A study of New Zealand men who have sex with men

Report four:
casual sex between men

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MALE CALL
Waea Mai, Tane Ma

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Casual Sex between Men

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Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report Series:

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Overview

Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma was the first nationwide survey of men who have sex with men (msm) in New Zealand. The project was undertaken because no large scale baseline data on this population was available. While a number of other groups are affected by HIV in this country, the virus is most significantly present amongst msm, who account for over 80% of those with AIDS. As there is still 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, it was recognised that there was an urgent need for up to date, accurate data on the socio-sexual characteristics of men who have sex with men. The aims of this survey were to:

- describe men who have sex with men’s HIV and AIDS knowledge and their sexual practices with a special focus on the adoption of safer strategies;
- examine the ways in which HIV and AIDS knowledge and safe sex 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
- to develop a core set of baseline questions which could be used in future surveys of men who have sex with men.

The method used was a nationwide telephone survey which was conducted over a six week period between May and June 1996. All men who had sex with another man in the previous five years were eligible to participate. Respondents called an 0800 toll-free phone number and answered a questionnaire, which took approximately forty minutes to complete. Respondents were able to terminate the call at any time. This method ensured that participants could remain anonymous, and encouraged a wide range of msm to participate. The questionnaire was developed by modifying and expanding the original Australian Project Male Call instrument, which was first used in 1992.

The questionnaire was completed in full by 1852 men. Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma attracted a broad cross section of msm through a successful recruitment campaign that spanned both mainstream and gay media.
Introduction

Casual sex with other men is a feature of many men's life experience, regardless of their sexual identity. The term 'casual sex between men' is a general descriptor which encompasses a number of different sexual scenarios. It refers to both anonymous sex - that is, sex during and after which the participants exchange no personal information - and other casual encounters where some information about each other may be passed on. In both scenarios the participants may not expect or intend to meet again (Davies et al. 1993:149). Within Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma a casual male partner was broadly defined as any sexual partner that did not fall into the definition of a regular partner - “someone with whom you have had sex more than once, and with whom you plan to have sex again in the near future”.

This is the first nationwide data on casual sex between men in New Zealand. Much of the previous research into casual sex between men in this country has been relatively small in compass and localised in nature (see Chetwynd 1990; Parkinson 1989). This study not only explores the sexual activities of a wide range of gay identified men but also those of large numbers of non-gay identified men.

The following report will investigate the demographic and social milieu characteristics, sexual practices and condom use of the 1362 respondents who had had sex with casual male partners in the six months prior to interview. Logistic regressions were carried out for the main aims listed below. Details of variables used and statistical findings are given in Appendix I 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.

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1 For the purposes of this study the SIGMA definition of a regular partner was modified. 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).

2 The term 'social milieu' refers here to the social contexts within which men who have sex with men live. This both influences how open men are about their sexual orientation, and reflects the extent to which they are attached to the gay community.
The aims of this report are:

- to compare the demographic variables and social milieu variables of the men who had sex with casual male partners in the six months prior to interview with the men who did not have sex with casual male partners in that time;

- to describe the demographic and social milieu characteristics of the men who went to five venues (that is the men who went to gay bars, gay saunas, public toilets, straight bars and who placed ads in gay press) to look for male sex partners in the previous year;

- to outline the sexual practices of men with their casual male partners;

- to examine the condom use of men who had anal sex with their casual male partners; and

- to examine the predictors of men having highly unsafe sex with casual male partners.

A large proportion of respondents (1362 men or 74%) stated they had had sex with at least one casual male partner in the six months prior to interview. This figure is similar to other large-scale studies of men who have sex with men, such as Male Call Australia, in which 72.7% of respondents had engaged in casual sex in the six months prior to interview (Kippax et al. 1995:134), and the British SIGMA cohort study, in which 61.4% of respondents had reported casual sex in the year prior to interview (Hickson et al. 1993:85).

Section I: Characteristics of Men Who Had Sex with Casual Male Partners

This section will explore several significant demographic and social milieu characteristics of the 1362 men who had sex with a casual male partner. The number of casual male partners that men had sex with in the previous six months will also be outlined. Those men who had sex with a casual male partner will be referred to throughout this report as 'msc'.

![Figure 1: Percentage of total sample who had sex with casual male partner/s in last 6 months (n=1852)](image)
Predictors of sex with casual male partners

A logistic regression was used to investigate the effect of several demographic and social milieu variables on the likelihood of men having sex with casual male partners (see Appendix I for full details of variables and results). We found that of the variables that did distinguish mosc, those that related to the social environment were more statistically significant than demographic factors. Whilst income was the only demographic variable that was found to have a significant effect on whether men had had sex with a casual male partner in the previous six months, three social milieu variables in particular emerged as significant. These were gay community attachment, relationship status and sexual identity. These findings are discussed below.

Income

We found a relationship between higher incomes and the likelihood of having casual sex. For example, men who earned over $20,000 pa were more likely to have had sex with a casual male partner in the previous six months than the men who earned less than $20,000 pa.\(^3\)

Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma was interested in investigating the effect of class on the sexual lives of msm. Dowsett et al. describe an 'under-class' effect on some men who have sex with men, which is constituted through "unemployment, poor education, poverty and cultural marginalisation" (1992:313). Patterns of sexuality often differ for men in this situation, many of whom fall outside the gay community. In order to identify this group, we isolated those respondents who earned less than $20,000 pa and whose highest educational qualification was School Certificate. A total of 171 respondents were in this category, and they were slightly more likely than the rest of the mosc to be of a non-NZ European identity, and to live in secondary or minor urban areas. They were also significantly less likely to be gay community attached.\(^4\) Over two thirds (67.8%) of the men who were in the under-class category had sex with casual male partners in the previous six months, compared with 74.1% of men who were not in the under-class category.\(^5\) Less than ten percent (8.5% or 116 men) of the total mosc fell into the under-class category.

\(^3\) p=0.02
\(^4\) p=0.004
\(^5\) Not significant. See Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report No. 1 Methodology and Demographic Characteristics for further explanation and discussion of the category of 'under-class' men who have sex with men.
Gay community attachment

Involvement in the gay community by men who have sex with men has been found to be central to successful HIV prevention (for example, see Watney 1990; Connell et al. 1991). Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma was interested in gauging men's attachment to the gay community for the purpose of exploring the relationship between involvement with the gay community and sexual practice, including condom use. A gay community attachment scale was constructed by ranking (on a scale of one to twelve) respondents' social contact with other gay/homosexual men, and places they visited with their gay friends. A score of five or more was regarded as indicating the respondent was gay community attached (gca), and a score of four or less meant that the respondent was non-gay community attached (non-gca). It must be acknowledged however that the term 'gay community' is not a singular or unproblematic concept, and as Ryan (1991:2) noted in her research into gay community in New Zealand, there is tremendous variation in how men connect with and experience a sense of 'community'.

Although large proportions of both gca and non-gca men had had sex with casual male partners in the previous six months, those respondents who were gca were more likely to have done this. While 77.3% of all gca men had had sex with a casual male partner, the figure for non-gca men was 66.8%. Two thirds of the 1362 msc were gay community attached (66.9% or 912 men).

