

BACKGROUND

- ❖ 1 in 50 adults between the ages of 25 and 44 could be considered **virgins**¹
- ❖ There is a **stigma** associated with being a virgin in adulthood²
- ❖ Common **reasons** for remaining a virgin in adulthood from previous research^{3,4}:
 - Not in a relationship long enough/in love enough
 - Fear of pregnancy
- ❖ Relative **importance** of reasons for remaining a virgin differ by gender^{3,4}:
 - **Women:** Personal beliefs, fear, not enough love
 - **Men:** Having an unwilling partner

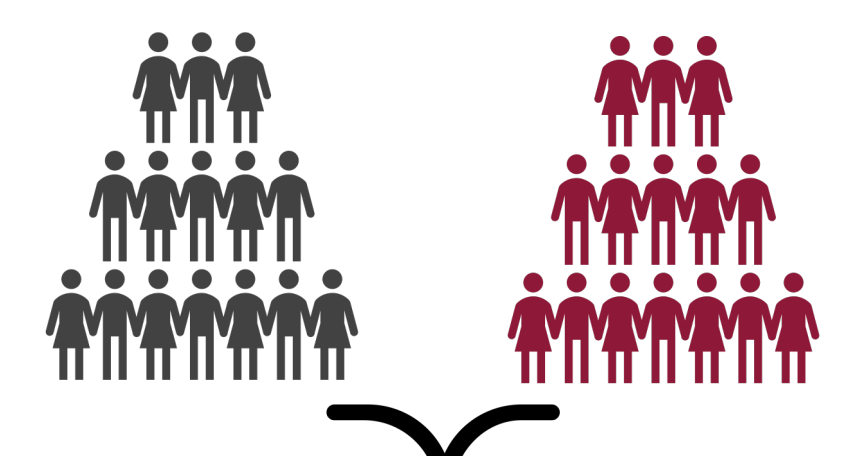
OBJECTIVE

To **compare** the **actual importance ratings** of adult virgins' reasons for remaining virgins to the **assumed importance ratings** given by non-virgins, in order to highlight possible **misconceptions** about adult virgins. Gender differences were also examined.

METHOD

Virgins
 n = 97
 M_{age} = 22.91
 SD_{age} = 4.78

Non-virgins
 n = 134
 M_{age} = 28.51
 SD_{age} = 10.75



13 reasons across 4 subscales⁴:

- Personal Beliefs
- Fear
- Inadequacy/Insecurity
- Not Enough Love



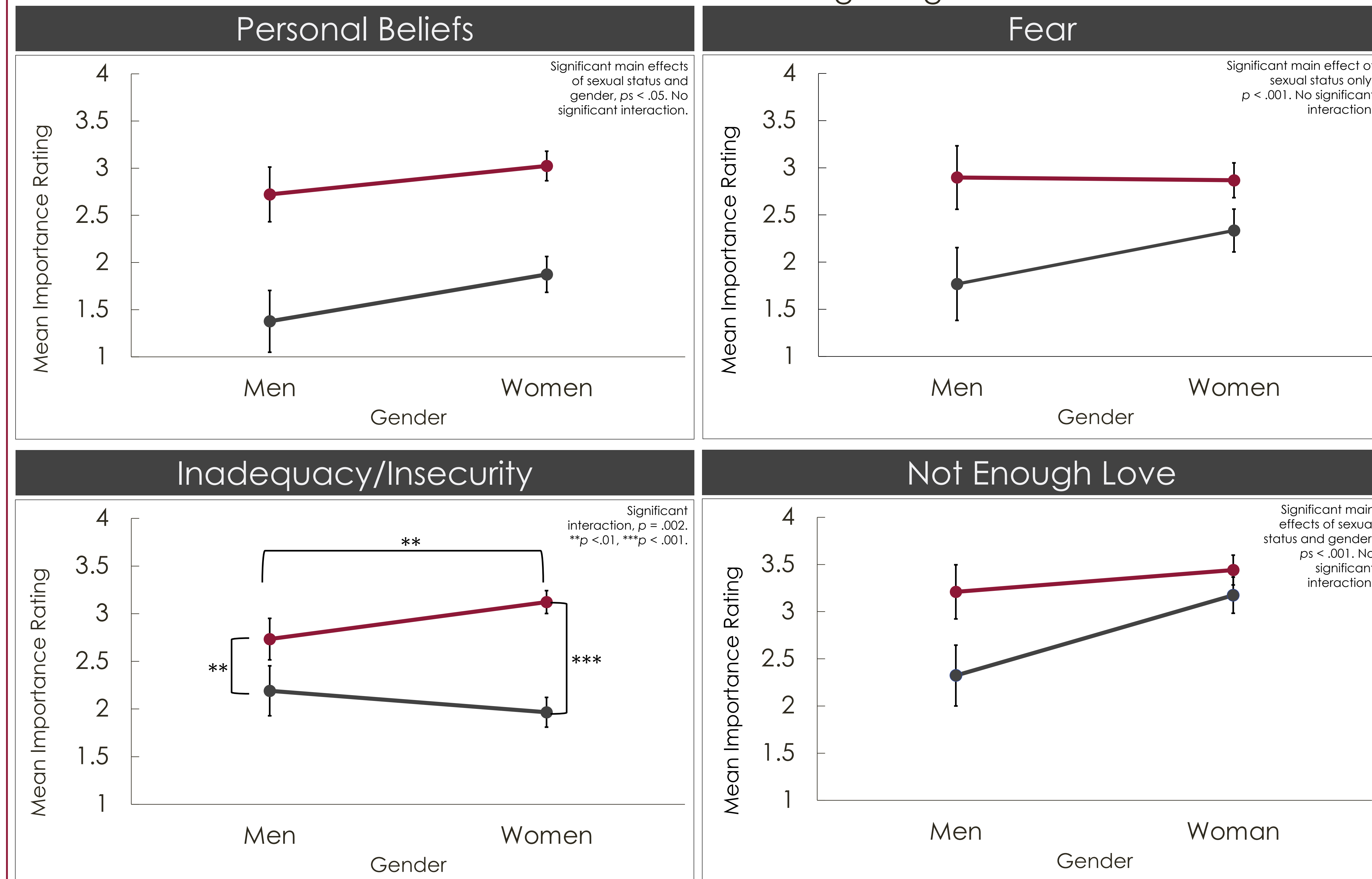
Rated on a scale from 1 (Not at all important) to 4 (Very important)

Please indicate the importance of each reason for your remaining a virgin as an adult.

