Human Biology of the Pacific

Tasmanians

Homo floresiensis
Tasmania
Sahul

- 25,000 years ago
- 10,000 ya separated from mainland
Tasmanian Aborigines
Negritos
British

- Governor George Arthur, 1803
- G.A. Robinson
- Hobart
- Massacre at Ridson
‘Picture Boards’

- Governor Arthur
- Black War, 1825
G.A. Robinson and Truganini
Flinders Island
Physical Characteristics

- Birdsell

  Parietal bossing
  High cranial breadth
  Tightly helical curled hair
W.W. Howells

Fig. 5.8. Clustering of major populations based on multivariate analysis of skulls (from Howells). 14

Fig. 5.9. Clustering of circum-Pacific peoples based on multivariate analysis of skulls (from Howells). 14
Fig. 2. Dendrogram constructed from D² scores (19 groups, 18 variables).
Homo floresiensis: “Hobbits”

38,000 – 13,000 ya
Australian-Indonesian Discovery

Liang Bua Cave LB1
38,000- 13,000ya
Stegodon

New species?  
Microcephaly? 
Endemic cretinism?

Stone tools:  
(94,000 – 13,000ya)
Anatomy

Female
3 ft. 6 in.
55 lbs.
Small Bodies

insular dwarfism

LB1: 3’6”
LB8 3’7”
Pygmies/Negritos

African Pygmies
Semang
Andamanese
Etc.
Flores Brains

380 cc
Other Features

• Forearm bones (Larson et al. 2007)
• 3 carpal bones (Tocheri et al. 2007)
• Feet
• Argue et al. (2006, 2009)
Controversies

- Falk et al
- Weber et al
- Robert D. Martin (*Science* 2006)
- Microcephaly
- Laron Syndrome
- Endemic cretinism
Mystery Continues