Relationship status

Men who were in a regular relationship with a man (of six months or longer) were less likely to have had sex with a casual male partner than men who were single (see beginning of this section for definition of regular partner). It must be noted that as the survey questioned respondents on their sexual practices and condom use in the previous six months, for the purpose of analysis only those men who were in a relationship of six months or longer were included. Just over a half (55.8%) of all men who were in a relationship with a man of six months or longer also reported sex with a casual male partner. Conversely, men who were not in a male-to-male relationship reported a much

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6 This is discussed in full in Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report No 7: Gay Community Involvement.
7 p<0.0001
8 p<0.0001
9 See Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report No. 2: Men in Relationships with Men for more detailed analysis of the demographic characteristics, sexual practices and condom use of respondents who were in a regular relationship with another man.
We focussed primarily on the question of how many casual male partners our respondents reported having sex with in the previous six months in order to establish whether numbers of casual partners had any effect on men’s sexual practices and condom use. However, in the process we were able to re-evaluate the stereotype of all gay men as ‘overly’ sexually active, and also to outline in more detail the frequency of casual sex between men in New Zealand. Whilst a large proportion of men had casual sex in the previous six months, many of these men had sex with relatively few partners (see Figure 3). The median number of casual male partners fell between two and five, and just over half (55.2%) of the men had had sex with five or less casual male partners in the previous six months. A small proportion (62 men or 4.6%) stated they had had sex with over fifty male partners in the previous six months. It is also worth noting that a third (30.6%) of these men reported that they had been paid to have sex in the previous six months.

An analysis of variance was used to investigate the effect of a number of demographic and social milieu variables on the number of casual partners our respondents had sex with in the previous six months (see Appendix I for details of variables and results). Several factors that were associated with sex with larger numbers of casual male partners were identified. These were age, place of residence, gay community attachment, relationship status and whether or not men had been paid to have sex in the previous six months. These findings are discussed below.
Age

Men's age had an effect on the number of casual male partners with whom they had sex. Younger msc (that is, men aged 15-24) were more likely to have had sex with fewer casual male partners in the previous six months than the rest of the msc. When compared with other age groups, a higher proportion of younger men had had sex with two to five casual male partners. Conversely, older msc (that is, men aged over 40) were more likely to have had sex with over six casual male partners in the previous six months.

Place of residence

Respondents who lived in rural areas were more likely to have sex with fewer casual male partners in the previous six months than men from larger urban areas. This is most probably a reflection of the difference between heavily populated urban areas - with large gay communities and many places where men can meet male sex partners - and isolated rural areas where potential casual male partners, and accessible places to meet them, are very restricted.

Paid for sex

Ninety of the msc (6.6%) had been paid to have sex in the previous six months. These men were significantly more likely to have had sex with larger numbers of casual male partners, and as noted above, these men accounted for a substantial proportion of the msc who had sex with larger numbers of casual male partners (see Figure 4).

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Figure 4: Proportion of msc who had been paid to have sex in previous six months by number of casual partners

- Not paid money
- Paid money to have sex

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11 p<0.0001
12 p<0.0001
13 p<0.0001
Gay community attachment

The 912 msc who were gay community attached were more likely to have had sex with larger numbers of casual male partners than the 450 non-gca men. Higher proportions of those msc who had sex with larger numbers of casual partners were gay community attached men (see Figure 5).

![Figure 5: Proportions of msc who were gay community attached by number of casual partners](image)

Relationship status

In line with the findings of Davies et al. that "[t]he number of casual partners men have varies according to whether they have a regular partner" (1993:153), we found that men who were in relationships with men were more likely to have sex with fewer casual partners than men who were single. Although the general distribution of the number of casual male partners of both groups was similar, a larger proportion of msc who were in relationships with men had casual sex with only one male partner (16%) in the previous six months, compared to those msc who were not in male-to-male relationships (11%).

Attraction to men

Respondents were asked to rate their sexual attraction to men on a scale of one to five. A substantial proportion of msc rated themselves as ‘extremely’ sexually attracted to men (86% or 1173 men). Perhaps not surprisingly, we found that msc who reported a greater sexual attraction to men tended to have sex with more casual partners. For example, whilst just under a half (46.7%) of the 1143 msc who were extremely sexually attracted to

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14 \( p=0.001 \)
15 \( p=0.0002 \)
16 See MALE CALL/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report No 2: Men in Relationships with Men for more detailed discussion of sex with casual male partners by men who were in relationships.
17 \( p=0.001 \)
men had sex with six or more casual partners in the previous six months, the comparative figure for the remaining 187 msc was 31.5%.

Section II: Places Men Went to Meet Male Sex Partners

Men who have sex with men go to a variety of places to meet or look for male sex partners. Sex may occur in these venues, or they may only function as sites where men first meet. A long history of criminalisation of male to male sex and the consequent marginalisation of homosexual and bisexual men in New Zealand encouraged the creation of places where men could meet other men, and know that they would be ‘safe’. These include a variety of private spaces such as bars and private parties, and public spaces such as certain parks and public toilets (known as “bogs” in New Zealand). With the decriminalisation of sex between men in 1988, many new venues have emerged, such as gay bars and nightclubs (often very popular venues for the ‘straight’ community as well), and cruise clubs. However, many long established venues remain popular places for men to meet.

Respondents were asked where they had gone in the previous year to meet or look for male sex partners. The options were not exclusive, and on average men stated they had been to just over five venues in the previous year. Under ten percent of the men (9.3%) reported they had visited only one place.

Gay saunas and gay bars were the most popular venues overall to look for male sex partners, with two thirds of the msc stating they went to these places. Avenues for meeting male sex partners that were part of the straight community, such as straight sex shops and saunas, and placing advertisements in the straight media were much less popular, with less than 10% of msc having visited these places. See Figure 6 for a comprehensive overview of where msc went in the previous year to meet potential male sex partners.

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18 Public toilets which are meeting places for men are also known as ‘beats’ in Australia, ‘cottages’ in Britain and ‘tea rooms’ in North America. These terms may also more widely refer to public sex environments.
Figure 6: Places men went to meet, or look for, male sex partners in the previous year
(n=1362)

Project SIGMA, a major cohort study of British MSM, found strong relationships between the type of casual sex men have and where they met their partner, stating there is a "definite link" between where a man meets his casual partners, how many he meets and how many he has sex with (Davies et al. 1993:157). Unfortunately, the survey design precluded any direct analysis of sexual practices within venues, as respondents were not asked about sex practices and condom use with male sex partners they had met in various places. It was possible however to gain a broad idea of who frequented different
venues to look for or meet men, and to examine any significant differences in terms of the sexual practices that they reported.

The demographic and behavioural characteristics of men who went to five particular places to meet men for sex are profiled in this section. The sub-groups chosen were: men who went to gay bars (826 men); men who went to gay saunas (822 men); those who visited straight bars (368 men); men who went to bogs/public toilets (477 men); and men who placed advertisements in gay newspapers (293 men). Note also that as respondents provided multiple answers to this question, the venue categories do not contain independent populations.

These particular places were chosen as they each have their own social characteristics, and provide a mix of contexts in which meetings between men occur. For instance, whilst gay bars and gay saunas are frequented by large numbers of gay community attached men, this is often not the case for straight bars and bogs. Sex may occur within some venues, such as saunas and bogs, while other venues operate as meeting places, such as bars and placing personal advertisements in the newspaper. Furthermore, these venues differ in terms of levels of anonymity, and the type of encounters men have when they meet their sex partners. For example, bogs are usually sites for anonymous sex, whereas it is highly likely that men who meet in a gay bar will share drinks and some information about themselves before sex takes place at some other location.

**Comparison of five venue groups**

This section provides an overview of the differences in several demographic and social milieu variables for the five chosen venue groups. The variables discussed are age, ethnicity, class, gay community attachment and relationship status. This overview is then followed by a more detailed outline of the demographic and social milieu characteristics of the men in each venue group.

**Age**

Proportionately more younger men (15-24) went to a gay or straight bar in the previous year to meet male sex partners than the rest of the men, and fewer of the younger men went to gay saunas or public toilets.¹⁹ Gay bars were the most popular venue for the 15-24 age group, with 73.5% stating they had gone to a gay bar in the previous year.

¹⁹ p<0.0001
Gay bars and gay saunas were the most popular of the five venues for men aged between 25-39 - two thirds (65%) of the men aged 25-39 had been to both of these venues in the previous year to meet male sexual partners.

For men aged forty and over, gay saunas were the most popular venue, with 64.8% of men over forty years old stating they had been to a gay sauna in the past year to look for or to meet male sex partners. When compared with the msc aged under forty, a larger proportion of respondents aged forty and over had gone to gay saunas (64.8% compared with 58%) and public toilets (40% compared with 33%).

However, a smaller proportion of men aged over forty had gone to gay bars (45.6% compared with 67.6% for the rest of the msc) in the previous year.

**Ethnic groups**

Whilst men of all ethnicities were broadly distributed amongst all five groups, there were several distinctive differences. The highest proportions of the 1135 msc who identified as NZ European reported going to gay saunas (62%) and gay bars (60.4%) in the previous year to meet potential male sex partners. The 112 Maori identifying msc were less likely than other msc to be gay community attached, and whilst the highest proportion (57%) reported having gone to gay bars in the previous year to meet or look for male sex partners, a similar proportion (53.6%) reported having gone to public toilets for that purpose. Maori respondents were more likely than NZ European to have gone to public toilets in the previous year to meet male sex partners (34.4% of NZ European msc had done this). In addition, a larger proportion of both Maori (45.5%) and Pacific Island men (44.7%) had been to straight bars, when compared with NZ European men (24.8%).

**Under-class**

Proportionately more of the 116 men who were in the under-class group had been to straight bars (36%), and had placed advertisements in the gay press for male sex partners (32.8%) compared to the rest of the msc sample (26% and 20.4% respectively). This reflects other findings from this survey that these men were significantly less likely to be gay community attached.
Gay Community Attachment

A clear relationship emerged between gay community attachment and where men went to look for male sex partners. Figure 7 reveals the proportions of gca and non-gca men who went to various venues. Proportionately more gca than non-gca msc had gone to gay venues such as gay bars (73.5%; 34.7%) and gay saunas (65.4%; 50.2%) in the previous year.\(^{26}\) These were the most popular venues for gca men. However, it is interesting to note that the highest reported venue for non-gca men was also gay saunas - just over half of non-gca men had been to a gay sauna (50.2%).

![Figure 7: Gay community attachment of men who went to five venues to meet male sex partners in previous year](image)

**Relationship status**

As the question on where msc went to meet male sex partners was restricted to the previous twelve months, only those men who were in a relationship of twelve months or longer with a man are included here (a total of 354 msc). The most popular venues that the men in relationships went to meet casual partners were gay saunas (64.1%) and gay bars (44.1%). Proportionately fewer of the msc who were in relationships with men went to gay bars to meet male sex partners (44%), than did msc who were not in relationships with men (66.4%).\(^{27}\)

Eight percent of the msc (109 men) were in a relationship with a woman during the year prior to interview. Men who were in relationships with women also went to a variety of venues in the previous year, with the largest proportion of these msc having been to gay saunas (57.8%). It is interesting to note the overall popularity of gay saunas with both

\(^{26}\) p values are <0.0001 for both bars and saunas.

\(^{27}\) p<0.0001
gca and non-gca men, and men who were in relationships with men and with women. This no doubt reflects the relative ease and anonymity of meeting men for casual sex in the safe and 'non-public' environment that saunas offer.

A brief outline of the demographic and social milieu characteristics of men who went to the five venues follows. For each group of men, comparisons were made with the remainder of msc who did not go to (or use, in the case of newspaper advertisements) that particular venue to meet men in the previous year.

Men who went to gay bars
One of the most popular venues that respondents went to meet male sex partners was gay bars. A total of 826 msc said that they had been to gay bars in the previous year to meet or look for male sex partners, representing 60.6% of all msc. When the demographic and social milieu characteristics of the men who went to gay bars to look for male sex partners were compared with those of the 538 msc who did not go to gay bars, we found higher proportions of men who:

- were aged under 35 (61.7%; 42.5%) p<0.001
- identified as gay (87.3%; 70.3%) p<0.001
- had at least some school qualification (43%; 36.5%) p=0.02
- were gay community attached (81%; 45%) p<0.001
- were not in a relationship with a man (81%; 63%) p<0.001

Men who went to gay saunas
Another very popular venue to meet male sex partners was gay saunas. Two thirds of all msc (60.3%) stated they had been to a gay sauna in the previous year to meet male sex partners. When the demographic and social milieu characteristics of the 822 msc who went to gay saunas were compared with those of the 540 msc who did not go to a gay sauna in the previous year, we found higher proportions of men who:

- were older, especially men aged over 40 (34%; 28%) p=0.02
- identified as NZ European (85.6%; 80%) p=0.008
- identified as gay (84%; 75.5%) p<0.001
- were gay community attached (72.5%; 56.5%) p<0.001
Men who went to public toilets

A third of the msc (35%) said they had been to a public toilet (or 'bog') at least once in the previous year to look for or meet male sex partners. The demographic and social milieu characteristics of the 477 msc who had been to public toilets were compared with those of the remaining 885 msc who had not been to public toilets to look for male sex partners. This group was characterised by higher proportions of men who:
- were aged over 35 (51%: 43%) \(p=0.006\)
- identified as Maori (12.6%: 5.8%) \(p<0.001\)
- did not have any school qualification (15%: 9.7%) \(p=0.006\)
- were not gay community attached (37.3%: 30.7%) \(p=0.02\)
- were in a relationship with a man (29.6%: 24%) \(p=0.04\)

