

Relative sexual frequency & sexual satisfaction in Australian couples: insights from the Australian longitudinal study of health and relationships

Anthony Smith, Jason Ferris, Juliet Richters,
Marian Pitts, Julia Shelley & Judy Simpson

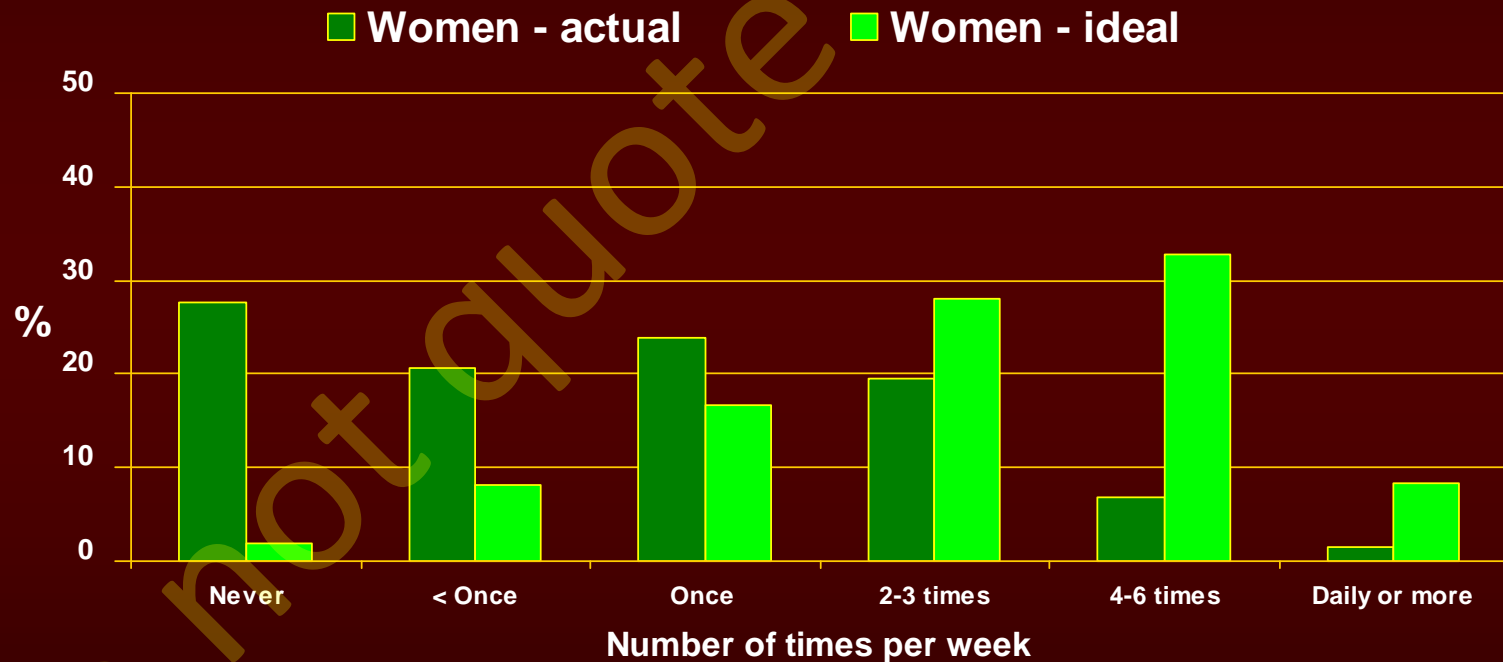
Sexual health

- Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. (WHO)

