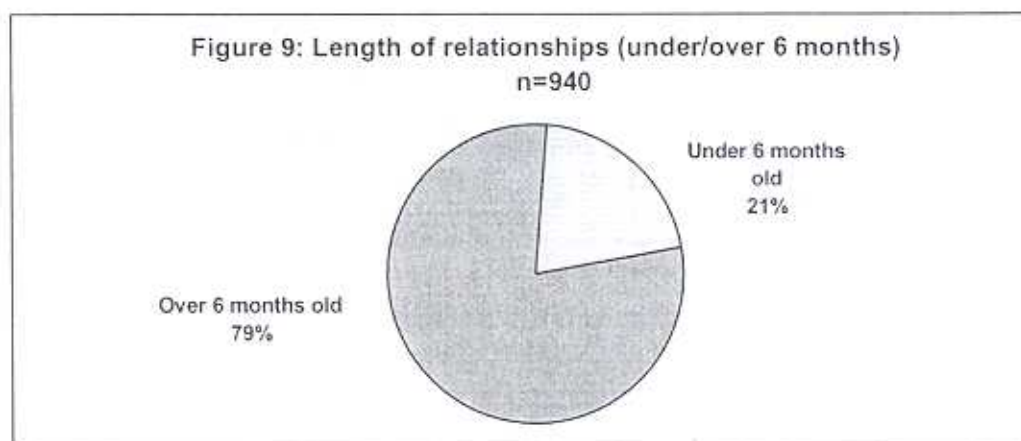


Almost all of the men under 20 were in relationships for less than a year and none had been with their partner for more than five years. For men aged between 20-29, the largest number had been a couple for under a year. Very few of these men had been together for more than 10 years. The majority of men who had been a couple for at least ten years were over 40. Relationship length steadily climbed for those over 40 years old. Those men who no longer had sex with their partner, or whose regular partner was a 'fuck buddy' had been in a relationship for a longer period than average for all men in relationships.

¹³ Project SIGMA is a prospective cohort study. Initial recruitment and interviewing began in 1987. Men were re-contacted and re-interviewed in three subsequent waves.

Section III: The Sexual Practices of Men in Relationships

Sex with a regular partner has meanings that make it far more than purely physical. Sexual practices are also social practices, constituted by both personal and social life. For most men, sex with a regular partner occurs in the context of intimacy and affection. Sex also takes place in a wide variety of interpersonal contexts and dynamics. For example, both length of time together and the ability to communicate with one's partner have an effect on the kinds of sex couples have. A number of other researchers have found that relationship status is the most important predictor of sexual practice.¹⁴ As we will show in this section, New Zealand men who have sex with men have somewhat different types of sex with their regular partner compared with casual partners.



As Figure 9 shows, of the 940 men who stated that they were in a regular relationship, 199 (21%) had been together for less than six months. In the following sections on sexual practice we will examine only the sexual partnerships and practices of the 741 men who had been in a relationship for six months or longer. Only these men have been included, as it is difficult to distinguish whether sexual practices occurred inside or outside the present relationship in the case of the remaining 199 men who were in relationships under six months.

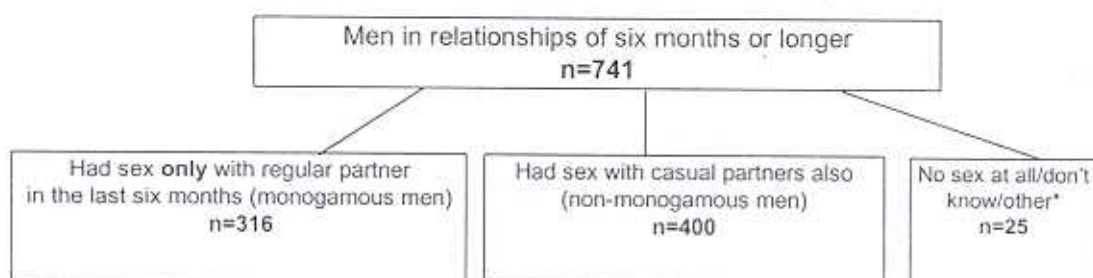
¹⁴ These include Bell and Weinberg 1978; Connell et al. 1989; Davies et al. 1993.

Open/Closed Relationships

Harry and de Vall (1978) have argued that one of the most difficult decisions facing a gay couple is whether the partners will have sex with other men. Some men who have sex with men are in a monogamous relationships, others are not. Some men may start out in a monogamous relationship and move to a more open arrangement or vice versa. Others may begin having sex with their regular partner and then stop having sex with him while still considering themselves to be in a relationship. Monogamy may also mean quite different things to different couples. For example, to some, it may signal emotional rather than sexual exclusivity. Some couples also agree to sex outside the relationship as long as it does not involve particular practices such as anal intercourse.

Figure 10 indicates that of the 741 men in a relationship of six or more months, 400 (54%) had casual partners in the previous six months. This group will be described as 'non-monogamous' men.¹⁵ Conversely, 316 men had not had any partners other than their regular partner for the prior six months. These men will be described as 'monogamous' men.

Figure 10: Self-description of present sexual partnerships of men who had been in a relationship of six months or longer



*16

In the next section we will discuss the demographic and milieu variables of 716 men (316 monogamous and 400 non-monogamous) who had been in a relationship for six months or longer.

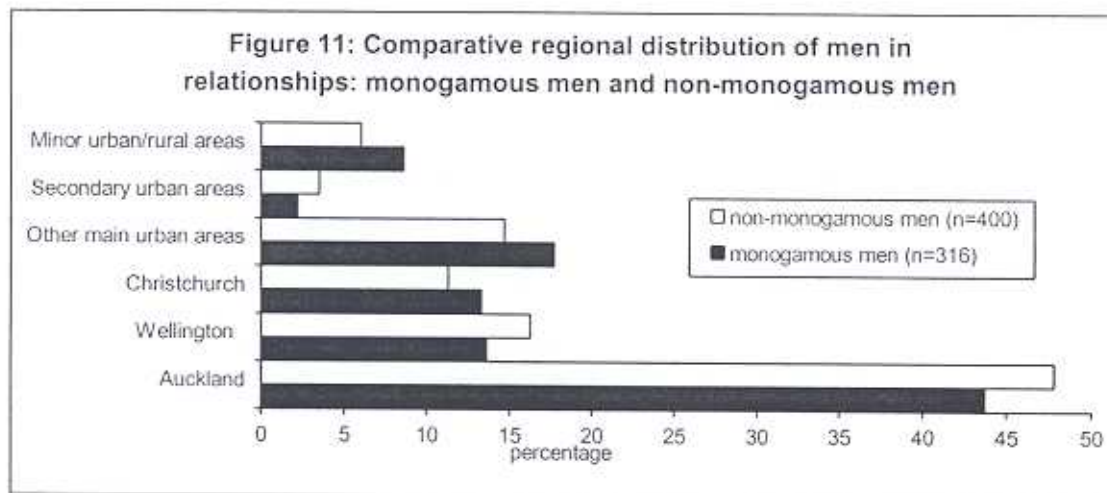
¹⁵ There are also a further twenty five men who either do not know what their relationship status is, or have not had sex at all in the last six months. We have not considered these men in the next sections.

¹⁶ There were twenty men who did not have sex at all in the previous six months, four men who 'did not know' their present relationship status and one 'other'.

Demographic and Milieu Comparisons between Men in Monogamous and Non-Monogamous Relationships

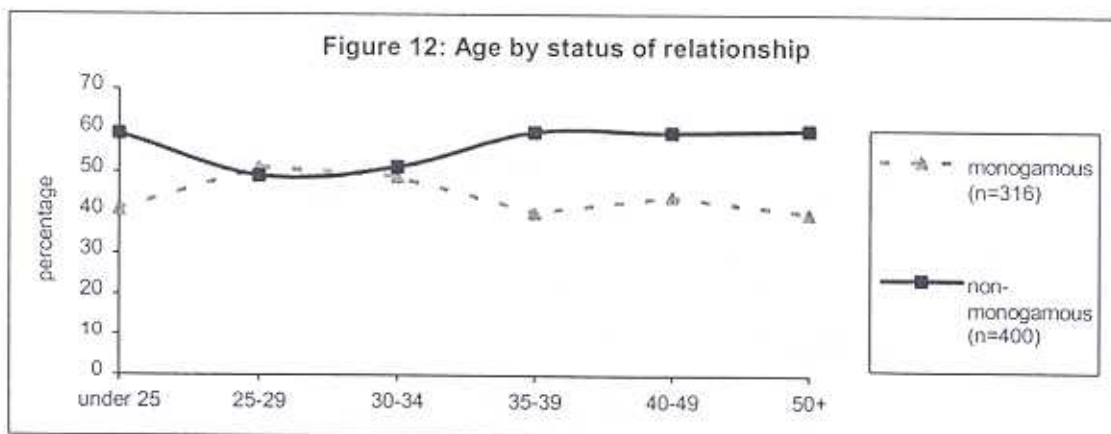
Regional Differences

Figure 11 shows that there are small but significant differences between place of residence of monogamous and non-monogamous men. Rural men are more likely to be monogamous than those from urban centres (see Appendix 1).¹⁷



Auckland and Wellington have a higher proportion of non-monogamous men than all other cities. In both these cities more men had open relationships than closed ones.