Men who went to straight bars

A total of 368 msc went to straight bars in the previous year to look for or meet male sex partners, representing 27% of all msc. When the men who had been to straight bars to look for male sex partners were compared with the 994 msc who had not gone to straight bars, we found higher proportions of msc who:
- were younger (15-24 years) (30.2%: 10.4%) \(p<0.001\)
- identified as Maori (14%: 6%) \(p<0.001\)
- identified as bisexual (30.7%: 23.7%) \(p=0.01\)
- were in the under-class group (11.4%: 7.4%) \(p=0.04\)
- were not in a relationship with a man (80%: 71.7%) \(p<0.001\)

Men who placed ads in the gay press

Just under a quarter of the msc (21.5%) had placed advertisements in the gay press in the past year in order to meet male sexual partners. When the 293 msc who had placed ads in the gay press were compared with the 1069 msc who had not done this we found very small differences between the groups. This group was characterised by higher proportions of men who:
- were aged 30-39 (23%: 15%) \(p=0.009\)
- were from secondary and minor urban areas (9.6%: 3%) \(p=0.003\)
- did not have any school qualifications (15%: 10.5%) \(p=0.05\)
- were in the under-class group (13%: 7.2%) \(p=0.007\)

Throughout the remainder of this report, differences in the general sexual practices and condom use of the msc from the five chosen venues will be summarised.
Section III: Sexual Practices with Casual Male Partners

Sex was defined broadly in the survey as "any intimate physical contact that involves sexual excitement", thus providing adequate room for men to specify their own sexual experiences. All sexual practices that were included in the questionnaire have been broadly divided into two categories: First, sexual activities which do not involve penile-anal intercourse but may still involve the anus, such as rimming and finger fucking. This category is called 'oral and other sex'. Second, those sexual practices that involve penile-anal intercourse, which are referred to as 'anal sex'.

Our respondents were asked about sex with casual male partners in the previous six month period.

Oral and other sexual practices

Respondents to Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma reported a wide range of sexual activities with their casual male partners. Oral-genital sex was widely reported - 93.8% of the men who had sex with a casual male partner in the previous six months reported engaging in one or more types of oral sex with them. Most of these men reported that they did not swallow their partner's cum (semen) (85.5%), and that they did not ejaculate into their partner's mouth (82%) during oral sex (see Figure 8).

![Figure 8: Oral sex with casual male partners in the previous six months (n=1362)](chart)

28 The term "rimming" refers to oral-anal contact.
29 The questionnaire asked men whether they had "swallowed" their partner's cum during oral sex. It should be noted that while this will have been taken literally by some respondents, for others it may mean having their partner's semen in the mouth only.
Most msc practised masturbation (93%), sensuous touching (92%), dry kissing (85%) and oral sex without swallowing cum (85.5%) with their casual male partners (see Figures 8 and 9). These results are very similar to the findings of Male Call Australia, which found that 93% of their sample practised mutual masturbation with casual male partners, 96% practised sensuous touching, 78.6% dry kissing and 87% oral sex without ejaculation in the mouth (Kippax et al. 1994:23).

![Figure 9: Other sexual practices with casual male partners in the previous six months (n=1362)](image)

**Relationship status**

The sexual practices of the 421 msc who were in a regular relationship with another man of six months or more were compared with those of the 941 msc who were not in such a relationship. Our goal was to ascertain whether being in a relationship with a man made any difference to the type of sex msc had with their casual male partners. Msc who were in relationships with men did significantly less deep kissing and rimming with their casual male partners, and were finger fucked less than men who were not in relationships. They also reported engaging in slightly more masturbation with casual male partners (97.6%) than the men who were not in a relationship (91.4%). This was the only oral or other sex practice that men in relationships engaged in with casual partners more often than did single men. Figure 10 (over) shows the comparison of sexual practices by these two groups of msc.

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30 The men were asked whether they had engaged in these activities 'never', 'occasionally' or 'often'. 'Occasionally' and 'often' were combined here to gain an answer of 'yes'.

31 P values are <0.0001 for deep kissing, 0.0002 for rimming partner, <0.0001 for being rimmed and 0.002 for being finger fucked.

32 p<0.001
Comparison of five venue groups - oral and other sex

Comparisons were also made between the reported sexual practices with casual male partners of the five subgroups of men who frequented particular venues. It should be noted again here that respondents were not asked about sexual practices within various venues. They were only asked whether they had gone to that venue in the previous twelve months to meet or look for male sex partners. The information given here on the sexual practices of these men is drawn from their responses to questions in other parts of the survey. In addition, because of the non-exclusivity of these sub-groups, statistical significance could not be evaluated. Nonetheless, several interesting differences between the groups emerged.

The most noticeable differences between the five groups of MSc were in kissing, rimming and oral sex activities with casual male partners. These differences will be briefly discussed below. See also Figure 11 for a summary of the sexual practices of men within these five sub-groups.

Kissing

Proportionately fewer of the men who went to public toilets to look for male sex partners engaged in deep kissing with their casual male partners than MSc in the other four groups. On the other hand, MSc who went to gay bars to meet male sex partners reported the highest proportions of both dry and deep kissing with casual male partners.
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It is also interesting to note that the men who went to gay bars to meet male sex partners were comparatively over represented in all oral and other sex practices.

**Rimming**

Men who placed advertisements in the gay press to meet male sex partners reported the lowest figure for rimming casual male partners of 27%. In comparison, 38% of men who went to straight bars reported rimming their casual male partners.

**Oral sex with ejaculation**

Higher proportions of msc who went to non-gay identifying venues such as straight bars and public toilets reported engaging in insertive oral sex with ejaculation than men in the other groups (see Figure 11). Conversely, the msc who went to gay identifying venues such as gay bars and gay saunas to meet male sex partners reported less insertive oral sex with ejaculation than the men in the other groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Gay bars</th>
<th>Straight bars</th>
<th>Gay saunas</th>
<th>Public toilets</th>
<th>Place ads in gay press</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sucking partner and not swallowing cum</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sucking partner and swallowing cum</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being sucked and not ejaculating</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being sucked and ejaculating</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry kissing</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep kissing</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masturbating together</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>97.3</td>
<td>92.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensuous touching</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rimming partner</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being rimmed</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finger fucking partner</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being finger fucked</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using sex toys</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anal sex

This section discusses the types and frequency of anal sex that men engaged in with casual partners, regardless of whether or not condoms were used. Condom use will be discussed later in Section IV.

![Figure 12: Proportion of msc who had anal sex with casual male partners (n=1352)](image)

Nearly two thirds (60% or 817 men) of the msc reported at least one episode of anal intercourse with a casual male partner in the previous six months (either insertive or receptive, or both). This figure was similar to other surveys of men who have sex with men, such as the first Australian Male Call survey in which 61.7% of respondents who reported casual sex with a man had engaged in anal sex with a casual partner over the preceding six months (Kippax et al. 1995:134), and the August 1996 Sydney Periodic survey, in which 68.1% of respondents had anal sex with casual partners (Richters et al. 1996:8).  