The problem

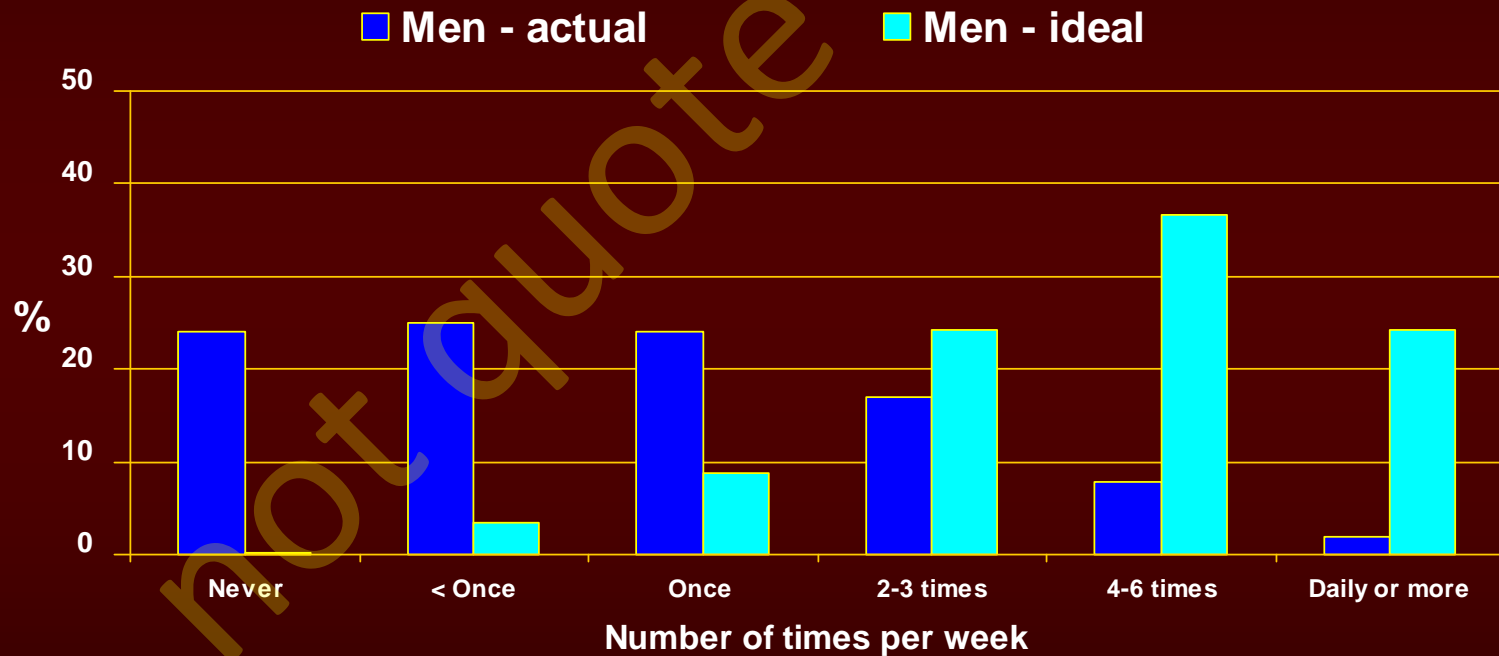
- The mismatch of sexual desire between partners is often cited as the most common source of relationship dissatisfaction and a significant contributing cause of relationship dissolution

We know that most people have less sex than they think is “ideal”



Source: Richters J, Grulich AE, de Visser RO, Smith AMA & Rissel CE. 2003. Sex in Australia: sexual and emotional satisfaction in regular relationships and preferred frequency of sex among a representative sample of adults. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 27: 171-9.

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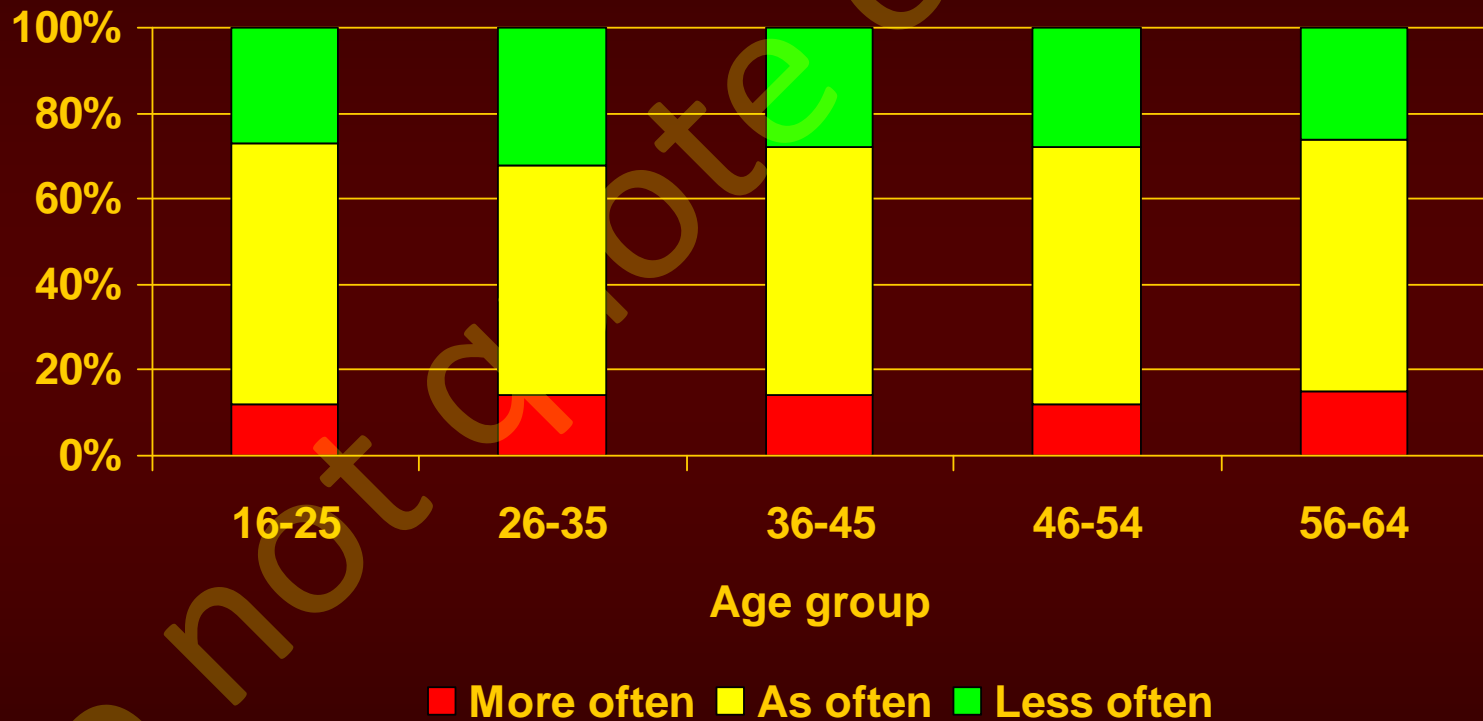


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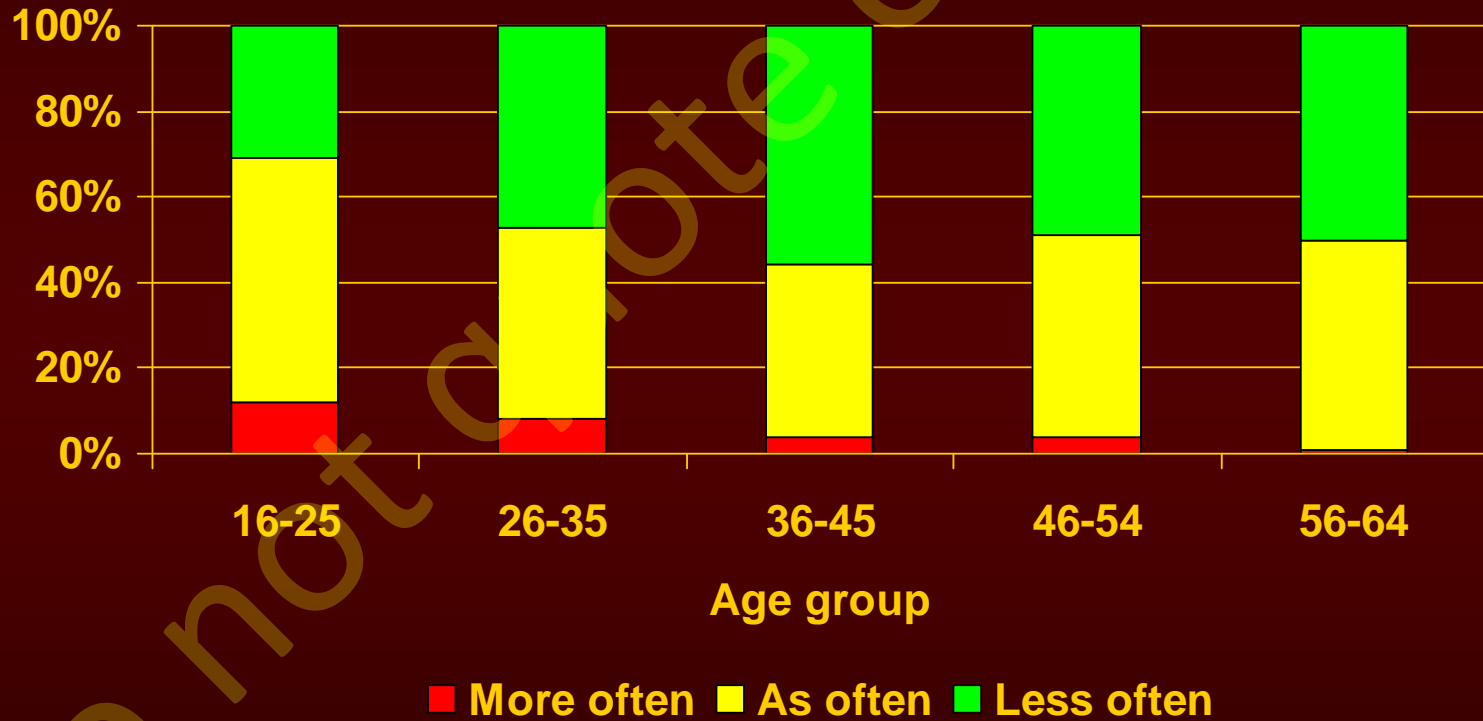
Data