Age



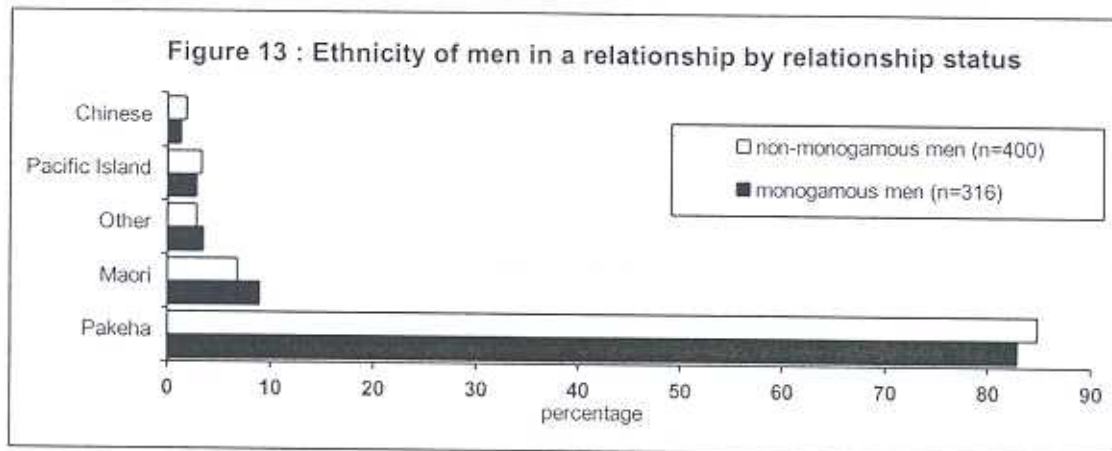
Monogamous and non-monogamous men followed similar age group patterns to the total sample of men in relationships.¹⁸ More men under 25 and over 35 years old are not monogamous (see Figure 12). This may be an indication that men begin their sexual life

¹⁷ p=0.1.

¹⁸ This was also true of residency patterns.

with casual partners, become monogamous for a period and then tend to enter more open relationships over time.

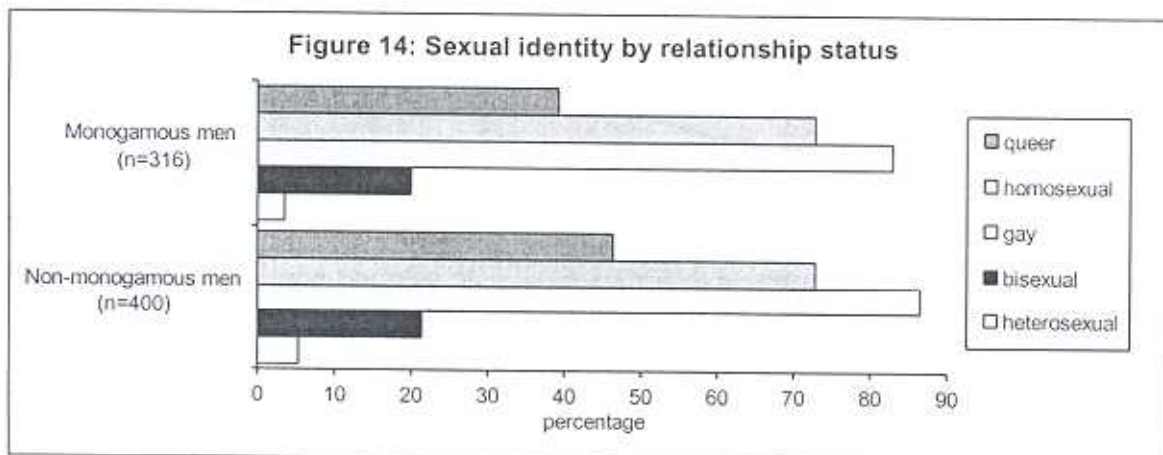
Ethnicity



The ethnicity of monogamous men shows a similar pattern to those in open relationships. While this is not statistically significant, there is a slightly smaller proportion of non-monogamous men who are Maori than any other ethnic group.

Sexual Identity

As Figure 14 indicates, sexual identity follows a similar pattern for both monogamous and non-monogamous men. However, men who are non-monogamous tend to have a slightly larger range of sexual identities than monogamous men.



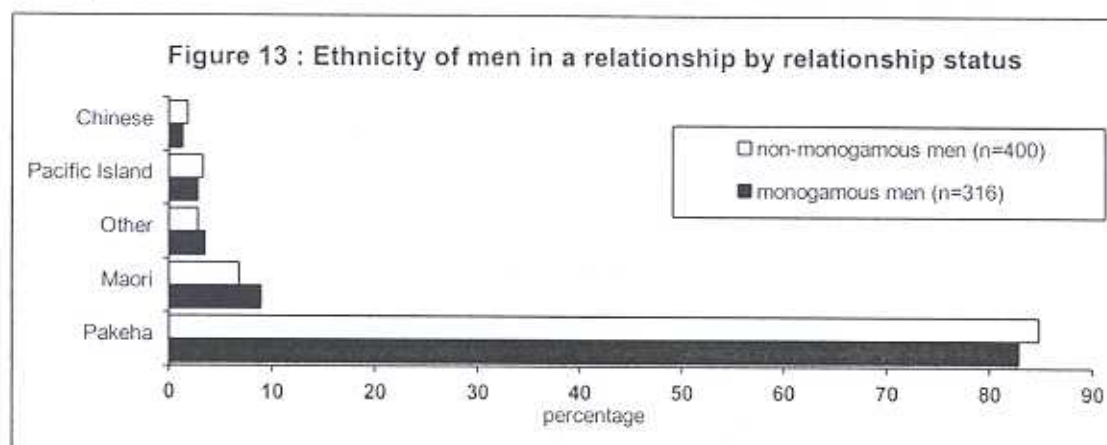
A slightly higher percentage of men in open compared to those in closed relationships not only identified as gay (86.5%; 82.9%), queer (46.3%;39.2%) but also as heterosexual (5.3%;3.5%) or bisexual (21.3%;19.9%). Those who identify as bisexual are significantly less likely to be monogamous than those who don't.¹⁹ Even though

¹⁹ n=0.04

²⁰ p<.0001.

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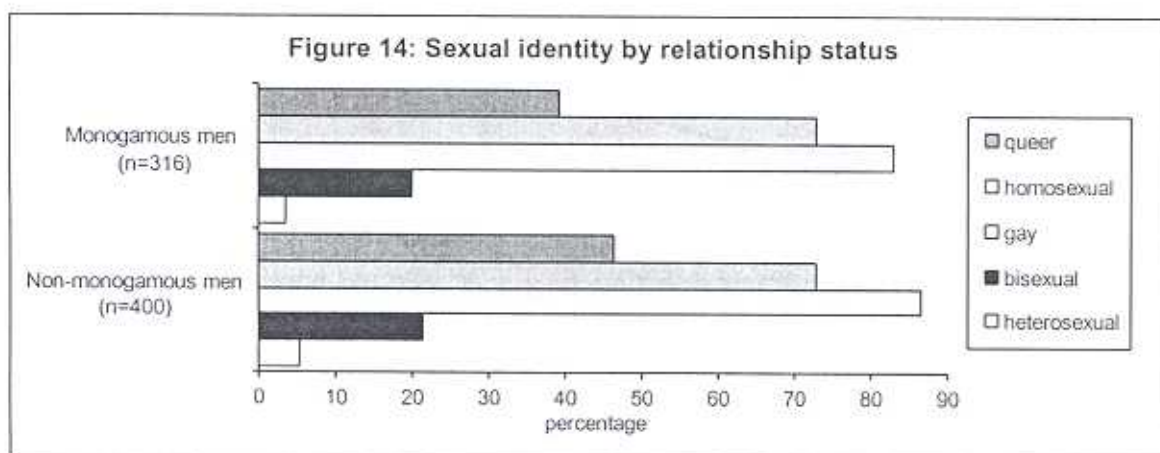
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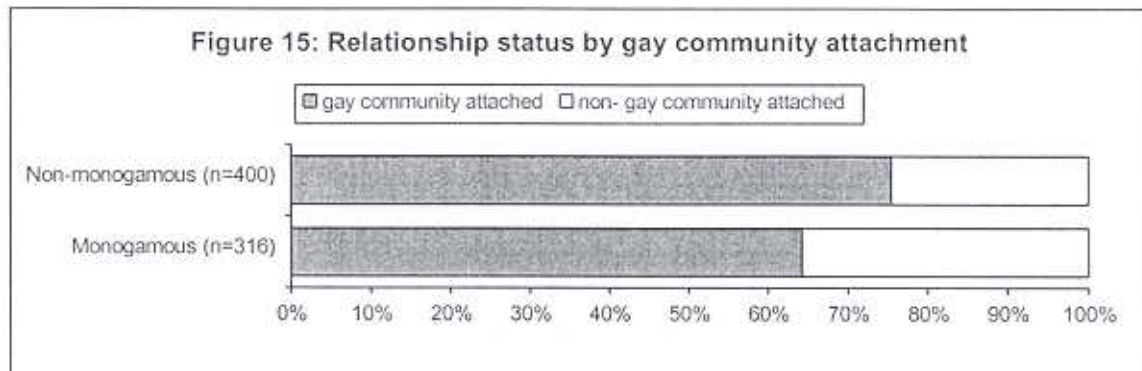
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¹⁹ p=0.04.

those identifying as heterosexual have a lower percentage who are monogamous, there is a correlation between this variable and other milieu variables (see Appendix 1).