Ejaculation and withdrawal

There was no significant difference between the proportions of msc who had anal sex with ejaculation and anal sex with withdrawal in the previous six months. For example, just over half (54.3%) of all the men who had anal sex with their casual male partners stated that they had engaged in insertive anal sex with ejaculation, and 53% stated they had engaged in insertive anal sex with withdrawal on at least one occasion in the previous six months (see Figure 13). However, when this data was compared with the 1992 Australian Project Male Call data, the New Zealand sample reported more anal sex with withdrawal and less anal sex with ejaculation than the Australian sample. The New Zealand sample also reported slightly less insertive anal sex with ejaculation (32.5%).

---

33 The second Australian Project Male Call survey, conducted in 1996, has found a 10% increase in anal sex with casual male partners since the first survey (Pollard 1997:7).
than the Australian sample (42%) with casual male partners in the previous six months (Kippax et al. 1994:23).\(^4\)

**Figure 13: Anal sex with casual male partners (n=817)**

Number of times msc had anal sex

Most msc did not report many episodes of anal sex with casual male partners in the previous six months, with a median of two occasions. Furthermore, the number of times men engaged in each of the four types of anal sex with casual male partners followed a very similar pattern (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15: Number of times men had anal sex with casual male partners in previous six months**

\(^4\) The figure for insertive anal sex with ejaculation here appears smaller than others in this section, as it was adjusted to represent the proportion of men who had insertive anal sex with a casual partner out of all 1362 msc, rather than out of only those 817 msc who had engaged in anal sex. This adjustment was done in order to compare New Zealand data with that from the Australian Male Call proportions, which was reported as proportions of the total msc sample.
It is interesting to note that men who had anal sex with casual male partners engaged in more of all of the other sexual practices than the men who did not have anal sex, especially activities such as rimming and finger fucking.

**Predictors of anal sex**

A logistic regression was used to investigate which factors influence whether or not men had anal sex with casual male partners (see Appendix I for details of variables and results). Factors that were found to be of significance were sexual identity, number of casual male partners, whether or not men found anal sex to be the most physically and emotionally satisfying sexual activity and relationship status.

**Sexual identity**

Men who identified as gay were significantly more likely to have had anal sex with their casual male partners in the previous six months than men who did not identify as gay. Nearly two thirds (62%) of gay identifying men reported anal sex with casual male partners, compared with just over a half (53%) of the non-gay identifying men. Men who identified as bisexual were also slightly more likely to have engaged in anal sex with casual partners - 62% of bisexual identifying men had done this.

**Number of partners**

Men who had sex with higher numbers of casual male partners in the previous six months were significantly more likely to have anal sex with casual partners. The proportion of men who reported anal sex rises as the number of reported casual male partners increases (see Figure 16). The raw mean number of partners for men who had anal sex with casual partners is eighteen, compared with a mean number of eight partners for men who did not have anal sex with casual partners.

---

75 p=0.0007
76 p=0.02

Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report No. 5: Sexual Identity found that proportionately more of the men who identified as heterosexual engaged in anal sex with casual male partners than the other sexual identity groupings. However, when various sexual identities (including heterosexual and gay) were included in the logistic regression as described above, heterosexual identity was found to have only a marginally significant effect on the likelihood of men having anal sex (p=0.07).

37 p<0.0001
Levels of satisfaction from anal sex

It is not surprising that this test found a strong link between respondent's levels of physical and emotional satisfaction from anal sex and the practice of anal sex with casual male partners. Men who found anal sex physically and/or emotionally the most satisfying sexual practice were much more likely to have anal sex with casual male partners than men who did not find anal sex the most satisfying practice.\(^{35}\)

Relationship status

Men who had been in a relationship with another man for six months or more were less likely to have anal sex with their casual partners.\(^{36}\) For example, whilst 54.2\% of msc who were in a relationship of six months or longer with a man (228 out of 421 men) had had anal sex with their casual male partners in the last six months, 62.5\% of men who were not in a relationship had done this. Furthermore, when the types of anal sex that msc engaged in were compared, men who were in a relationship were significantly more likely to practise insertive anal sex with withdrawal with their casual partners than the msc who were not in a relationship.\(^{40}\) This was the only significant difference between the two groups in terms of anal sex practices (see Figure 17).

\(^{35}\) p=0.0001 for physical satisfaction, p=0.001 for emotional satisfaction.
\(^{36}\) p=0.0001
\(^{40}\) p=0.008
Comparison of five venue groups - anal sex

When the anal sex practices of the men who went to the five venues were compared, the proportions of those who had anal sex were remarkably similar. Slightly more of the men who went to straight bars had engaged in anal sex with casual male partners (69.5%) than any other group (see Figure 18 over).
As shown in Figure 19, men who went to straight bars also reported the most insertive anal sex with ejaculation with casual male partners (62.8%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Gay bars</th>
<th>Straight bars</th>
<th>Gay saunas</th>
<th>Public toilets</th>
<th>Place ads in gay press</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insertive anal with ejaculation</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptive anal with ejaculation</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insertive anal with withdrawal</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptive anal with withdrawal</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section IV: Condom Use with Casual Male Partners**

Respondents were asked to indicate condom use on a scale of "always" to "never" and were asked to do this separately for each type of anal sex.\(^41\) Note that answers may have differed for each type of anal sex (for instance, some men may have reported "never" using a condom for anal sex with withdrawal, but may have indicated "always" if ejaculation inside was involved). Most of the men who had anal sex with their casual male partners were practising safe sex. That is, most men used condoms (either always or sometimes) for anal sex with their casual male partners. Notwithstanding, a clear subgroup of men who "never used a condom" with casual male partners was isolated. This category only includes those men who indicated that they had "never" used a condom for any type of anal sex in the previous six months (that is, men who reported that they "very rarely" or "sometimes" used condoms were not included). A total of eighty-two men, or 10% of all men who had anal sex with a casual male partner, fell into this category.

**Figure 20: Condom use with casual male partners**

- Always: 66%
- Never: 10%
- Sometimes: 24%

\(^{41}\) The full scale for condom use was: Never/Very rarely/Sometimes/Almost always/Always.
As stated above, 10% (82 out of 817) of the men who reported anal sex with their casual partner never used a condom. Just under a half of these msc (46.3% or 38 men) also stated they had engaged in anal sex without a condom with a man whose HIV status was unknown to them, or different than their own in the previous six months. We refer to this as ‘highly unsafe sex’, and it is examined in detail in Section V of this report.

A more detailed pattern of condom use by msc for each type of anal sex is outlined in Figure 21.

![Figure 21: Condom use with casual male partners](image)

**Predictors of condom use**

A logistic regression was used to investigate which factors influenced whether msc were likely to never use a condom with casual male partners (see Appendix I for the variables that were used and the results). Only msc who reported anal sex with their casual male partners were included in this test. Several demographic and social milieu variables emerged as important predictors of regular non-condom use, namely low income, non-gay community attachment, and sex with higher numbers of casual male partners. These variables are discussed below.

**Income**

Men who were on a lower income were more likely than the rest of the msc to never use condoms with their casual partners.\(^\text{32}\) For example, 15% of all msc who earned under $20,000 pa never used a condom, compared with 8% of msc who earned $20,000 or over.