- Australian Longitudinal Study of Health & Relationships
- CATI
- N=8656
- Aged 16-64 at intake (2004/5)
- Interviewed annually

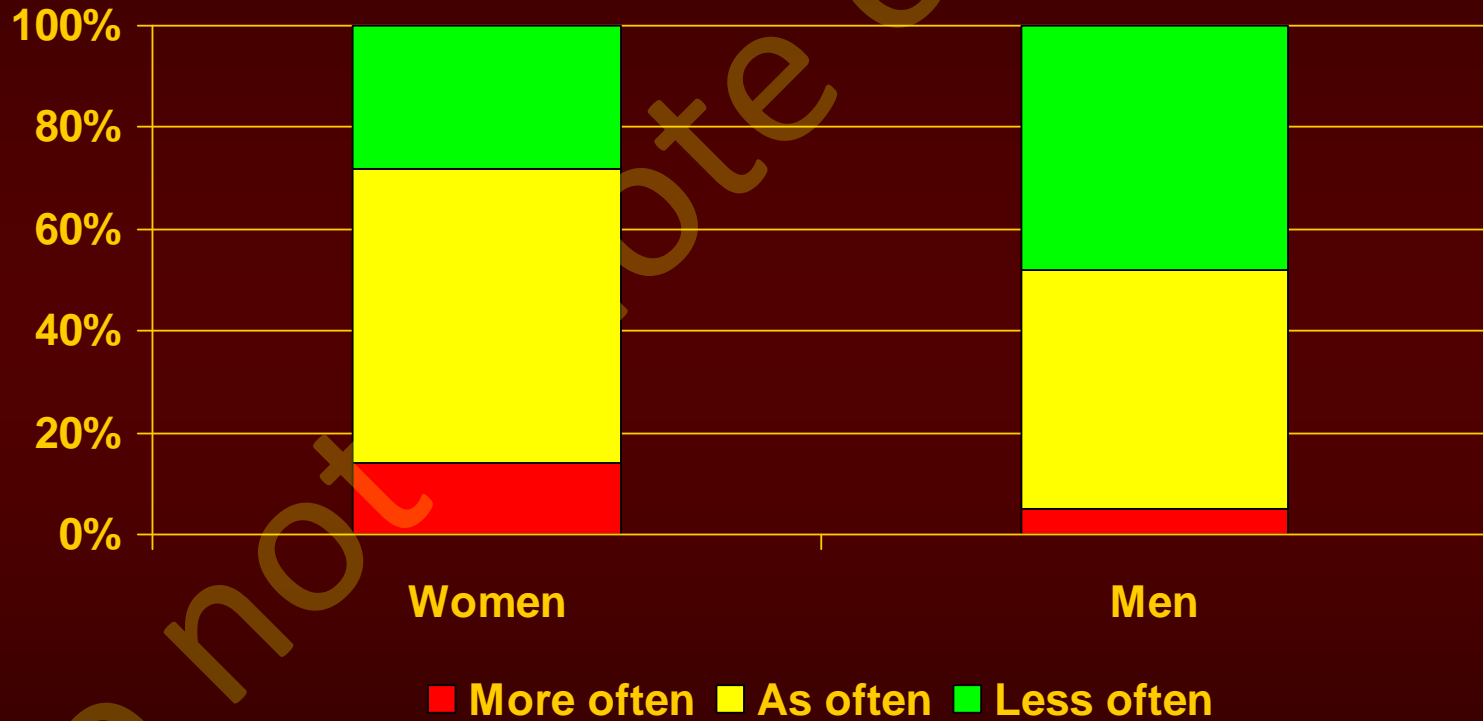
Frequency of sex (women)



Frequency of sex (men)