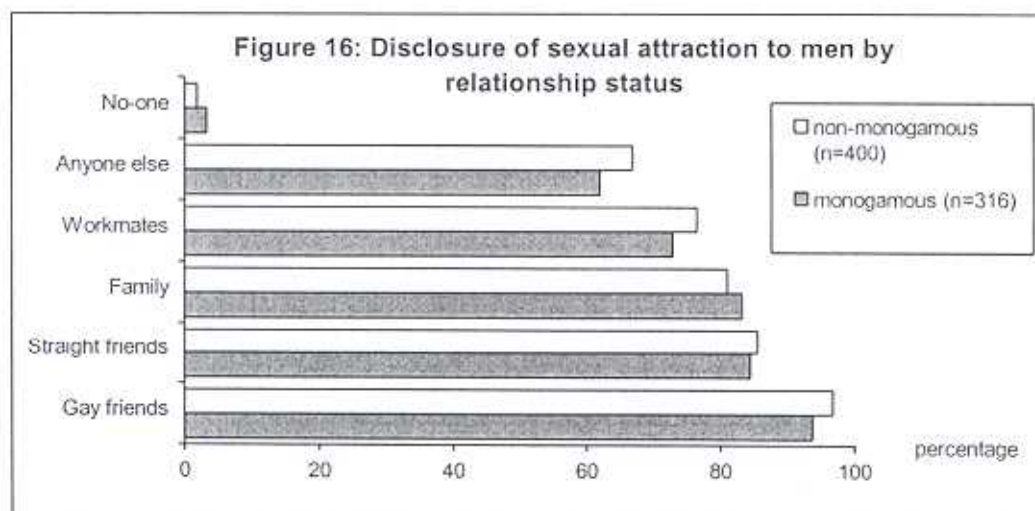
Gay Community Attachment

There is a significant correlation between community attachment and relationship status. As Figure 15 indicates, of the men in a relationship, those men who were non-monogamous were significantly more likely to be attached to the gay community than the men who were monogamous (75.5%; 64.2%).²⁰



Disclosure of Sexual Attraction

More than 95% of men in relationships had disclosed their sexual attraction, as Figure 16 indicates.



Proportionately fewer monogamous men disclosed their sexual attraction to friends and workmates than did men in open relationships. However, this was not statistically significant (see Appendix 1). Overall, more non-monogamous men had disclosed their sexual attraction to everyone except family members.

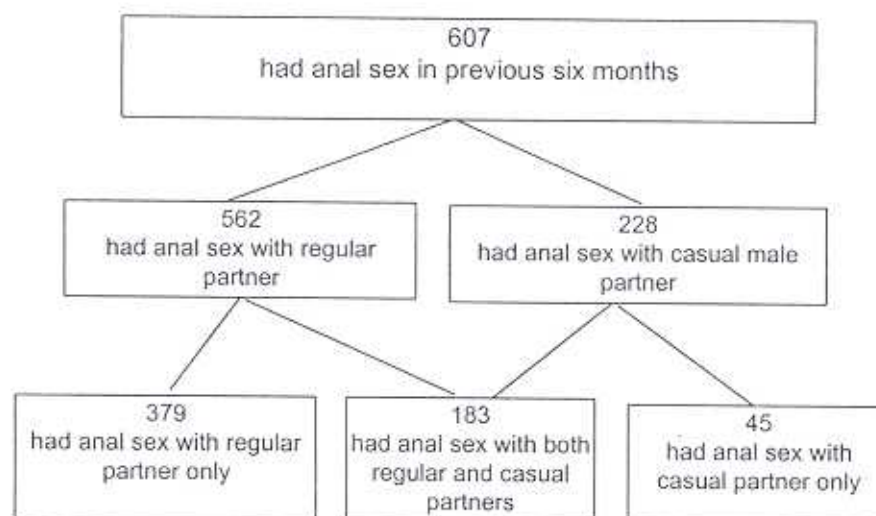
²⁰ $p < .0001$.

sex with ejaculation this was not statistically significant.²⁵ However, they were significantly more likely to engage in finger-fucking activities and use sex toys than those in closed relationships.²⁶

Anal Sex

For some, anal sex has symbolic significance as an expression of identity and community, and a way of sharing intimacy with one's partner (see Prieur 1990). In our study 607 men had at least one kind of anal sex with their regular partner in the previous six months. The following flow diagram will give an overview of anal sex between men who were in regular relationships.

Figure 19: Overview of anal sexual practices of men in regular relationships



As Figure 19 above indicates 562 men (75.8% of the 741 men in a regular relationship of six or more months) had anal sex with a regular partner. This figure is significantly higher than the frequency of anal sex for those not in a relationship (63%).^{27 28}

As Figure 20 indicates, 75.8% of both non-monogamous and monogamous men had anal sex with their regular partner (248 monogamous men and 314 non-monogamous men). Other studies have shown that men in relationships tended to have both receptive and insertive anal sex.²⁹ Over half (54%) of men in open relationships had insertive anal sex and 52.3% had receptive anal sex (with ejaculation present). Over half (56.2%) of

²⁵ $p > 0.2$.

²⁶ $p < 0.001$ and $p = 0.004$ respectively. SIGMA also found this (see Davies 1993:111).

²⁷ $p = .001$.

²⁸ This is extremely close to the Male Call Australia figure of 69% (Kippax et al. 1994:20). SIGMA data show that 70.5% of their third wave had anal sex in the year prior to study (Davies 1993:109).

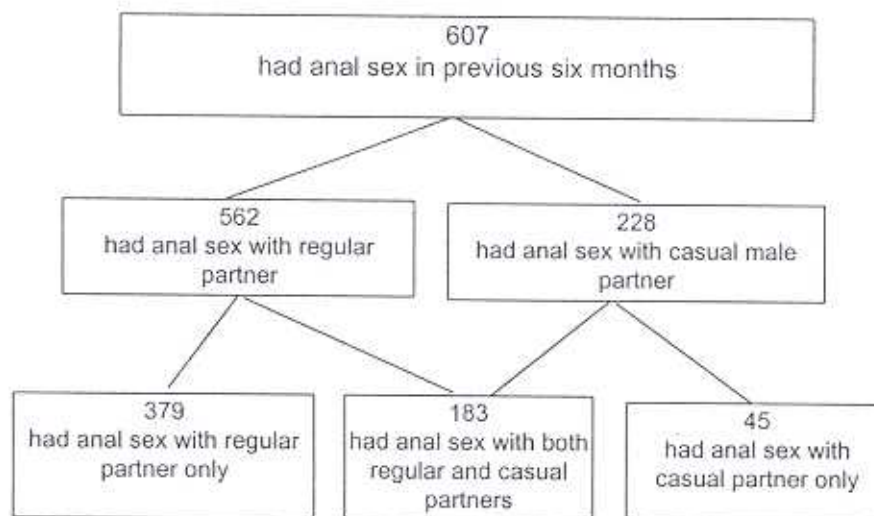
²⁹ See Parkinson 1985; Davies et al. 1993. The issue of whether msm have both insertive and receptive anal sex will be discussed in full in *Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma: Report no. 4: Casual Sex between Men*

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As Figure 19 above indicates 562 men (75.8% of the 741 men in a regular relationship of six or more months) had anal sex with a regular partner. This figure is significantly higher than the frequency of anal sex for those not in a relationship (63%).^{27 28}

As Figure 20 indicates, 75.8% of both non-monogamous and monogamous men had anal sex with their regular partner (248 monogamous men and 314 non-monogamous men). Other studies have shown that men in relationships tended to have both receptive and insertive anal sex.²⁹ Over half (54%) of men in open relationships had insertive anal sex and 52.3% had receptive anal sex (with ejaculation present). Over half (56.2%) of

²⁵ $p > 0.2$.

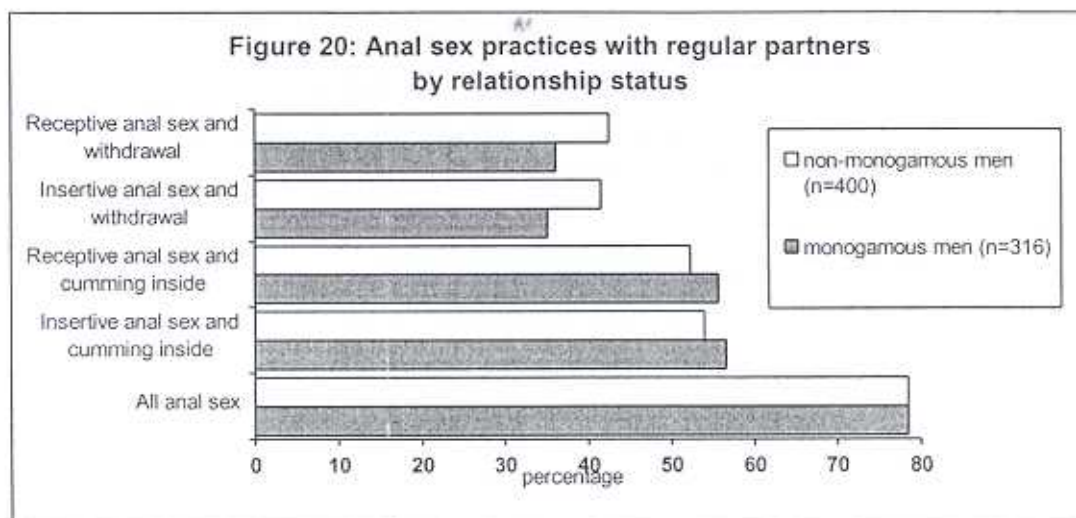
²⁶ $p < 0.001$ and $p = 0.004$ respectively. SIGMA also found this (see Davies 1993:111).

²⁷ $p = .001$.

²⁸ This is extremely close to the Male Call Australia figure of 69% (Kippax et al. 1994:20). SIGMA data show that 70.5% of their third wave had anal sex in the year prior to study (Davies 1993:109).

