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## “PHALLACIES: An Unfettered Study of the Phallus ”— The Penis in History (or Everything You Want to Know...)

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“Phallacies: An Unfettered Study of the Phallus ”

The Penis in History (or Everything You Want to Know...)

Amos Lassen

Everyone wants to know about the penis—does size matter? Is its purpose only for sex or is it a symbol of masculinity or even all of the above plus more? Ma often seems to be preoccupied with his penis and historians, sociologists and psychologists have questioned if it is the penis that is responsible for the aggressive, militaristic and violent nature of society. This film looks at those questions but does so in a non-sexual, non-titillating way.

The phallus has been the center of many ancient traditions and cultures and has been displayed in art throughout history. It has been regarded as the symbol of fertility as well as longevity. The penis has maintained its prevalent position in art and in India, for example, and entire temple has walls covered with the penis in art.

Eastern cultures regard the penis as the symbolic representation of both love and procreation. In the west, the penis is regarded differently however. This movie shows through interviews with experts how the penis is directly connected to our culture and man has given it a responsibility. Now it seems that masculinity is defined by the length of the penis and many men go to extremes hoping to measure up to what they consider to be the expectations of society.

We see discussions about sexual performance and learn some interesting things about the penis. Ian and Joan are senior citizens who demonstrate how a vacuum pump has brought newness to their sex lives. We see an interview with Allard and Joyce and they tell us about their participation in early trials for a drug for erectile dysfunction which eventually led to Viagra.

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We learn of surgeries for penile enhancement and learn of a man who used an 8 pound weight to help increase the length of his penis (and he claims that it worked). Most important is that we learn that misconceptions about the penis are fueled by concealing the facts about it. The film brings the penis forward so that it can reclaim its due place. This is a wonderful look at the penis and is for anyone who is interested in knowing more about the male sexual organ. We would think that more people would want to know about the penis since half of the people in the world have one.

In America, the penis is considered to be a stealth weapon, as a definition of masculinity. However there are many misconceptions about it and therefore women have a hard time understanding men. We may talk about the penis a lot but usually in jest or as part of a joke. The real truth is that most people (men included) know nothing about the penis.

Here is an interesting fact: 65% of men think that their penis is small and 35% are totally convinced that they do not have the size necessary (whatever that means). Of these men, only 5% actually look for help and Viagra is the fastest selling drug in the history of medicine. In western culture, the penis mysterious because we have made it that way and therefore rarely “pops up” in intellectual conversations and discussions.

The film is explicit but not erotic and was actually produced for Canadian television and Director Vishnu Mathur covers the subject brilliantly in a little under an hour. While Canadians can see this on television and in their homes but I doubt that will ever happen here.

<http://vimeo.com/10600367>

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