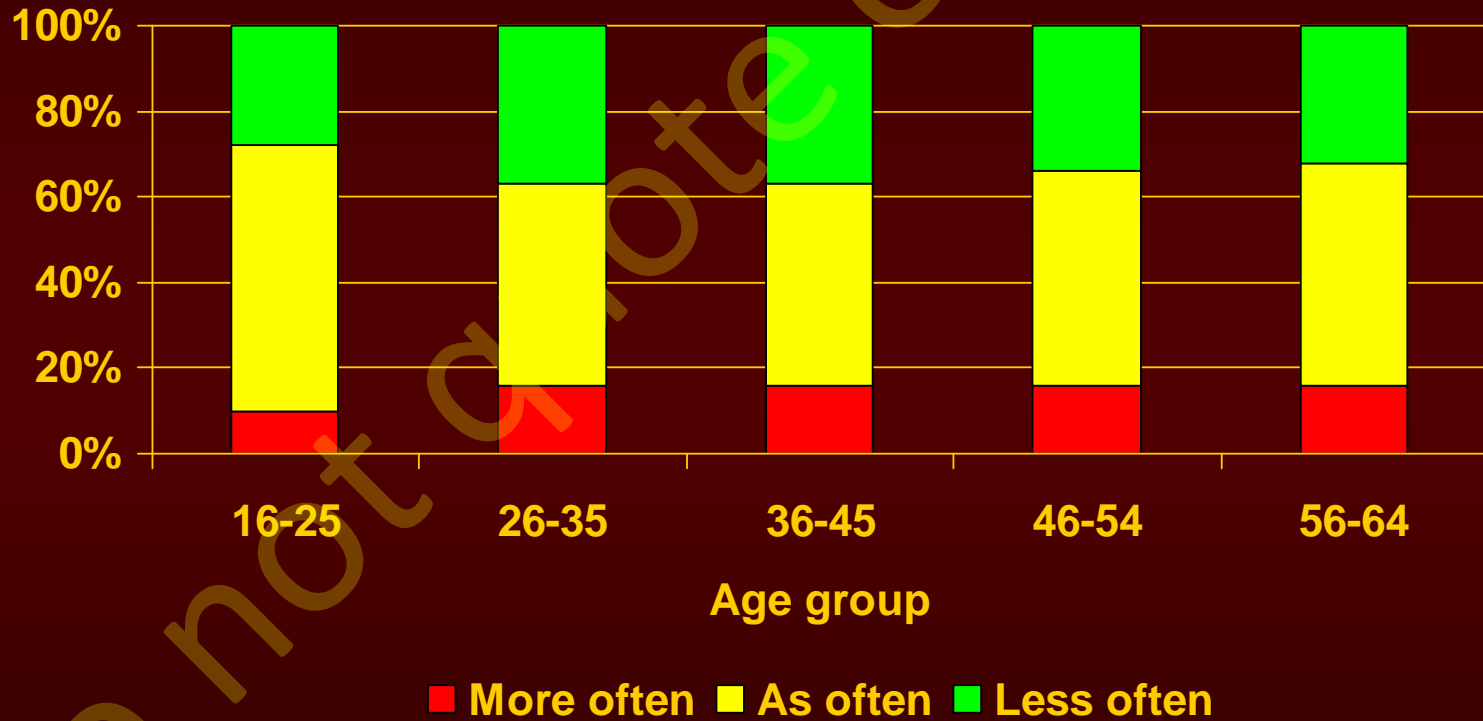
Frequency of sex



Partner's frequency of sex (women)



Partner's frequency of sex (men)



Partner's frequency of sex



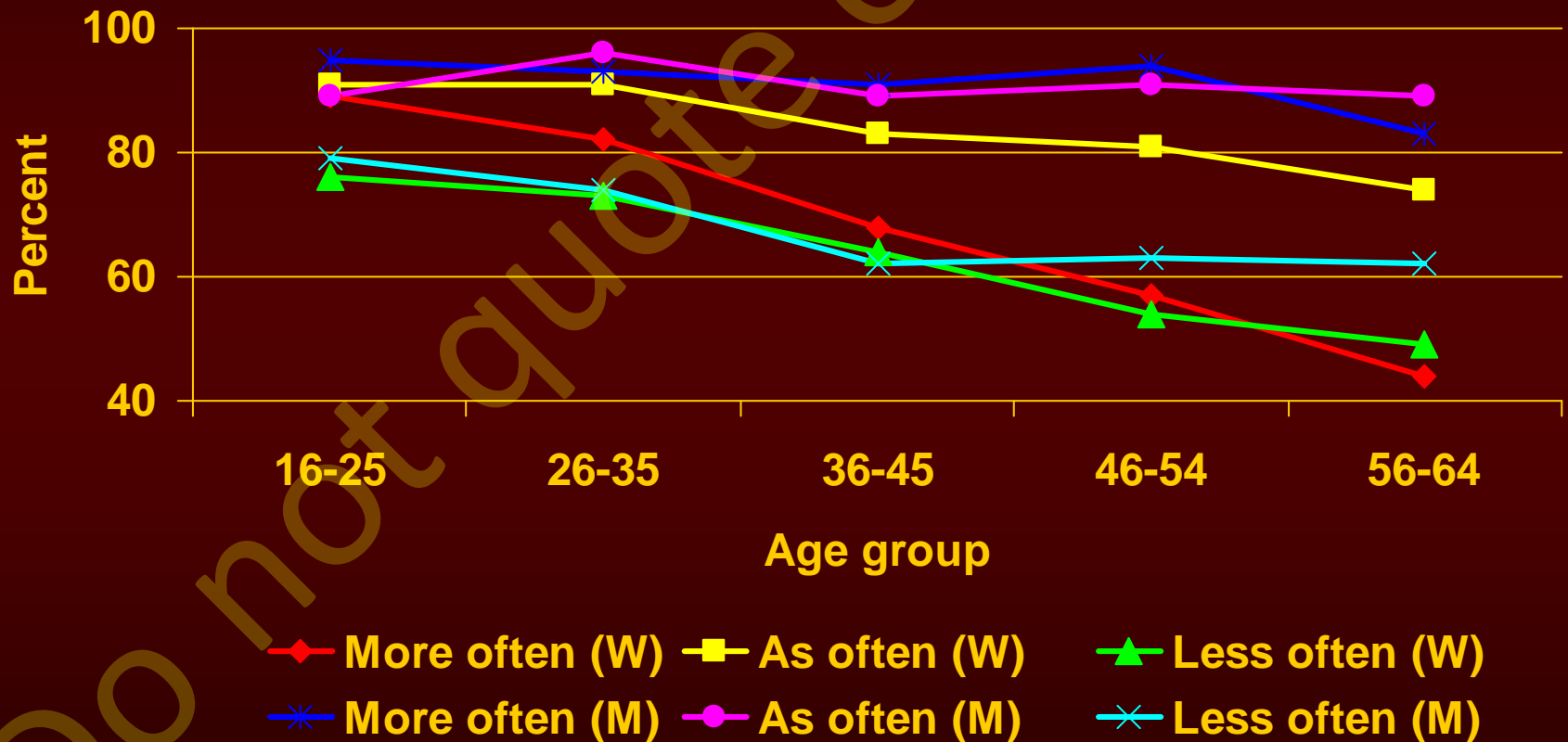
Average frequency of sex in the past four weeks (women)