²⁹ See Parkinson 1985; Davies et al. 1993. The issue of whether msm have both insertive and receptive anal sex will be discussed in full in *Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma: Report no. 4: Casual Sex between Men*

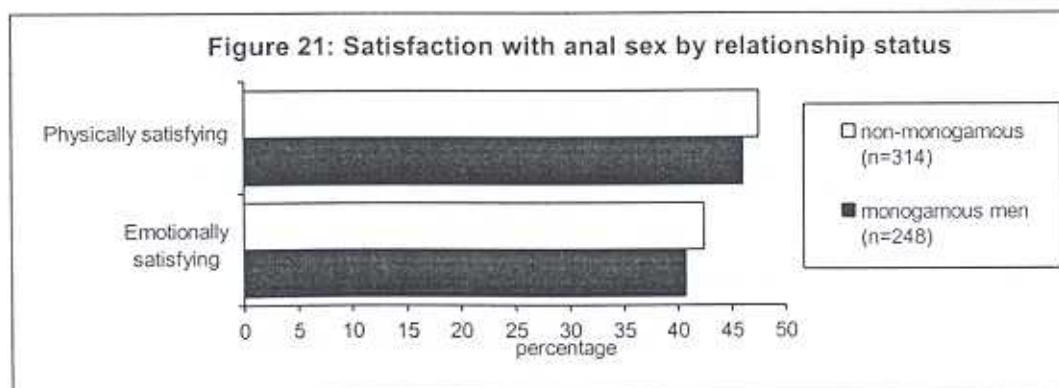
monogamous men had insertive anal sex while 55.7% had receptive anal sex (with ejaculation present).



Withdrawal was a significantly less popular sexual act than ejaculating inside a partner.³⁰ There are some differences in the types of anal sex men had, dependent on relationship status. Slightly fewer non-monogamous men than monogamous men had anal sex with ejaculation present. Non-monogamous men practiced more withdrawal, but this was not statistically significant.

Satisfaction with Anal Sex

Whilst over 80% of all those with a regular partner had anal sex, less than half found it the most physically or emotionally satisfying act. Figure 21 shows that there were differences between monogamous men's and non-monogamous men's satisfaction with anal sex. Even though they were having the same levels of anal sex with their regular partner (see Figure 20), more non-monogamous men found anal sex the most emotionally or physically satisfying sexual practice than monogamous men.

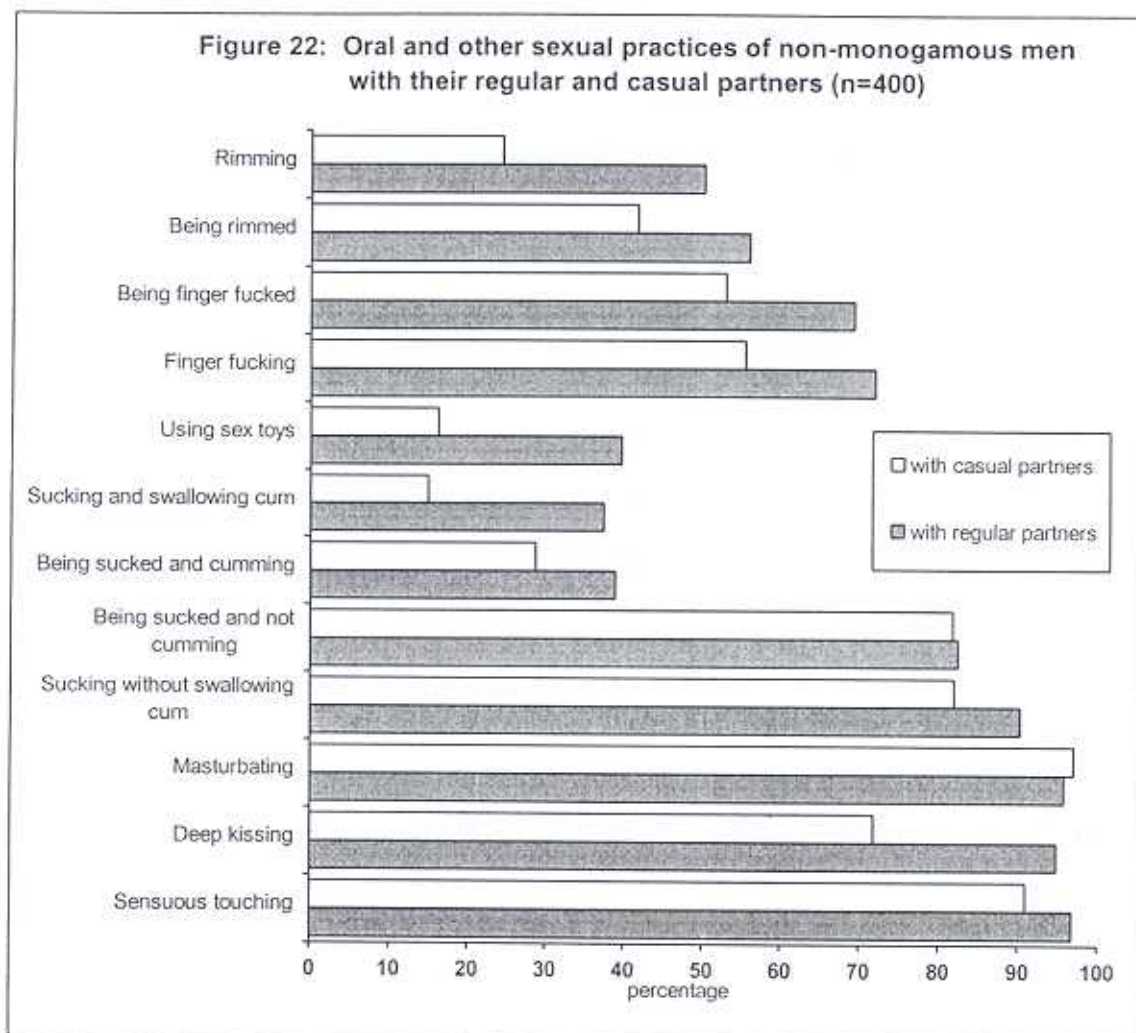


³⁰ $p < .001$.

Sex with Casual Partners

Oral and Other Sex

As Figure 22 shows, sexual practice is partner specific.

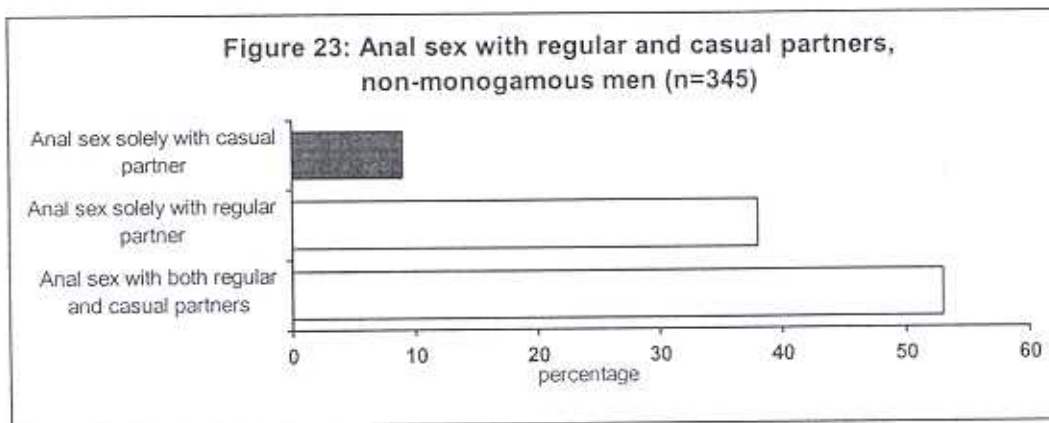


Those men in an 'open' relationship had different sexual practices with their regular and casual partners. Fewer men engaged in all types of sexual activities, except for masturbation, with casual partners. Non-monogamous men were much less likely to engage in rimming or being rimmed, to use sex toys, or to have oral sex with semen present, and deep kissing was more often reserved for regular partners.³¹ There are a number of "oral and other" sexual practices that few men did with their casual partners. Over 80% did not swallow ejaculation with casual partners, 80.5% did not use sex toys, 70% did not rim their casual partner, and 68% did not ejaculate in their partner's mouth (68%). These practices were also performed the least frequently with regular partners.

³¹ rimming : $p < .001$; being rimmed: $p = 0.003$; sex toys: $p < .001$; oral sex: $p = .02$; deep kissing: $p < .001$.

Anal Sex with Casual Partners

Anal sex tends to be context dependent. Almost all studies of the sexual practices of men who have sex with men show that more men have anal intercourse with their regular partners than with casual partners.³² This was also a finding of the Male Call study - men were significantly less likely to have anal sex with their casual partners than with their regular partner.³³ Figure 23 shows that 345 (86.3% of the total non-monogamous men) had anal sex. One hundred and eighty-three men (53% of non-monogamous men who had anal sex) had anal sex with both regular and casual partners. Less than 10% had anal sex with their casual partners only.