\(^\text{32}\) p=0.05
Gay community attachment

In her review of previous research into sexual practices of MSM in New Zealand, Worth (1996:98) showed that men who practise safe sex on a reliable and consistent basis tend to be attached to the gay community. The first Australian Male Call survey also found that condoms were used more often by gca men than non-gca men with their casual partners (Kippax et al. 1994:66). Our data point to a similar conclusion: Men who were gay community attached and who had anal sex with casual male partners were significantly more likely to use condoms with their casual partners than non-gca men. Under ten percent (6.9%) of all gca msc never used a condom, compared with 16.9% of all non-gca msc.

Number of partners

Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma found that msc who had sex with fewer casual male partners were more likely to never use a condom for anal sex. It must be noted that we did not specifically ask the number of partners with whom respondents had anal sex. Rather, we only asked partner numbers for all kinds of sex taken together, and so we cannot isolate this parameter for anal sex alone. As Weatherburn et al. noted when exploring the relationship between condom use and numbers of sex partners, "conclusions regarding condom use which rely upon examination of absolute partner numbers should be treated with caution as any proclaimed links may be spurious" (1991:38). For example, whilst 15% of all msc who had sex with under five casual partners in the previous six months never used a condom, the corresponding figure for men who had sex with over twenty casual partners was 6.5%.

Relationship status

In line with other research, we found that condom use is higher with casual partners than with regular partners (see Kippax et al. 1993 and 1995; Davies et al. 1993; Myers et al. 1992; Hoff et al. 1996; Weatherburn et al. 1992). For instance, whilst 10% of all msc who had anal sex with casual male partners stated that they "never" use a condom, just under a half (46%) of all respondents who were in a relationship with a man (of six months or longer) and who had anal sex with their regular partner reported that they "never" use a condom with their regular partner.

\[ p=0.005 \]
\[ p=0.02 \]

It is also important to remember that only msc who never used a condom were included here. This means that if a msc used a condom at least once in the previous six months, they were not included.
Our data shows that only 7.5% of all men in a relationship with a man never used a condom with their casual male partner, compared with 11.1% of men who were not in a relationship with a man (see Figure 22).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 22: Total men who had anal sex with casual male partner in last 6 months (n=817)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men in a r/s with a man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6 months and over in length)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men not in r/s with a man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(72%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always or sometimes use a condom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(92.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never use a condom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always or sometimes use a condom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(88.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never use a condom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact with the HIV epidemic

Worth (1996:98) also found that men who practise safe sex on a reliable and consistent basis tend to know someone with HIV or AIDS. Although not statistically significant, it is interesting to note that proportionately more of our respondents who never used a condom said they did not know anyone who was HIV positive (49%), compared with men who reported some condom use with casual male partners (34.6%).

Section V: Predictors of Highly Unsafe Sex

Although the majority of our respondents regularly used condoms with their casual male partners, a considerable proportion of men had engaged in highly unsafe sex on at least one occasion in the previous six months (20.6% of all men who had anal sex with casual partners). We have defined highly unsafe sex here as unprotected anal sex in the previous six months with a casual partner whose HIV status was unknown to the respondent, or different to their own. This definition has been chosen because such a scenario includes the combination of two potentially high risk elements: unprotected anal intercourse and unawareness of their partner's serostatus. However, we wish to stress that it must not be assumed that unprotected anal intercourse with a partner whose HIV status is 'known' can be regarded as a safe strategy, and most men will not know the
serostatus of their casual male partners. Nevertheless, it is clear that some individuals reported that they have been engaging in higher risk activities than did other respondents. In this section we will examine the characteristics of that group.

Respondents were asked whether highly unsafe sex, as defined, had occurred in the previous six months. A total of one hundred and sixty-nine men stated that this had happened on at least one occasion. For some of these msc, this appears to have been a 'slip up', or what Kippax et al. (1995:137) refer to as a "haphazard event" - just under half of the men (46.7%) reported that highly unsafe sex had occurred only once in the past six months (see Figure 23). Yet forty msc stated that this had happened over five times in the previous six months. Most of these forty men were situated on the margins of the gay community. For example, they identified predominantly as bisexual (40%) or heterosexual (15%), many were in a relationship with a woman (17.5%), and a quarter (25%) fell into the under-class category.

![Figure 23: Number of times in past six months men have had highly unsafe anal sex with casual male partner (n=189)](image)

A logistic regression was used to investigate which factors influence whether msc had highly unsafe sex with casual male partners (see Appendix I for the variables used, and full results). Several variables emerged as significant predictors of msc engaging in highly unsafe sex. They were low income, identifying as heterosexual, reporting high levels of physical satisfaction from anal sex, and engaging in sex with greater numbers of casual male partners. Being in a male-to-male relationship did not have a strong influence on the likelihood of msc having highly unsafe sex with a casual male partner. These predictors are discussed below.
Income

Similar to the findings for non-condom use, Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma found that men on a lower income were more likely to have had highly unsafe sex compared with men on higher incomes.\(^6\) For example, of the 817 msc who had anal sex with their casual partners, a quarter (24.5\%) of those who were on an income of less than $20,000 pa had highly unsafe anal sex, compared with 18.7\% of those who earned more than $20,000 pa.

While income emerged as a predictor of highly unsafe sex, being in the ‘under-class’ did not. For example, while 17.6\% of under-class men reported highly unsafe anal sex with casual male partners, the percentage for men who were not in the under-class group was slightly higher at 20.9\%.

Sexual identity

Msc who identified as heterosexual were more likely than msc who did not so identify to have engaged in highly unsafe anal sex with their casual male partners.\(^7\) Just over one third (35.1\%) of all msc who identified as heterosexual reported at least one incidence of highly unsafe anal sex in the previous six months, compared with 19.5\% of all msc who did not identify as heterosexual. An Australian qualitative study of 97 non-gay community attached and non-gay identifying men who have sex with men found that many of their respondents experienced sex with other men outside the context of their social relationships. They suggest that these men’s social isolation from the gay community “is a powerful metaphor for their personal, physical isolation from the virus” (Bartos et al, 1993:v). That is, many heterosexually identifying msm may regard HIV as a ‘gay man’s’ virus, and not consider themselves to be at risk.

Levels of satisfaction

Levels of physical satisfaction from anal sex had an effect on the likelihood of msc having highly unsafe anal sex with their casual male partners.\(^8\) Of all 817 msc who had anal sex with casual partners, a quarter (24.3\%) of the men who found anal sex “the most” physically satisfying sex practice had highly unsafe anal sex, compared with 18.1\% of all msc who did not find anal sex the most physically satisfying sexual practice. However,
emotional satisfaction from anal sex did not have an effect on the likelihood of highly unsafe sex.

**Number of partners**

Of the 817 msc who had anal sex, those who had sex with proportionately more casual male partners were more likely to have had at least one incidence of highly unsafe anal sex in the previous six months.\(^{49}\) For example, while 28.8% of the men who had had anal sex with over fifty casual male partners had at least one incidence of highly unsafe sex in the previous six months, the comparative proportion for the men who had anal sex with only one casual male partner was just 12% (see Figure 24). This is in line with several other surveys that have found a relationship between unsafe sex and larger numbers of partners (de Wit et al. 1993; Schmidt et al. 1992; Weatherburn et al. 1991).