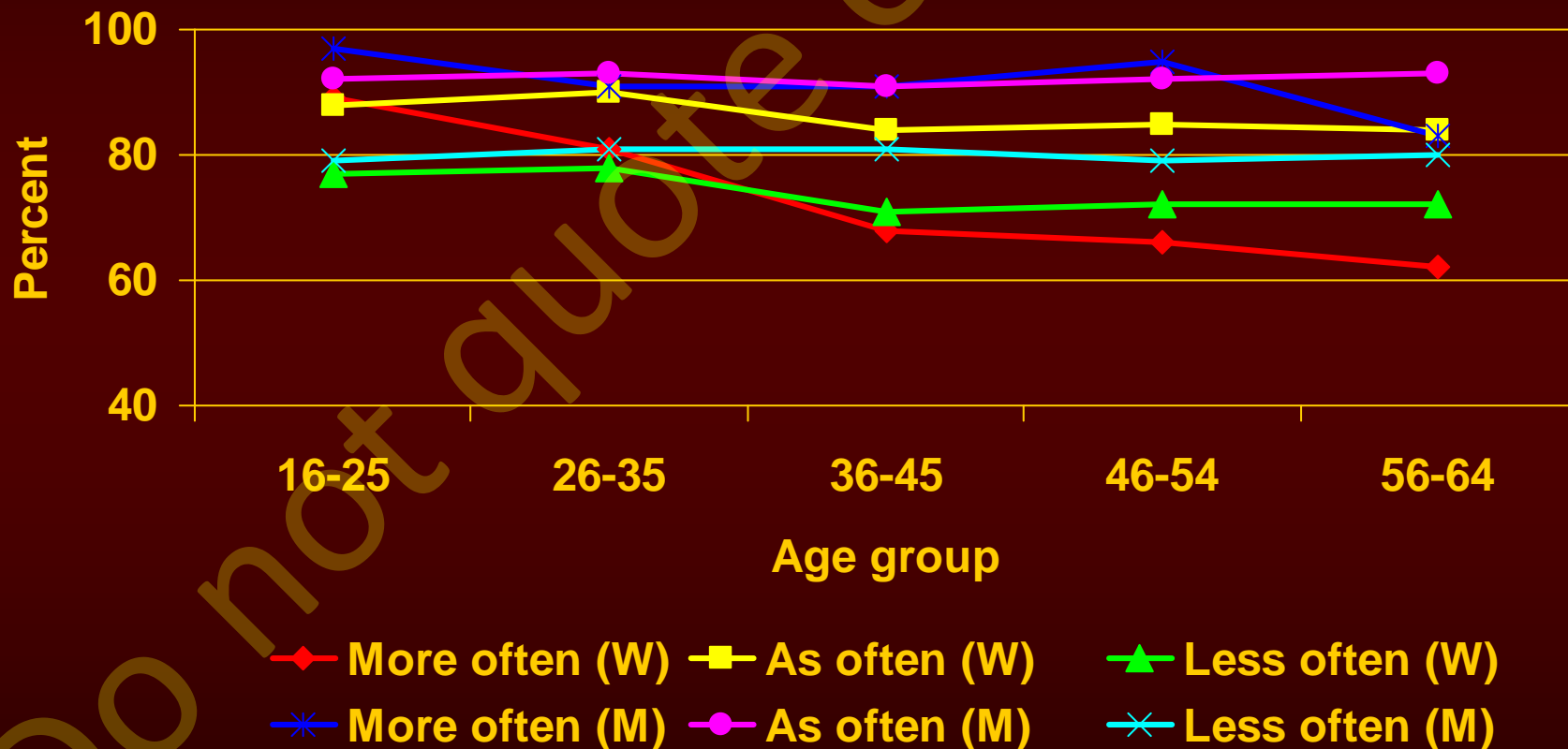
Average frequency of sex in the past four weeks (men)