*Types of Anal Sex Outside Non-monogamous Relationships*

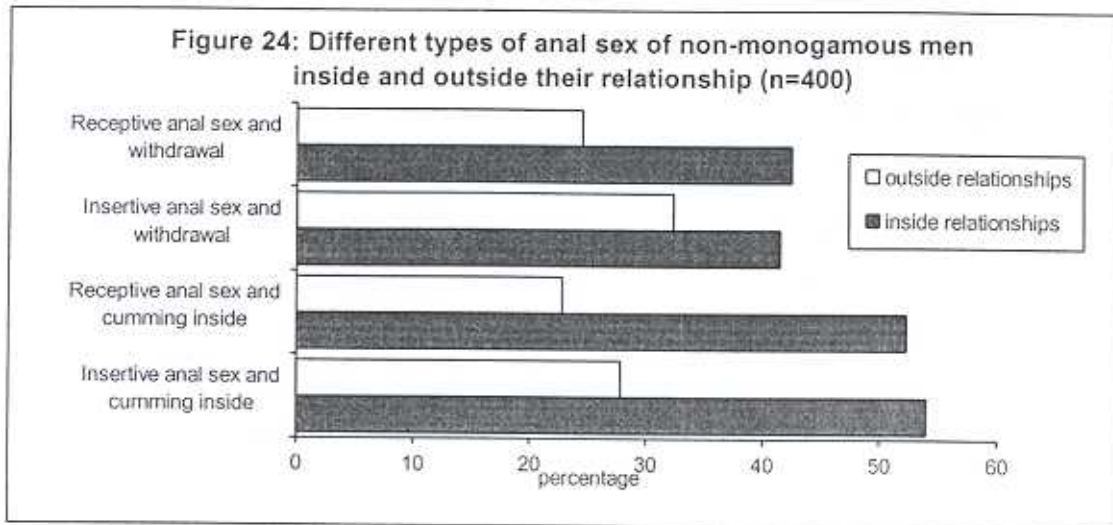
Anal sex with ejaculation was more popular with regular than casual partners.³⁴ While just over half of the non-monogamous men had insertive or receptive anal sex with ejaculation inside with their regular partners (54% and 52.3% respectively), only a quarter did so with their casual partners (27.8%; 22.8%). As Figure 24 (over) indicates, for all four categories of anal sex, there was a significant difference between sex with regular and casual partners.³⁵

³² Examples include Kippax et al. 1993, 1994; Davies et al. 1993; Myers et al. 1993.

³³ $p < .001$.

³⁴ All types of anal intercourse were significantly more likely to be practiced inside than outside relationships ($p < .001$ except insertive withdrawal: $p = 0.06$.)

³⁵ all $p < .001$, except for insertive anal sex with withdrawal for which $p = .06$.

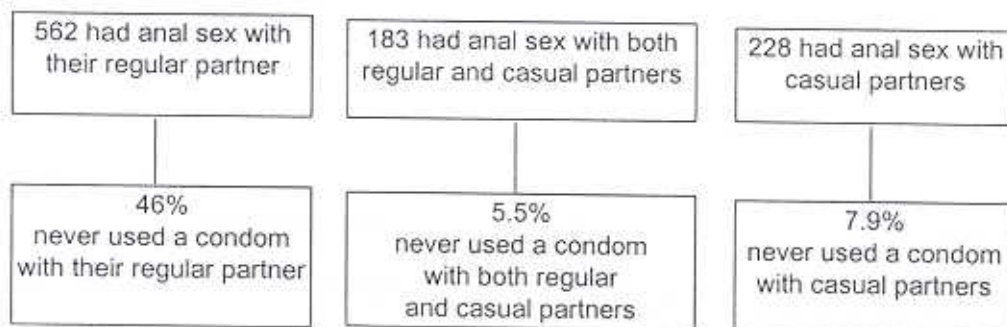


Section IV: Condom Use

While anal sex is more likely to be practiced in regular relationships, condom use is also less frequent. Anal sex may have high levels of interpersonal meaning for some men, and for them the use of condoms may also have symbolic value. Some men believe that sex without a condom is "warm, moist and intensely human" (Parnell 1993) and is a sign of love, trust and intimacy. For others, it is clear that condom use is problematic because it "interferes with the moment" (see Worth 1996a; Reid 1997).

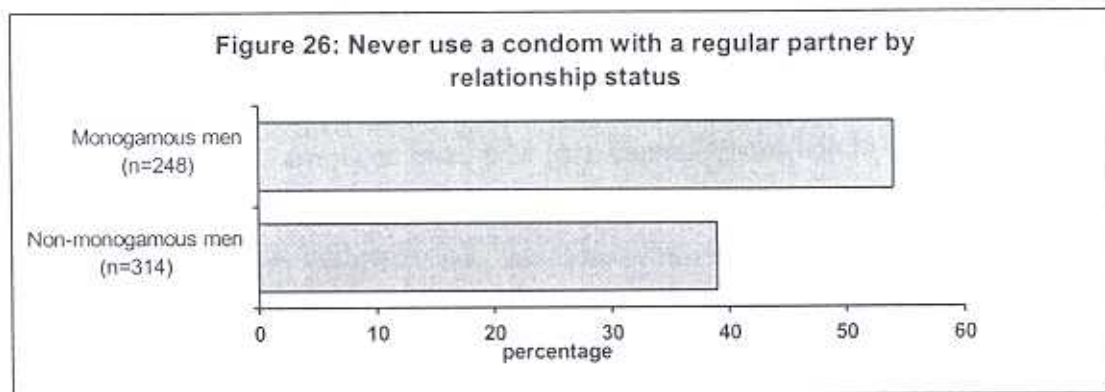
Figure 25 outlines condom use with both regular and casual partners. Condom use with a regular partner is much lower than with casual partners. Two hundred and fifty eight men (46%) in a regular relationship with a man of six months or longer had never used a condom (for any type of anal sex) in that period for sex with their regular partners. Of the men who had anal sex with **both** regular and casual partners, only 5.5% never used a condom for anal sex. Eighteen of the men who had anal sex with casual partners (7.9%) never used a condom.

Figure 25: Condom use of men in regular relationships of six months or longer who had anal sex (n=607)



Condom Use with Regular Partners

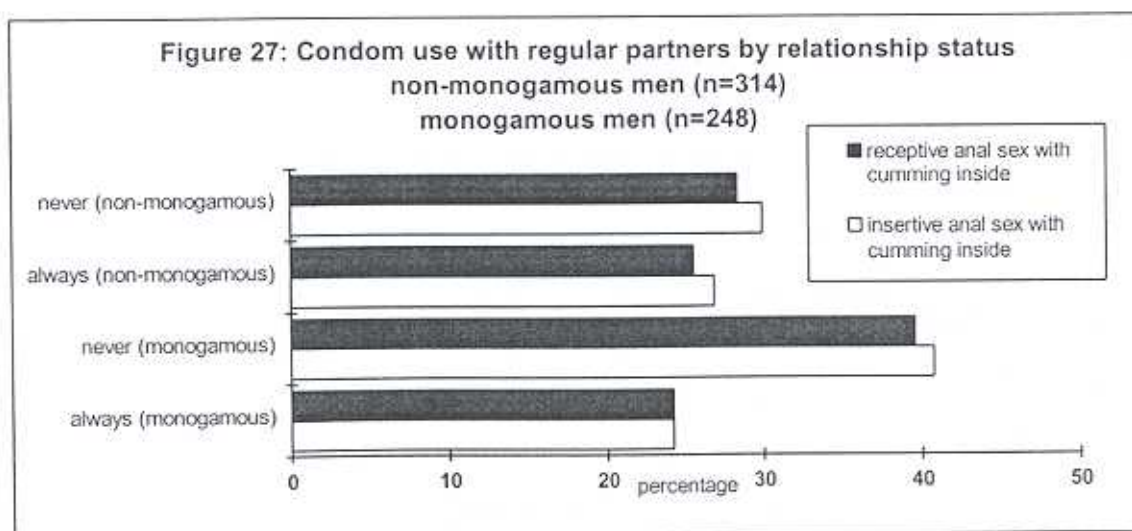
Condom use with a regular partner will be analysed first. Condom use inside relationships is dependent on the type of relationship men have.³⁶ Figure 26 shows that men in open relationships are higher condom users than monogamous men.



As shown in Figure 26, 248 monogamous men had anal sex with their regular partner. Of those, 134 (54%) never used a condom with their regular partner. Of the 314 non-monogamous men who had anal sex with their regular partner, 124 (39.5%) never used a condom. This pattern is similar to that found by Davies et al. where 41.4% of men in open relationships never used a condom for anal sex with their regular partner in the last month, as opposed to 55% of monogamous men (1993:115).

Condom Use for Different Types of Anal Sex

Figure 27 indicates that 'always' using a condom within a relationship occurred less often than 'never' using one.



³⁶ $p < .001$.

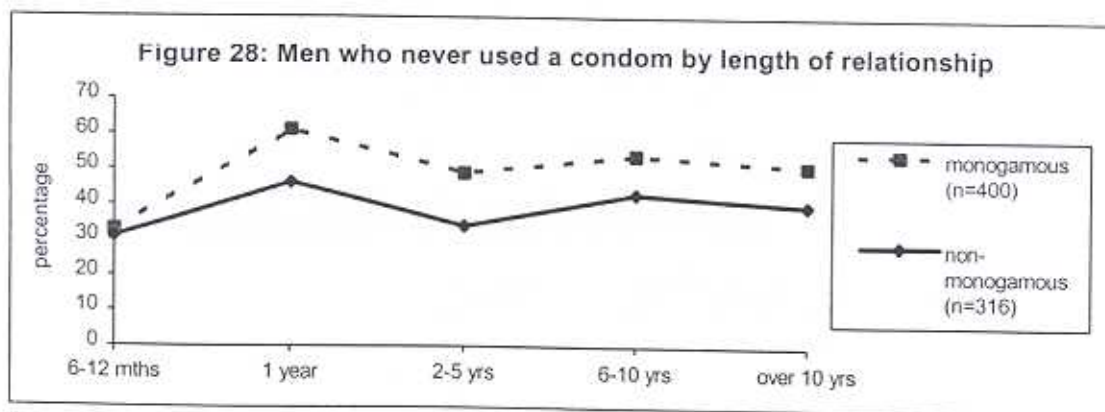
Condom use was low for both receptive and insertive anal sex, for both monogamous and non-monogamous men. Less than a quarter of monogamous men **always** used a condom for both types of anal sex (24.2% for both types). Conversely, 40.7% of monogamous men **never** used condoms for insertive anal sex and 39.5% for receptive anal sex. This finding is consistent with other studies which reveal high levels of unprotected anal intercourse within monogamous relationships (see Kippax et al. 1993, 1994; Davies et al. 1993).

