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The Relationships Among Height, Penile Length, and Foot Size

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THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG
HEIGHT, PENILE LENGTH,
AND FOOT SIZE

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ABSTRACT

To determine whether "folk myths" regarding the relationships of penile size to body height and foot size have any basis in fact, 63 normally virilized men were studied. Height and stretched penile length were measured; shoe size was recorded and converted to foot length. Penile length was found to be statistically related to both body height and foot length, but with weak correlation coefficients. Height and foot size would not serve as practical estimators of penis length.

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The penis has figured prominently in the myths, legends, religion, and art of many cultures (Janda & Klenke-Hamel, 1980; Johnson & Belzer, 1973; Masters & Johnson, 1980). Consequently, many conceptions regarding the male genitalia have become incorporated into the common folklore (Johnson & Belzer, 1973; Masters & Johnson, 1980; McCary, 1971). One of the more prevalent beliefs involves the theory that the size of a man's penis may be estimated indirectly by assessing overall body size, or by gauging the size of another of his appendages (such as his earlobes, nose, thumbs, or feet), and extrapolating to penile length (Masters & Johnson, 1980; McCary, 1971). Depending on the underlying hypothesis, the penis is assumed to correlate either directly or inversely with the dimensions of one of these other body parts. To scientifically address this issue, we studied the relationships among penis length and two of these anatomic variables, overall body height and foot length.

One pertinent study was that of Heinrich Loeb, published in 1899, which reported penile dimensions and body height (Loeb, 1899). From his raw data one can calculate a correlation of $r = 0.44$ between penile length and body height ($p < 0.01$). The specificity of the relationship is evidenced by the absence of a significant correlation in Loeb's data between penile circumference or urethral volume with body height ($p > 0.05$). Also, age did not correlate with any of the other variables Loeb examined, including body height, penile length, penile circumference, and urethral volume.

METHOD

Research Participants & Procedure

Sixty-three normally virilized males (normal pubertal history, virilization on physical examination, and serum testosterone and gonadotropin levels) were examined. Average age was 39.6 (S.D. = 12.4) years, with a range from 27 to 71. Total body height was measured, along with stretched penile length (Schonfeld, 1943; Schonfeld & Beebe, 1942). Shoe size was recorded and converted to length from a standard North American Shoe store scale. Equations for relationships were determined using least-squares linear regression.

RESULTS

The average height was 174.7 cm. (S.D. = 8.0 cm) with a range from 157 to 194 cm; average penis length was 9.4 cm (S.D. = 1.4 cm), with a range from 6.0 to 13.5 cm; and average foot length was 26.5 cm (S.D. = 1.1 cm), with a range from 24.4 to 29.4 cm.

Table 1
Correlaation of Penis Size
With Height, Foot Size And Age

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Penis Length	.			
2. Height	0.26	.		
3. Foot Size	0.27	0.66	.	
4. Age	0.23	0.20	0.09	.

Foot length and body height (Table 1) were moderately correlated ($r = 0.66$; $p < .10-6$). Penis length had a statistically significant relationship to height, although the correlation was relatively weak ($r = 0.26$; $P < 0.05$). The relationship between penis length and foot length was also statistically significant, with a similar correlation of $r = 0.27$ ($p < 0.02$). Correlations of height, foot length, and penis length with age were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The data of Loeb (1899) demonstrated a correlation between penile length and body height ($r = 0.44$; $p < 0.01$) similar to results of our study, confirming our finding in another population, widely separated in time (Table 1). The specificity of the relationship is evidenced by the absence of a significant correlation in Loeb's data between penile circumference or urethral volume with body height ($p > 0.05$). Also, as with our data, age did not correlate with any of the other variables.

The stretched penile lengths observed in our study were somewhat smaller than those reported in the seminal studies of Schonfeld (Schonfeld and Beebe, 1942; Schonfeld, 1943). He reported a mean value of 13.2 cm and a 95% range from 10.5 to 18 cm. Our study produced a mean stretched penile length of 9.4 cm, with a 95% range from 6.6 to 12.2 cm. The differences between these studies may reflect intrinsic population variability, or may be related to variation in the degree of stretching force. The mean penile length in our study was, however, similar to other published data (e.g., Fujieda and Matsuura, 1987), and was larger than

most values recently reported for flaccid penises. For example, Farkas found a 95% range for flaccid penises of 5.0 to 9.5 cm (mean 7.2 cm) (Farkas, 1976), Chaurasia and Singh (1974) found a range of 6.1 to 9.2 cm (mean 7.7 cm) and Ajmani, Jain, and Saxena (1985) found a range of 5.2 to 11.2 cm (mean 8.2 cm). Regardless, all measurements were made by one of us (JB) using a standard technique, so any differences between studies do not affect the interpretation of the size relationships in our analysis.

Two of the more common popular sexual presumptions are that penis length may be predicted by observing a man's foot size or his height (Masters and Johnson, 1980; McCary, 1971). Our data and an analysis of the data of Loeb confirm these hypotheses but offer only weak support. The relatively low correlation coefficients, although statistically significant, indicate that there is no practical utility in predicting penis size from foot size or height.

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