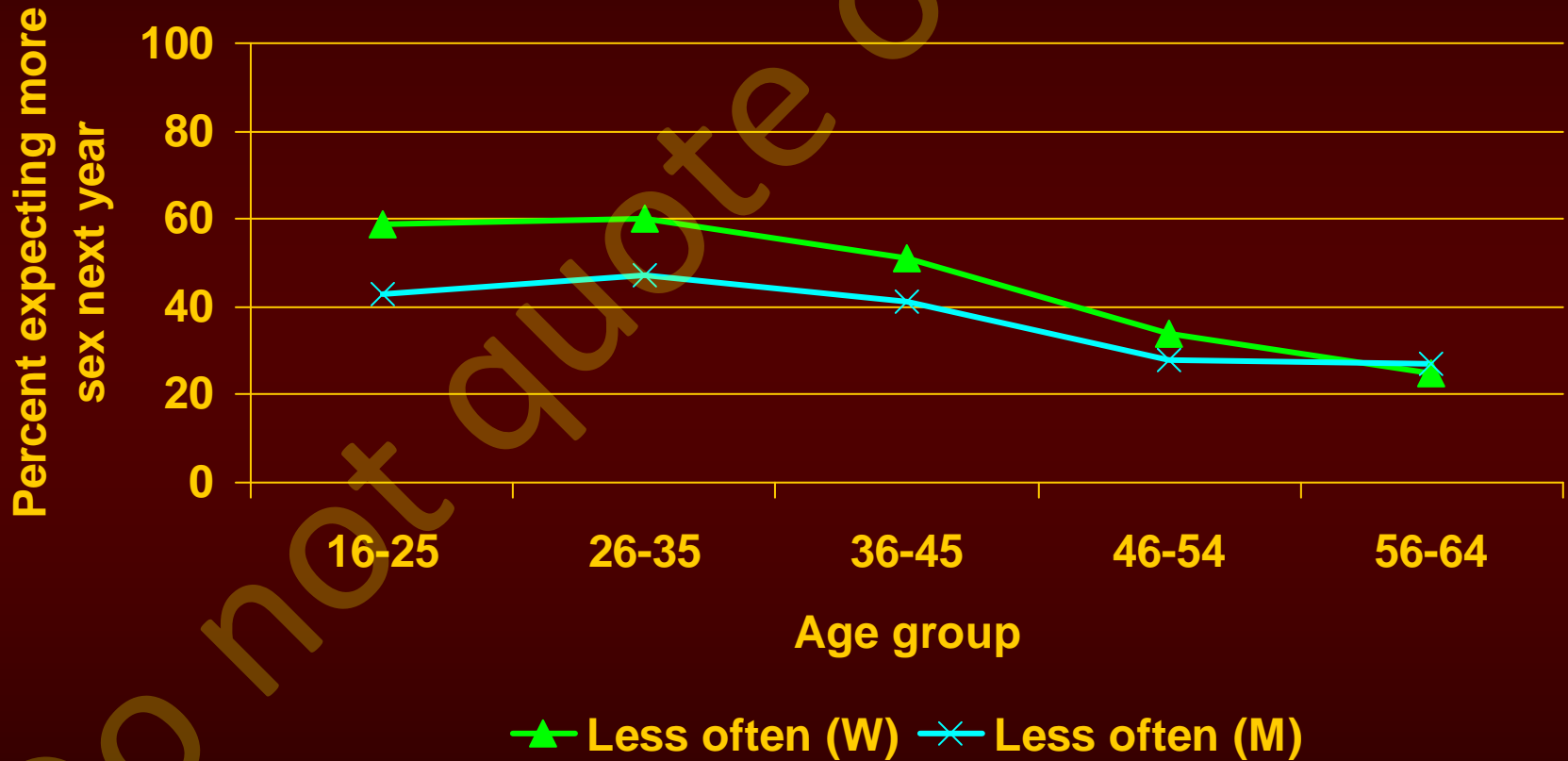
Percentage very or extremely satisfied with sexual relationship