The percentage of non-monogamous men who used condoms is slightly higher than that of monogamous men, but not significantly so. Of the non-monogamous men, 26.8% **always** used a condom for insertive anal sex and 25.5% for receptive anal sex. About thirty percent (29.9%) of monogamous men **never** used condoms for insertive anal sex, and 28.3% never used condoms for receptive anal sex.

Withdrawal was somewhat less popular overall than ejaculation inside. Some men seemed to be using withdrawal in addition to using a condom (as an extra safety measure).

Length of Relationship and Condom Use

The length of a relationship makes a considerable difference to condom use. The percentage of men who never used a condom in a regular relationship almost doubled from 31% of those in a relationship of less than a year who had anal sex with their partner, to 55% of those in a relationship of a year or longer. Condom use levelled out to just over forty percent for those men in a relationship of two years or over. Figure 28 shows that the patterns of condom use over length of relationship are similar for both monogamous and non-monogamous relationships.

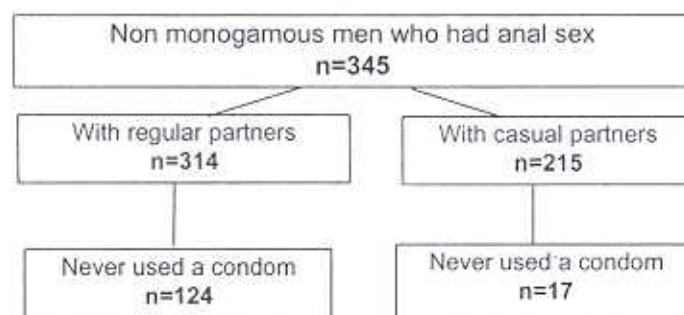


While condom use is about the same for those men in a relationship of less than one year, more monogamous men in relationships of over a year never used condoms.³⁷ This finding shows that many men in relationships - particularly those in relationships longer than one year - are not taking up the safe sex message of "use a condom every time". Despite this, our data also shows that a third (33%) of men in relationships are using condoms every time for anal sex with their regular partner.

Condom Use with Casual Partners

As Figure 27 showed, just over a quarter of non-monogamous men always used condoms for insertive and receptive anal sex with a regular partner. As might be expected, many more men always used condoms with their casual partners than with their regular partners (see Figure 29).³⁸

Figure 29: Condom Use for Anal Sex with Casual Partners (non-monogamous men)



Only seventeen non-monogamous men never used a condom for casual anal sex (7.9% of those having anal sex with a casual partner), while 124 (39% of those having anal sex with their regular partner) never used a condom for anal sex with that partner.

Agreements about Anal Sex and Condom Use

Agreements Inside a Relationship

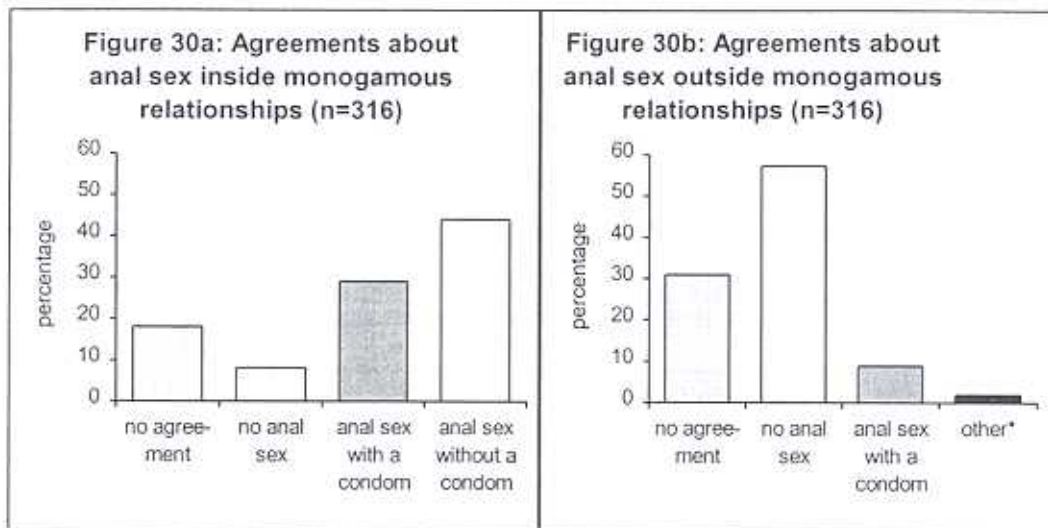
When it comes to anal sex within a relationship, many men just slip into having unprotected sex, rather than go through an explicit decision-making process (see Reid 1997). We particularly wanted to know if men had discussed anal sex and condom use. The criterion for having an 'agreement' was that men had discussed anal sex and had come to a decision with their partner about condom use. This is somewhat problematic,

³⁷ For most lengths of relationship numbers are too small to detect a difference, but for men in relationships between 2 and 5 years $p=0.02$.

as qualitative research has found (see Worth 1996a, Reid 1997). About a quarter of the men that took part in the survey had no clear agreement with their regular partner about anal sex within their relationship.

Monogamous Men

As Figure 30a shows, around 80% of monogamous men had made some kind of agreement with their partner about anal sex **within** their relationship. Almost half had agreed not to use condoms for anal sex with their partner. Only a fifth (18%) had agreed to use condoms and very few (8%) had agreed not to have anal sex at all.



* 'other' includes one man who agreed to anal sex outside the relationship without a condom.

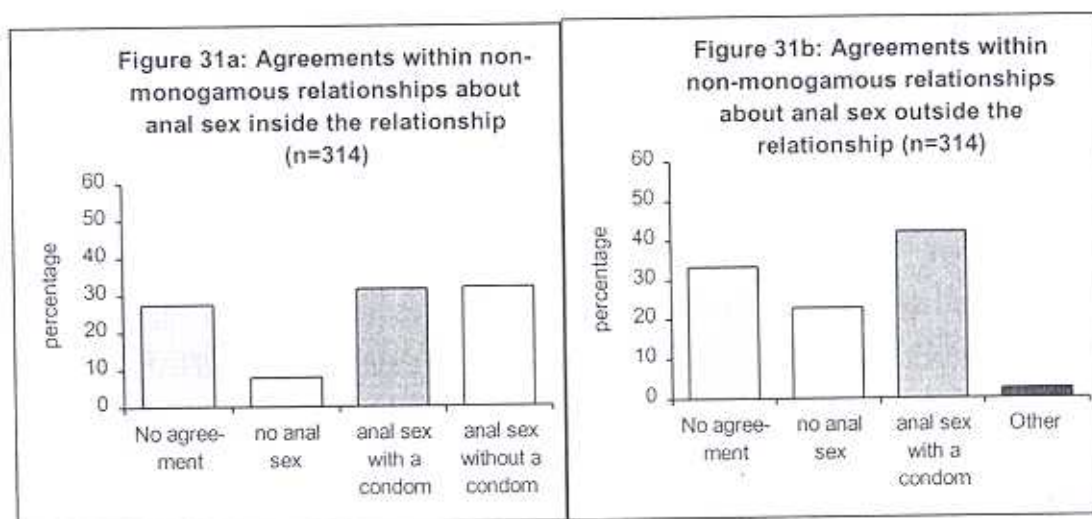
There are considerable differences between the agreements that monogamous men made about anal sex inside and outside their relationship. A third of monogamous men had no agreement about sex with casual partners. This may be because they believe that such agreements are unnecessary as they are monogamous. Also some men may feel that having an agreement about sex outside their relationship undermines their desire for monogamy. If these men are unable or unwilling to discuss the possibility of casual sex because it may jeopardise their relationship, they may also be unwilling to tell their partner about any unsafe sex outside the relationship.

Most (86%) of the men who had discussed the subject had agreed to have no anal sex with a casual partner. Less than 10% had agreed to have anal sex with a condom with a casual partner. Over 80% of monogamous men used HIV testing as part of an

agreement about sex inside their relationship. Those who tested were significantly more likely to have an agreement to discard condoms for anal sex with their regular partner.³⁹

Non-Monogamous Men

Figure 31a shows that non-monogamous men were less likely than monogamous men to have an agreement with their regular partner than monogamous men.⁴⁰ Just over a quarter (27%) of non-monogamous men had no agreement about sex inside the relationship. Again, few had agreed to no anal sex with a regular partner. Figure 31b indicates that fewer non-monogamous men had agreements about sex outside the relationship (31% had no agreement). Non-monogamous men were much more likely to have agreed to anal sex with a casual partner than men who were monogamous.⁴¹



* 'other' includes one man who agreed to anal sex outside the relationship without a condom.