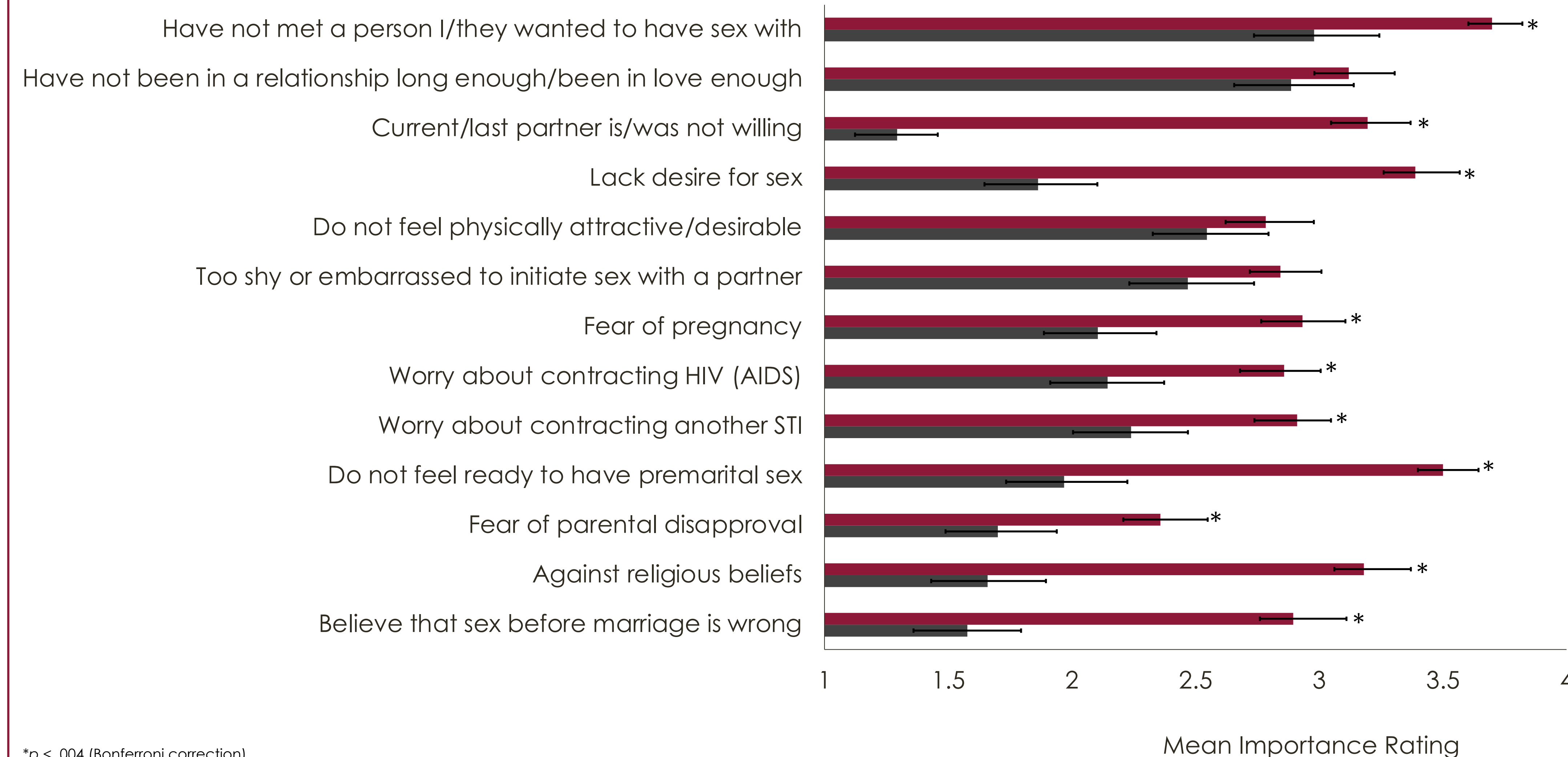
Please indicate how important you believe each reason is for adults remaining virgins.

RESULTS

1. Results of 4 separate 2(Sexual Status: **Virgin/Non-Virgin**) X 2(Gender: Men/Women) ANCOVAs. The covariate was age, and the dependent variable was the average score on each of the 4 subscales of the list of reasons for remaining a virgin.



2. Results of 13 separate independent samples *t*-tests conducted on each of the reasons in order to compare importance ratings between **virgins** and **non-virgins**.



DISCUSSION

- ❖ Women (virgin and non-virgin) rated reasons related to Personal Beliefs and Not Enough Love as more important than did men
- ❖ On all subscales, **non-virgins' assumed importance ratings** were significantly higher than **virgins' actual importance ratings**
- ❖ Non-virgin participants **significantly overestimated** the actual importance of 10 of the 13 reasons
- ❖ The **largest discrepancies** were for:
 - Current/last partner is/was not willing
 - Lack desire for sex
 - Against personal beliefs
 - Do not feel ready to have premarital sex
- ❖ These discrepancies may be indicative of **general misconceptions** regarding why individuals remain virgins in adulthood
- ❖ **Education** that addresses these misconceptions may help to **reduce the stigma** associated with virginity in adulthood
- ❖ **Future research** should examine **other reasons** adults may have for remaining virgins, and how these reasons may change with age

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