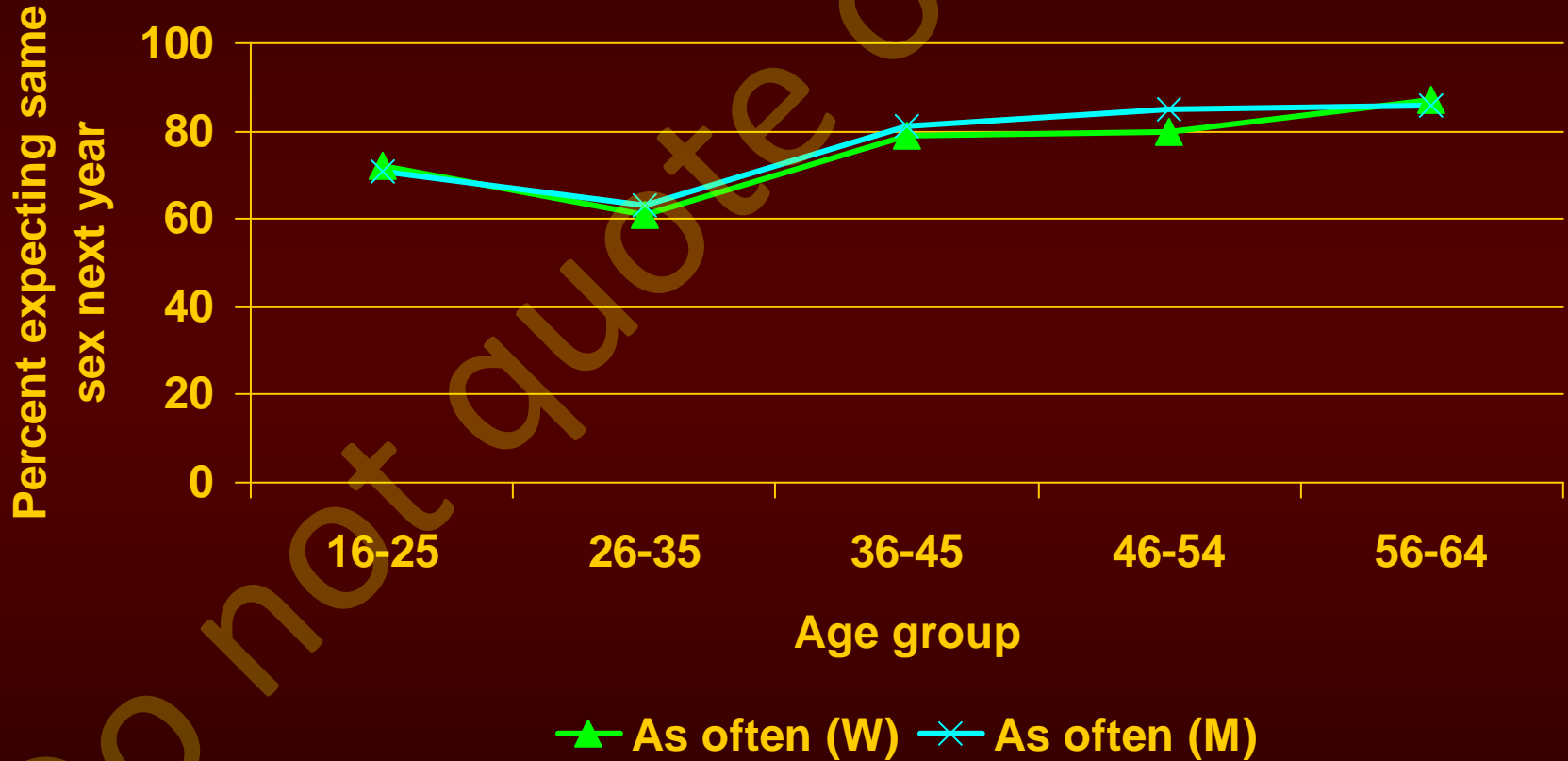
Percentage very or extremely satisfied with emotional relationship



But will it change?



Or stay the same?



Summary

- There can be a significant gap between desired and actual levels of sexual activity
- Women are more likely than men to report having sex more often than they would like and less likely to report having sex less likely
- The associations between actual and desired frequency of sex and sexual and emotional satisfaction in relationships are strong but complex