A significantly larger proportion of non-monogamous men had agreed to use condoms inside their relationships than those in closed relationships (42%; 9%).⁴²

Section V: Highly Unsafe Sex

In general, few men in the Male Call survey had had unsafe sex in the past six months with a casual partner. In order to further analyse the proportion of men in relationships whose sexual practices could be deemed extremely high risk we used the definition of 'highly unsafe sex' as having had unprotected anal intercourse with a man whose HIV status was unknown or different from the respondent in the last six months. Only 15% of

³⁹ $p=.04$

⁴⁰ $p=.003$

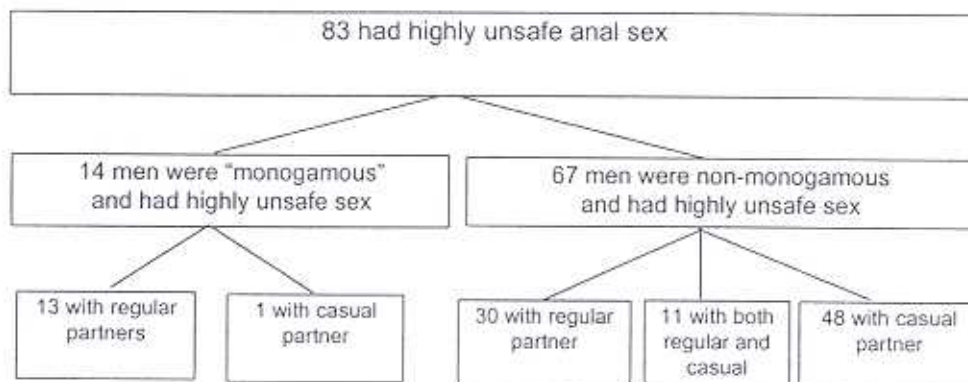
⁴¹ $p<.001$

⁴² $p<.001$.

the 1852 Male Call respondents fell into this category. For this report this definition will include highly unsafe sex with both regular and/or casual partners.

The incidence of highly unsafe sex is shown in flow diagram form in Figure 32 (over).

Figure 32: Incidence of highly unsafe sex by men in regular relationships (6 months or longer) who had anal sex in previous six months



* Two men declined to say whether or not they were monogamous for this question.⁴³

Of the men in relationships, fourteen 'monogamous' men stated that they had had unprotected anal sex, in the last six months, with a partner whose status they did not know or which was different from their own. These men represented 4.4% of those who stated that they only had sex with their regular partner. Thirteen of these men had highly unsafe sex with their regular partner, and one with a casual partner. Nine had agreed to have anal sex without a condom with their partner, and three had no agreement at all.

Sixty seven men in an open relationship of six months or longer (19.4% of those who had anal sex) had had unprotected anal sex with a man whose HIV status was unknown, or different from their own, in the last six months. Of these men, forty eight had highly unsafe sex with a casual partner, and thirty with their regular partner.

Half of the sixty seven men had no agreement with their partner about anal sex either inside or outside their relationship. Nearly a third had agreed that sex inside the relationship could be **without** condoms, and a similar number had agreed that anal sex outside the relationship should be **with** condoms.

⁴³ The one 'monogamous' respondent who had had highly unsafe sex with a casual partner had earlier in the interview stated that he had not had sex with a man other than his partner in the last six months.

There were few men who had had highly unsafe sex with both regular and casual partners. Eleven men, all of whom were in open relationships (representing 6% of those having anal sex with both regular and casual partners) had had highly unsafe sex with both regular and casual partners in the previous six months. There is no doubt that these men are putting both their regular and their casual partners at considerable risk of infection.

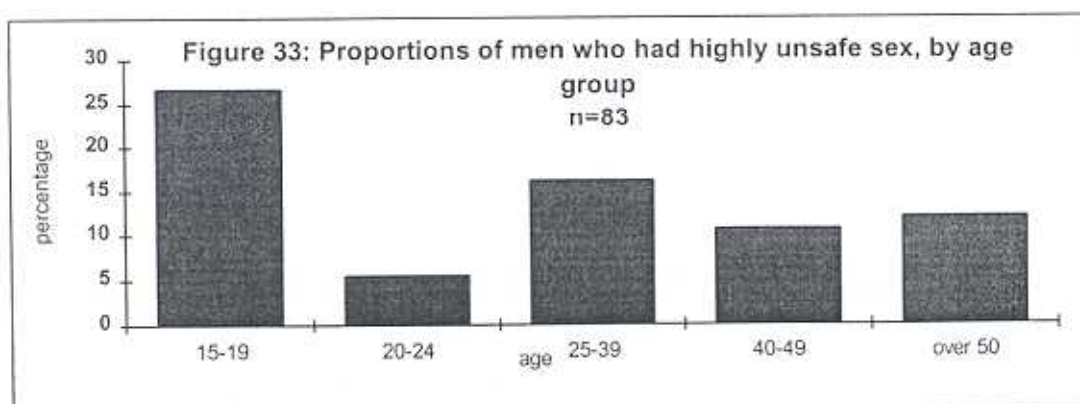
Predictors of Highly Unsafe Sex

There is no universal agreement amongst AIDS researchers on the predictors of unsafe sex. Other studies have found various correlates of unsafe sex amongst men who have sex with men. Some of these correlates are:

- being in a relationship with a man (see Kippax et al. 1993, 1994; Myers et al. 1993; Weatherburn et al. 1992).
- having lower education levels (Kippax et al. 1994)
- being non-gay community attached and having sex with casual partners (Kippax et al. 1994)
- having sex with larger numbers of casual partners (Kippax et al. 1993)
- being young (Myers et al. 1993.)

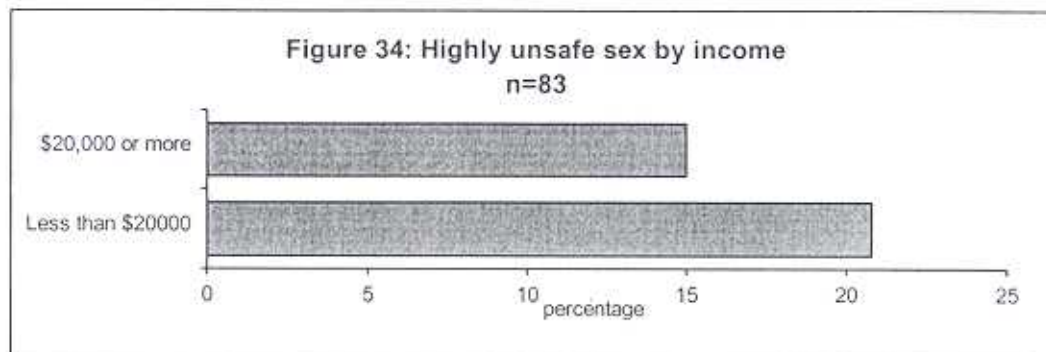
Male Call found five predictors of highly unsafe sex inside a relationship (see Appendix 1). These were age, income, sexual identity, length of relationship and agreements with partners about anal sex. These predictors will be discussed briefly below.

Age



Very young men (15-19) were significantly more likely to have highly unsafe sex than any other age group (see Appendix 1).⁴⁴ There are a number of possible explanations for this. Teenage years can be a period of extreme vulnerability and isolation for young men who have sex with men. Many young men are unable to disclose their sexual attraction, orientation or identity to peers, school teachers and family for fear of rejection. Lack of social support for young men 'coming out' enhances the risk of unsafe sex in this group.

Income



Men earning under \$20,000 were significantly more likely to have highly unsafe sex, compared with men earning over \$20,000.⁴⁵ This is borne out by further Male Call findings, in which a greater proportion of the men who fall into the category of an 'under-class' of men had had highly unsafe sex in the previous six months.⁴⁶

Heterosexual Identity

Men identifying as heterosexual are significantly more likely to have highly unsafe sex than those men who did not identify as heterosexual.⁴⁷ For example, of the men who were in a relationship over six months and who had anal sex with their regular partner, 45% of those who identified as heterosexual had had highly unsafe sex compared with 12.5% of those who did not identify as heterosexual.

⁴⁴ p=.01

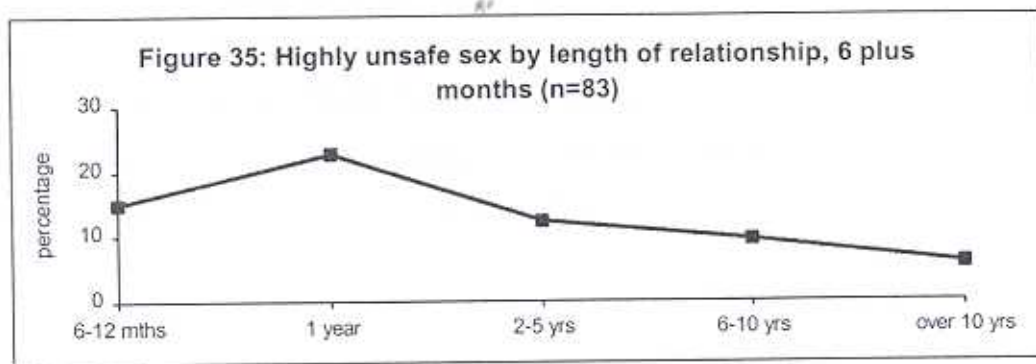
⁴⁵ p=.01

⁴⁶ For Male Call analysis, men who earned less than \$20,000 pa., and whose highest qualification was School Certificate, were defined as being in an 'under-class' position. See Male Call Report no. 1: Methodology and Demographic Characteristics.

