

Notes and Comments

Howells' Craniometric Data on the Internet

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This note has to do with availability to others of my database of cranial measurements, compiled from 1965 to 1980 and treated by me in three monographs (1973, 1989, 1995.) The Anthropology Department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, has undertaken to supply it to qualified users. This is a particularly satisfactory arrangement, given their facilities and the special qualifications and interests of the faculty. The Department is well equipped to handle the material. They manage other data bases including the Forensic Data Bank, a worldwide dermatoglyphics data base, and Boas' century-old anthropometrics from North American Indians and Siberians. In addition, at Knoxville my data have been rendered into forms more available than the original punch-card format.

From the start of my own work I was aware that I personally could hardly exhaust the possibilities of the material, but I have been surprised, and certainly gratified, by what others have been able to do with it. I began, over 25 years ago, responding to requests from others, distributing part or all of the data (first on punch cards!). I noted in my 1989 volume that users could have the set from the Peabody Museum or myself, on disk, and have replied to more than thirty requests. While I could in fact continue to comply with such, present-day technology makes it simpler for most users to download from the internet. This of course saves me trouble, and I have found that the data already move with ease around the internet, without reference to myself. No such thing as a copyright is involved, although I would expect that the source and identity of the material do not become clouded.

As to the material itself, this comprises

1,348 specimens known or diagnosed as male and 1,156 known or diagnosed as female. (The cases of known sex derive from dissecting room collections or are identified in some other way.) These are grouped into 28 specific populations (26 only for the females), which are described and documented in my 1989 report. Also included are 524 "test" specimens, some being extras or rejects from the above samples but largely crania from a wide variety of sources, including prehistoric specimens or casts thereof. These test specimens are the subject of my 1995 treatise. All the original measurement records, with notes as to location, condition, and special characters or history of specimens, are at the Peabody Museum at Harvard.

The data set has been modified and edited somewhat as time went on. My 1973 study dealt with only 17 populations, all I had covered up to about 1970. Possible errors in recording had been looked for by checking all measurements against predictions from multiple regression equations, and questioned figures were tested by querying kind friends at the institutions housing collections or by re-inspecting specimens myself. A few other slight changes or reassignments were made before the constitution of the final set; these are mentioned in the 1989 report. Therefore, data sets distributed early do not correspond exactly to those of recent years.

The measurements are 57 in number for all cases (though most are provided with a slightly larger number, not used in my reports). These mostly coincide with standard measurements as defined by earlier workers, but various of them were modified and redefined for reasons of my own—see my 1973 report for descriptions. Not originally anticipating wide use by others, I never intended to establish a new standard set of measures, whatever may actually have hap-

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pened. My choice of measures was partly limited by the need to confine instruments to a set which would be highly portable and durable, without regard to any suite of measurements that might be made working entirely in one's home laboratory.

Specifically, the dataset can be had by using anonymous ftp from `utkux.utk.edu` (128.169.76.67), in the `/pub/anthro` directory. You can also point your web browser to `ftp://utkux.utk.edu/pub/anthro/HOWTXT.ZIP`. Two compressed files are available, one in comma-delimited format, the other in dBase III format. All major data base applications can convert dBase files into their native format.

Altogether, the file names are:

HOWDBF.ZIP 256,727 bytes Howells
world data set, dBase file
HOWTXT.ZIP 235,760 bytes Howells
world data set, comma-delimited file
HOWTSTDB.ZIP 80,582 bytes Howells
test data set, dBase file

HOWTSTXT.ZIP 66,653 bytes Howells
test data set, comma-delimited file

Each file expands into two files, a text file with a variable list and data base description, and the actual data file.

I thank Richard Jantz and Steve Ousley for their kindness in making these arrangements.

LITERATURE CITED

- Howells WW (1973) Cranial Variation in Man. A Study by Multivariate Analysis of Patterns of Differences Among Recent Human Populations. *Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology*, vol. 67, pp. 259. Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum.
- Howells WW (1989) Skull Shapes and the Map. *Cranio-metric Analyses in the Dispersion of Modern Homo*. *Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology*, vol. 79, pp. 189. Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum.
- Howells WW (1995) Who's Who in Skulls. *Ethnic Identification of Crania from Measurements*. *Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology*, vol. 82, pp. 108. Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum.