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The features marked with a star (\*) are based entirely on material taken straight from standard research (and other Official and Therefore Always Correct) literature. Many of the other articles are genuine, too, but we don't know which ones.

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### Where There's More

There's always new improbable — it's not what you expect! — stuff on the **Improbable Research blog** at [IMPROBABLE.COM](http://IMPROBABLE.COM)

### On the Front Cover

Photo of a frog that was thrust into the air during the launch of NASA's LADEE spacecraft in 2013. (See "Animals (and Moon Bits) Aloft", page 22)



### On the Back Cover

A small dog attempting and failing to disprove Newtonian laws of motion.

Photo: A.S. Kaswell



### Some Coming Events

The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced excitingly boundless uncertainty as to whether, when, and where public activities will happen in the near future.

(See [IMPROBABLE.COM](http://IMPROBABLE.COM) for details of these and other events.)

**August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

— Worldcon  
Glasgow, Scotland

**September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

— The 34th First Annual Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony (and webcast).  
MIT, Cambridge,  
Massachusetts, USA

**September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

— Ig Nobel Face-to-Face,  
MIT Museum, Cambridge,  
Massachusetts, USA

**February 2025**

— AAAS Annual Meeting,  
Boston, Massachusetts, USA

**Spring 2025**

— Ig Nobel EuroTour

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

— Balticon,  
Baltimore, Maryland, USA



# MAY WE RECOMMEND: SCROTUM BEAUTY, AND MANAGER BIASES

*An item that merits an extra look*

by Danjur Karkummin, Improbable Research staff

"The Scrotum: A Comparison of Men's and Women's Aesthetic Assessments," Paula Albrecht, Carolin Eimer, and Erich Kasten, *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology*, vol. 22, no. 8, 2023, pp. 2273-2282. The authors, at Medical School Hamburg (MSH), Germany and Aesthetic Compass Praxisgemeinschaft (which also is in Hamburg), explain:

[S]tudies have yet to investigate aesthetic preferences as regards the scrotum....

Our sixth hypothesis suggested that men would rate their scrotum significantly more positively than women their vulva.... However, we were unable to identify any significant difference in ratings by gender.

Conclusion: Ultimately, it was barely possible to identify a "beautiful" scrotum; we must instead speak of the least ugly.

The study cites a list of other studies. This is the first item on that list:

1. Marlowe CM, Schneider SL, Nelson CE. "Gender and Attractiveness Biases in Hiring Decisions: Are More Experienced Managers Less Biased?" *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 11; 1996.



Paula Albrecht, lead author of the study. Drawing by Nan Swift.

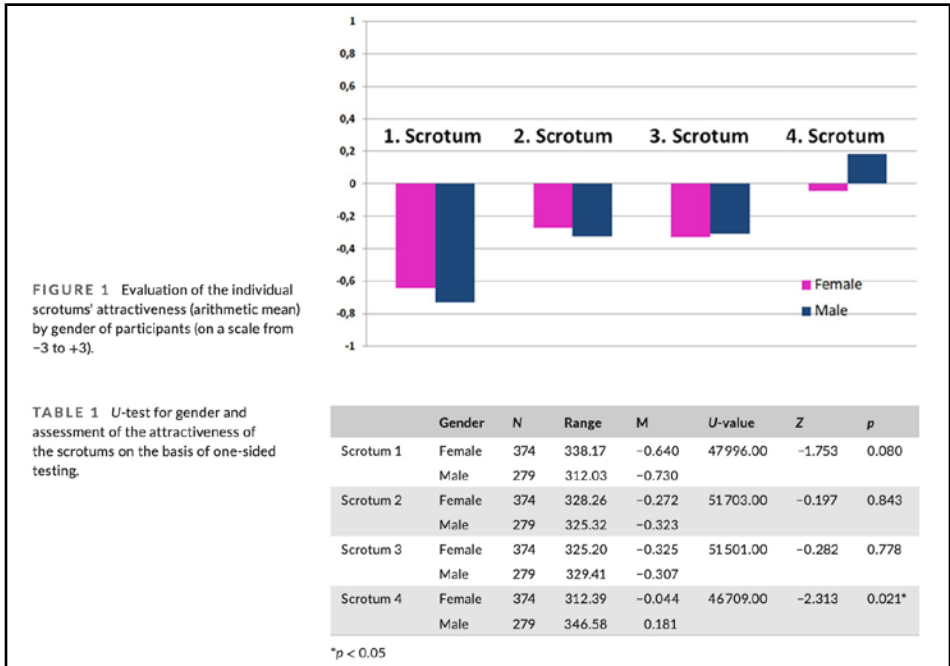
## The scrotum: A comparison of men's and women's aesthetic assessments

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**Abstract**  
**Background:** Cosmetic surgery is a growing trend. Opportunities for an individual to attain their personal aesthetic ideal via plastic surgery have now extended as far as the genital area. Adaptive surgery on intimate areas of the body may take place for physical complaints, but may instead be due to a desire to conform to a particular ideal. Breast operations, labia reductions, and penis lengthening are long-established interventions, the motives for which a number of previous studies have examined. Tightening of the scrotum, by contrast, is a new trend in the aesthetic surgery market. Notwithstanding its rapid increase, studies have yet to investigate aesthetic preferences as regards the scrotum.  
**Aims:** Accordingly, the aim of the present study is to compare men's and women's evaluation of various sizes of scrotum, to the end of assisting people opting to un-



Detail from the study.