⁴⁷ p=.04

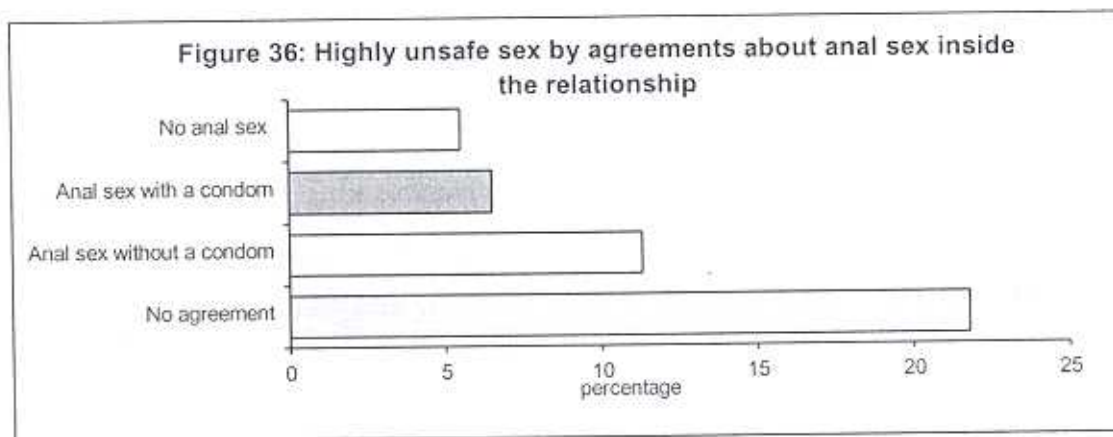
Length of Relationship

Men who had highly unsafe sex were significantly more likely to be in a relationship of less than two years, and in particular a relationship of between one and two years.⁴⁸



Agreements about Anal Sex Inside and Outside the Relationship

Men who had no agreement, or who had an agreement not to use condoms inside the relationship, were significantly more likely to have highly unsafe sex.⁴⁹



The safest strategies appear to be either an agreement to have no anal sex inside the relationship, or an agreement to have anal sex with condoms inside the relationship, and no anal sex outside the relationship.

Are Men Successfully 'Negotiating' Safe Sex?

The concept 'negotiated safety' refers to the practice of unprotected anal intercourse inside a regular relationship. According to Kippax et al. (1993), this is not an unsafe practice as long as there is a clear understanding that partners have the same sero-status and that, with casual partners, either no anal sex occurs or anal sex is always

⁴⁸ $p < .0001$

⁴⁹ $p = .0002$

with a condom. Kippax et al. argue that "many men use their concordant sero-status as a means of preventing the transmission of HIV" (1993:142). Negotiated safety requires men to have:

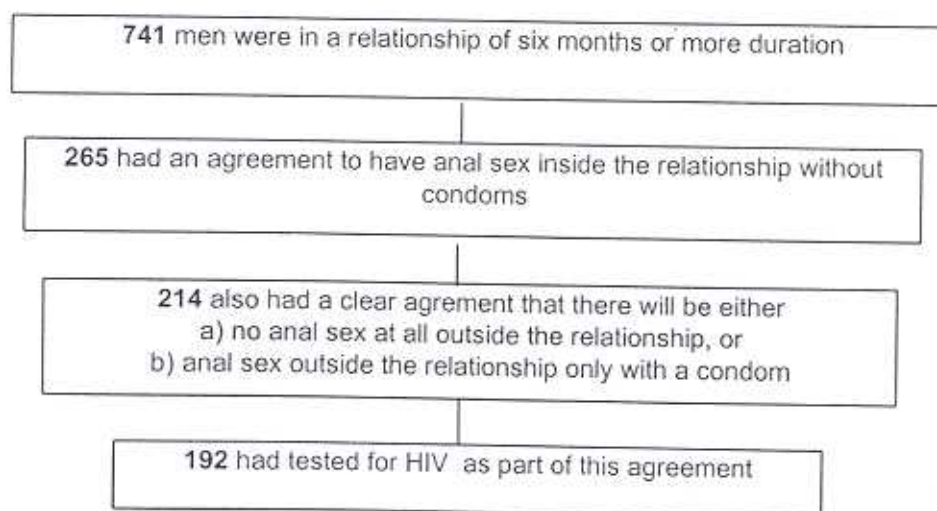
- a clear agreement to have anal sex without a condom inside the regular relationship
- a clear agreement that there will either be NO anal sex, or that anal sex outside the relationship is always with a condom
- told each other their HIV test results when working out these agreements with their regular partner/s.⁵⁰

Of the 400 men in an open relationship of six months or more, 192 (25.9%) had what would be considered a negotiated safety arrangement. That is, these men had:

- agreed to have sex without condoms inside their relationship;
- agreed that there would be no anal sex, or that anal sex with casual partners was only with a condom; and
- tested for HIV as part of this agreement.

It is possible to draw a flow diagram of these steps using Male Call data:

Figure 37: "Negotiated Safety"



If we are to test whether these agreements are working successfully then we need to test condom use for casual sex for these 192 men. Of these men only forty two men had anal sex with casual partners in the previous six months. However, seven of the

⁵⁰ The AIDS Council of New South Wales' campaign, 'Talk, Test, Test, Trust' further requires that men have two HIV tests after having agreed to non-condom use inside the relationship. After the first test condoms are still used for a three month 'window period'. The men test again and if the results are negative only then can condoms be discarded.

forty two men (16.7%) had had unprotected anal intercourse without a condom in the last six months with a casual partner whose HIV status was unknown or different from their own. This figure is only slightly lower than that for non-monogamous men who had highly unsafe sex (19.4% of those non-monogamous men who had anal sex). Whilst these numbers are too small to make definitive statements, they serve to provide no evidence that, in Male Call, negotiated safety is a significantly more successful strategy for men in relationships than always using a condom for anal sex.

Conclusion

Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma data dispels the traditional stereotype that gay men are not involved in relationships. While the data collected only begins to reveal the richness and diversity of the respondents' lives, it has provided an enormous amount of new information about men who have sex with men which was previously unknown. Male Call is, of course, unable to tell us about the meanings men give to their relationships, how they communicate with each other about trust and love, or how they negotiate with each other about safe sex, both inside and outside their relationships. It does, however, signal a number of important issues.

Over half the sample were in a relationship with another man. Men in relationships with men live in all parts of the country, but particularly in cities. Proportionately more older and more gay community attached men were in a relationship. Men in relationships have, on average, been together for over four years.

Men in relationships have a wide diversity of sexual practices. Masturbation and sensuous touching occurred almost universally with regular partners, and the great majority of men had both oral sex without ejaculation, and anal sex, with their regular partner. Men in relationships with men were much less likely to have anal sex with casual partners.

The lower levels of condom use inside relationships (nearly half never used a condom with their regular partner) is a cause for serious concern. The limited amount of overseas data available indicates that a growing number of new HIV cases amongst men who have sex with men have occurred inside a relationship.⁵¹ This is contrary to the usual stereotype of casual sex being the most unsafe sex. While only a small number of men had unsafe sex with a partner whose HIV status was unknown or

different from their own; some of those men were supposedly monogamous. The number of non-monogamous men in relationships who had this kind of highly unsafe sex is considerably higher than the overall average. There is an urgent need for education campaigns which address the issues of condom use inside and outside relationships. These campaigns must specifically target those most at risk: the very young, those in relationships of under two years; and those men on lower incomes. They must also emphasise that agreements that involve the use of condoms inside relationships are the safest arrangements.

⁵¹ See Davies 1992 for example

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Appendix 1: Statistical Analysis

A multi-variate logistic regression was used to investigate the effect of demographic characteristics and social milieu variables on whether the Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma respondents were in a regular relationship with another man. 1718 respondents (909 in relationships) had full information and were included in the model.

Demographic and Milieu Variables

- age: 15-19; 20-24; 25-39; 40-49; over 50
- ethnicity: Pakeha; Maori; Pacific Island; other
- residence: major urban; secondary urban; minor urban/rural
- gay community attached: 4 or below; 5 and above
- identity: gay or not; queer or not; heterosexual or not; bisexual or not
- qualifications: none, school qualifications; professional/technical; incomplete university; graduate; post-graduate
- income: less than \$20,000; \$20,000 and above
- disclosure: to anyone or not

1718 (909 in relationships) had full information and were included in the analysis

Table 1: p-values for the effect of demographic and milieu variables on relationship status

age	0.1	heterosexual	not significant
ethnicity	not significant	bisexual	0.07
residency	not significant	qualifications	not significant
gay com. attachment	<.0001	income	0.08
gay identity	not significant.	disclosed to anyone	0.0004
queer	not significant		

Men who were attached to the gay community are more likely to be in a regular relationship with a man, as are those who have disclosed their sexual attraction to men to anyone. Those men whose income is less than \$20,000 and those who identify as bisexual are less likely to be in a relationship with a man.

Monogamous/Non-monogamous Relationships

Those men who had regular relationships of at least six months duration were divided into two groups, monogamous and non-monogamous. A multi-variate logistic regression was

used to investigate the effect of demographics on whether or not those Male Call respondents were monogamous. 691 men (305 were monogamous) with full information were included.

Table 2: p values for the effect of demographic and milieu variables on whether men were monogamous or not

age	0.2	heterosexual	not significant
ethnicity	not significant	bisexual	0.04
residency	0.01	qualifications	not significant
gay com. attachment	<0.0001	income	not significant
gay identity	not significant.	Disclosed to anyone	not significant
queer	not significant		

Men who are attached to the gay community are less likely to be in monogamous relationships, as are those who identify as bisexual. Rural people are more likely to be monogamous than those from urban centres.

Highly Unsafe Sex inside Regular Relationships

A variable was formed using Q202 from the Male Call questionnaire: "have you in the last six months had unprotected anal intercourse with a partner whose HIV status was unknown or different from yours?". 863 respondents had full information and were included in the model. Of these men, 62 had had highly unsafe anal sex. See Table 3 over.

Table 3: p values for the effect of demographic and milieu variables on whether men had highly unsafe sex

age	0.1	heterosexual	0.04
ethnicity	not significant	bisexual	not significant
residency	not significant	qualifications	not significant
gay com. attachment	not significant	income	0.1
gay identity	not significant.	disclosed to anyone	not significant
queer	not significant	length of relationship	<0.0001
agreement	0.0002		