![Figure 24: Proportion of msc who had highly unsafe anal sex with casual male partner/s, by number of partners](image)

**Comparison of five venue groups - highly unsafe sex**

Incidences of highly unsafe anal sex as reported by men who went to the five venues to meet male sex partners were compared. Again, only those men who reported anal sex with casual male partners in the previous six months were included in this analysis.\(^{50}\) It must also be remembered here that respondents were not asked about sex practices and condom use with male partners within venues, but were only asked whether they had been to these venues to meet or look for male sex partners in the previous year.

\(^{49}\) p=0.0002

\(^{50}\) Figures for the proportions of msc who had anal sex with casual male partners in the previous six months by venue groups are included in Section III of this report.
Although the proportion of men within each group who had engaged in highly unsafe anal sex with casual male partners was very similar, the men who went to straight bars to meet male sex partners reported the highest proportion of 26.5%. This group also reported slightly more anal sex with casual partners than other groups. An earlier Australian study of non-gay community attached men who have sex with men (Hood et al. 1994,59) also found that the occurrence of unsafe sex was higher in the group of men who met their sexual partners in straight bars.

HIV testing

Respondents to this survey were asked whether they had ever had an HIV test, and if they had, how long it had been since they were last tested. This section refers to the HIV testing rates of the 169 men who had had highly unsafe anal sex with casual partners in the previous six months.51

The 169 men who had engaged in highly unsafe sex reported slightly higher levels of testing in the previous six months than the rest of the men who engaged in anal sex (n=648). Nearly two thirds (64.5% or 109 men) had been tested for HIV at least once. Of these 109 men, a quarter (26.6%) had tested in the previous six months, compared with just over a third (37.3%) of the remaining men who had anal sex.

Respondents were also asked to rate how likely they thought it was that they would become infected with HIV on a twelve point scale. Men who reported highly unsafe sex were slightly more likely than the rest of the men who had anal sex to feel that HIV infection was possible in their lives. Four men felt it was certain to happen. This is in line with findings from Male Call Australia, namely that those men who engaged in unsafe sex were significantly more likely to assess their risk as high or moderate than men who practised safe sex (Kippax et al. 1995). Nevertheless it must also be noted that a surprising number of the 169 men felt that HIV infection was ‘impossible’ - fifty one respondents, or 30.2%.

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51 See Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma Report No. 9: HIV Testing and Sero-status for further analysis of the HIV testing rates of the total sample.
Section VI: Communication with Casual Male Partners

Safe sex practices do not just 'happen'. They usually require one or both partners to communicate with each other in some way about what type of sex they want, and whether or not condoms will be used. All men who had anal sex with casual male partners were asked about their verbal and non-verbal communication with casual male partners. This included questions about anal sex and condom use. Respondents were asked whether they "always", "sometimes" or "never" negotiate with their casual male partners, and the question was not related to any specific time period. Results for the total group of men who had anal sex with casual male partners (n=817) are discussed below, followed by a brief discussion of the differences between the 169 men who had highly unsafe anal sex and the 648 men who did not.

Overall, less than half of the respondents communicated with their casual male partners about whether they wanted anal sex - about a quarter of the men who had anal sex reported that they either verbally or non-verbally let their partner know if they want anal sex (26.6% and 24.3% respectively). Only 14% stated that they always let their partner decide what kind of sex they want.

Our respondents also reported relatively low levels of communication around their partner's HIV status. Roughly one in every five men stated that they always ask their casual male partner their HIV status (18%), or tell their partner their HIV status (13%), and about a half sometimes did this. Two thirds of the men who had anal sex (65%) stated that they never compare HIV status with a casual partner when deciding what sex to have.

In line with our findings that most men practise safe sex with their casual partners, the men who had anal sex reported higher levels of insistence on condom use. Substantial proportions of men who had anal sex with casual male partners stated that they always verbally or non-verbally tell their partner they don't want anal sex without a condom. For example, just under half of the men who had anal sex (47.6%) stated that they always non-verbally let their partners know that they want to use a condom. In contrast, a very low percentage (6%) of all men who had anal sex with casual male partners reported that they always negotiate anal sex without a condom - either verbally or non-verbally.
### Figure 26
Verbal and non-verbal communication about condom use “always” practised with casual male partners (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of communication</th>
<th>Men who had highly unsafe anal sex n=169</th>
<th>Men who did not have highly unsafe anal sex n=648</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-verbally let partner know you want anal sex without a condom</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbally tell partner you want anal sex without a condom</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-verbally let partner know you don’t want anal sex without a condom</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbally let partner know you don’t want anal sex without a condom</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask partner their HIV status</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell partner your HIV status</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare HIV status and then decide</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to questions about communication with casual partners by the 169 men who reported highly unsafe anal sex were compared with those of the 648 men who did not have highly unsafe anal sex in the previous six months. Significantly less of the men who had engaged in highly unsafe sex stated that they always verbally tell their casual male partners they do not want anal sex without a condom, and that they always ask their partner’s HIV status (see Figure 26).\(^5\) Men who had highly unsafe sex were not significantly more likely to always (verbally or non-verbally) let their partner know that they wanted anal sex without a condom.

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\(^5\) p values are <0.0001 and 0.001 respectively.
Conclusion

Male Call/Waea Mai, Tane Ma data confirms that many New Zealand men who have sex with men have casual sex. Furthermore, a wide diversity of MSM have casual sex, including men who identify as straight, men who are in relationships (both with men and women), men who are single, and men in all age groups. But it must not be imagined that sexual contact between men only occurs on a casual basis - just over half of the total sample were in a sexual relationship with another man.

New Zealand men who have sex with men meet their male sex partners in a wide variety of locations and in a large number of different contexts. On average, respondents reported five places they had been to meet or look for male partners in the previous year. The most popular venues appear to be gay saunas and gay bars, yet men also meet in straight bars and saunas, on the street, in public spaces such as parks and beaches, and at the gym.

Not all men have anal sex with their casual partners, in fact our respondents engaged most frequently in masturbation and oral sex. Of those men who did have anal sex, a small proportion of men never used a condom (10%), and a significant number of men reported at least one incident of highly unsafe sex in the last six months (20.6%). Whilst this indicates that most men who have sex with men are taking up the 'use a condom every time' message for sex with casual partners, 'slip ups' still occur and a small number of men appear to have rejected condoms altogether. While the recent move in HIV prevention programmes away from addressing all men who have sex with men to focusing on the issue of low condom use by men in specific contexts (i.e. men in relationships) is necessary, it must not be assumed that casual sex between men is no longer a matter for concern. A small group of MSM remain at high and on-going risk of HIV infection.

But perhaps the most encouraging finding of this survey is that the overwhelming majority of MSM practise safe sex with their casual male partners. Despite the fact that this result stands as an important achievement in health promotion praxis, it must not be forgotten that it could easily be eroded over time. Because prevention is still the only effective strategy we have to limit the spread of HIV, it is vital that targeted community education programmes amongst MSM who have casual sex continue to be developed and implemented.
References


Chetwynd, J. 1990 *Profiles of Gay and Bisexual men: A series of reports on the socio-demographic and behavioural characteristics of men according to the venues at which they make sexual contacts*. Six reports prepared for the NZ AIDS Foundation: Auckland.


Appendix 1: Statistical Analysis

Several logistic regressions were used to investigate the effect of various demographic and social milieu variables on a number of questions. These questions included the likelihood of having sex with casual male partners, numbers of casual male partners, the likelihood of having anal sex with casual male partners, never using a condom and the likelihood of having highly unsafe anal sex with casual male partners. The variables that were tested differed slightly for each question. Details of the variables that were used and the full results of the tests are outlined separately below.

Having sex with casual male partners in the previous six months

A logistic regression was used to investigate the effect of demographics and social milieu on whether respondents had sex with a casual male partner or not. 1771 men (1305 had had sex with casual male partners) had full information and were included in this analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>15-19, 20-24, 25-39, 40-49, over 50</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Pakeha, Maori, Pacific Islander, Other</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency</td>
<td>Major and minor urban areas, secondary urban, minor urban and rural</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>School Certificate or no school qualification vs others</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$20,000 or less vs &gt;$20,000</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCA</td>
<td>Index scale 1-12</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity</td>
<td>4 binary variables:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chose queer or not;</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chose bisexual or not;</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chose heterosexual or not;</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chose gay or not</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular male partner</td>
<td>None, in a relationship less than 6 months, in a relationship over 6 months</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure</td>
<td>Told anyone they were sexually attracted to men, or not</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men who were attached to the gay community were more likely to have had sex with casual male partners in the previous six months, as were men who were not in a relationship with a man. Men who identified as queer and men who were on higher incomes were also more likely to have had sex with a casual partner.
Number of casual male partners in previous six months

An analysis of variance was used to investigate the effect of the variables listed below in Table Two on the number of casual male partners respondents reported in the previous six months. As the distribution of number of partners was skewed, a logarithmic transformation was used on the data. 1028 men had full information and were included in the analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>15-19, 20-24, 25-39, 40-49, over 50</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Pakeha, Maori, Pacific Islander, Other</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency</td>
<td>Major and minor urban areas, secondary urban, minor urban and rural</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>School Certificate or no school qualification vs others</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$20,000 or less vs &gt;$20,000</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCA</td>
<td>Index scale 1-12</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity</td>
<td>4 binary variables: choice queer or not; choice bisexual or not; choice heterosexual or not; choice gay or not</td>
<td>0.4 0.3 0.6 0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular male partner</td>
<td>None, in a relationship less than 6 months, in a relationship over 6 months</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid for sex</td>
<td>Whether they had received money for sex in past 6 months, or not</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracted to men</td>
<td>Scale of 1-5</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure</td>
<td>Told anyone they were sexually attracted to men, or not</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men who were in a regular relationship with a man (of six months or longer), and men living in rural areas had less casual male partners in the previous six months. Older men, men who were attached to the gay community, and men who were paid to have sex in the previous six months tended to have sex with more casual male partners. Men with a greater attraction to men also tended to have sex with more casual partners.
Had anal sex with casual male partners

A logistic regression was used to investigate which factors influence whether or not men have anal sex with casual male partners. 1235 men (756 had anal sex) had full information and were included in the analysis. Results are listed in Table Three below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>15-19, 20-24, 25-39, 40-49, over 50</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Pakeha, Maori, Pacific islander, Other</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency</td>
<td>Major and minor urban areas, secondary urban, minor urban and rural</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>School Certificate or no school qualification vs others</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$20,000 or less vs &gt;$20,000</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCA</td>
<td>Index scale 1-12</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity</td>
<td>4 binary variables: chose queer or not; chose bisexual or not; chose heterosexual or not; chose gay or not</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical attitude to anal</td>
<td>Find anal sex the “most physically satisfying” sex practice, or not</td>
<td>0.0007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sex</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional attitude to</td>
<td>Find anal sex the “most emotionally satisfying” sex practice, or not</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anal sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of casual male</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular relationship</td>
<td>None, in a relationship with a man less than six months or longer, in a relationship over six months</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men who identified as gay and bisexual were more likely to have had anal sex with their casual male partners. Men who found anal sex to be “the most” physically or emotionally satisfying sexual practice were more likely to have engaged in anal sex also. Those in a regular relationship of six months or longer were less likely to have anal sex than men who were single, and men who had sex with more casual partners were more likely to have anal sex with a casual partner.
Never use a condom

A logistic regression was used to investigate which factors influence whether or not men never used a condom for anal sex with their casual male partners. Results are listed in Table Four below. 756 men (79 never used a condom) had full information and were included in the analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>15-19, 20-24, 25-39, 40-49, over 60</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Pakeha, Maori, Pacific Islander, Other</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency</td>
<td>Major and minor urban areas, secondary urban, minor urban and rural</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>School Certificate or no school qualification vs others</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$20,000 or less vs &gt;$20,000</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCA</td>
<td>Index scale 1-12</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity</td>
<td>4 binary variables: chose queer or not; chose bisexual or not;</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chose heterosexual or not; chose gay or not</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regular male partner</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None, in a relationship less than 6 months, in a relationship over 6 months</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude to anal sex</td>
<td>Find anal sex the “most physically satisfying” sex practice, or not</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude to anal sex</td>
<td>Find anal sex the “most emotionally satisfying” sex practice, or not</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of partners</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men on lower incomes, men who were non-gay community attached, and men who had sex with a smaller number of casual male partners were more likely to never use condoms with casual partners.
Having highly unsafe sex

A logistic regression was used to investigate which factors influence whether or not men had highly unsafe sex with their casual partners (unprotected anal sex with a man whose HIV status was unknown, or different to their own). 1237 men (170 had highly unsafe sex) had full information and were included in the analysis. The results are listed below in Table Five.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>15-19, 20-24, 25-39, 40-49, over 50</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Pakeha, Maori, Pacific Islander, Other</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency</td>
<td>Major and minor urban areas, secondary urban, minor urban and rural</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>School Certificate or no school qualification vs others</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$20,000 or less vs $20,000</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCA</td>
<td>Index scale 1-12</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity</td>
<td>4 binary variables: chose queer or not; chose bisexual or not; chose heterosexual or not; chose gay or not.</td>
<td>0.9, 0.5, 0.03, 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular male partner</td>
<td>None, in a relationship less than 6 months, in a relationship over 6 months</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude to anal sex</td>
<td>Find anal sex the “most physically satisfying” sex practice, or not</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude to anal sex</td>
<td>Find anal sex the “most emotionally satisfying” sex practice, or not</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of partners</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men who had sex with more casual male partners were more likely to have engaged in highly unsafe anal sex. Men who were on a lower income and those who identified as heterosexual were also more likely to have done this.
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