

HOW CHILDREN SCORE ON DISCRIMINANT FUNCTIONS DESIGNED FOR ADULTS ^{MAS}

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Forensic anthropologists attempt to determine the identity of individuals from skeletal remains brought to them by law enforcement agents. One aspect of personal identity is sex, which may be estimated by visual and metric methods. The standard metric technique for estimating sex is discriminant functions analysis. Existing discriminant functions for sex are designed to be used with adults. The question of how well they work with children has not been adequately explored. I constructed a

discriminant function for sex using 7,428 adults from the Boas Anthropometric Data Set, and used the function to estimate sex for 6,102 children from this data set. The accuracy was about 50% for people 12 and under, about 90% for people 19 and older, and increased in a nearly linear fashion between ages 12 and 19. The function scores small people as female. I tried three methods for compensating for the effect of size, without success.