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模拟试卷与精解

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考 博 英 语
模 拟 试 卷 与 精 解

PRE F A C E

丛书总序

中国加入 WTO 之后, 改革开放逐步深化, 与国外进行的经济、贸易、科学、教育、管理和军事等领域的合作也更加紧密, 从而对我国人才的知识水平提出了更高的要求。社会对博士、硕士研究生等高层次人才的需求越来越大, 报考硕士、博士研究生的考生正在逐年增多。从整体上看, 由于博士生招生形势的不断发展, 各院校博士生入学考试的难度越来越大, 对考生的外语水平要求也越来越高, 特别是听、说能力。攻读博士学位的学生, 一方面应该具备坚实的专业理论基础和扎实的科研能力, 另一方面还应该具备较强水平的外语能力。

综合考察最近的图书市场, 有关硕士研究生英语考试的辅导资料很多, 而直接针对博士研究生入学英语考试的指导用书几近空白。报考博士研究生的考生对如何复习应考常常感到无所适从, 他们迫切需要一套高质量的考前辅导资料, 以应对考博英语的实际要求, 帮助其把握命题规律, 在考试中获取高分。

博士研究生入学英语考试主要测试听力、语法、词汇、阅读理解、完形填空、翻译、写作等方面的知识, 各个招生院校的试题尽管具体的考查范围有些出入, 但是基本上都是在这些题型的范畴内出题。具体考查内容归纳总结如下:

听力理解部分主要测试考生对一般性听力材料的理解与判断能力, 要求考生听过一遍后回答所提问题。主要考查考生如下能力: (1) 判断对话场景; (2) 判断人物关系及身份; (3) 理解说话者的意图、观点或态度; (4) 理解话语要点和含义; (5) 获取具体信息; (6) 理解中心思想; (7) 进行有关的判断和推理。

词汇部分主要测试考生是否具备一定的词汇量和根据上下文对词和词组意义进行判断的能力。每题有一个留有空白的英文句子, 要求考生从所给的四个选项中选出可填在空白处的最恰当的词或词组。

完形填空部分主要测试考生在语篇层次上的理解能力以及对词汇表达方式和结构掌握的程度。考生应具有借助词汇、句法及上下文线索对语言进行综合分析和应用的能力, 要求考生就篇章所留空白分别从四个选项中选出最佳答案。

阅读理解部分主要测试考生在规定时间内通过阅读获取相关信息的能力。考生须完成 1 800~2 000 词的阅读量 (3 篇~6 篇短文), 并作答文后题目。要求考生能: (1) 掌握中心思想、主要内容和具体细节; (2) 进行相关的判断和推理; (3) 准确把握某些词和词组在上下文中的特定含义; (4) 领会作者观点和意图、判断作者的态度。

英译汉部分要求考生将一篇近 400 词的英语短文中有下画线的 5 个句子翻译成汉语, 主要测试考生是否能从语篇的角度正确理解英语原句的意思, 并能用准确、达意的汉语书

面表达出来。

写作部分要求考生按照命题、所给提纲或背景图、表,写出一篇不少于200字的短文。目的是测试考生用英语表达思想或传递信息的能力,以及对英文写作基础知识的实际运用。

为了更好地帮助考生复习,了解各高等院校考试的内容、要求、题型以及难易程度,并通过有效的考前试题训练掌握各种题型的答题方法和技巧,提高得分能力,我们根据多年的教学实践经验,在认真分析了北京大学、清华大学、中国人民大学、中国科学院、中国科技大学、复旦大学、同济大学、南京大学、武汉大学、厦门大学等50余所重点高等院校最近几年博士生入学考试英语试题的考点、难点、重点及命题套路之后,倾情奉献了这套《博士研究生入学考试英语辅导用书》系列丛书,包括《考博英语综合辅导教程》、《考博英语全国重点院校真题详解》、《考博英语模拟试卷与精解》、《考博英语词汇分级考点详注》、《考博英语词汇、语法与完形填空高分突破》、《考博英语阅读理解、翻译与写作高分突破》共六本。

这套丛书的特色如下:

一、作者阵容强大、辅导经验丰富、深谙命题动态

这套丛书作者长期从事考博英语命题、阅卷与辅导,对考博英语的考点非常熟悉。他们具有相当丰富的辅导和教学工作经验,深谙命题规律和出题的动态,从而使本丛书具有极高的权威性。这套丛书的出版凝结着参与编写的专家学者多年教学、命题、评卷的经验。

二、鲜明的创新特色,编写体例非常符合考生的需要

这套丛书全面吸收了同类图书的优点,结合作者丰富的辅导经验,博采众长,推陈出新,使丛书结构和内容具有鲜明的创新特色。下面分别加以介绍。

《考博英语综合辅导教程》:参考全国重点院校的最新考试大纲,按照最新精神编写。在编写过程中,特别注意知识的系统性。在每章后都编写了足量的同步强化练习题,并给出答案和解析。考生可通过做这些强化练习题进行自测,巩固复习成果。该书力求把重点、难点与考点讲深、讲透。

《考博英语全国重点院校真题详解》:历史是一面镜子,了解过去可以预知未来。通过对历年试题的详细解析,考生可以了解命题原则与规律。研习有代表性的院校的真题是复习备考中必不可少的关键环节,也是考生掌握考试动态、赢得高分的最佳捷径。循着命题人的思路,我们就可以把握考试的脉搏,明确考试的重点和难点。

《考博英语模拟试卷与精解》:许多考生缺乏实际临场经验。该书将精辟阐明解题思路,全面展现题型变化,将浩渺的习题浓缩于有限的模拟题精华中,迅速提高考生快速、准确、灵活的解题能力。为考生全程领航和理性分析,引领考生高效通过考试难关。每套试卷都有详细的标准答案和解析。考生可以利用模拟试卷进行考前模拟实战训练,检验自己的学习成果,及时进行查漏补缺,有针对性地进行复习备考。

《考博英语词汇分级考点详注》:该书包括博士生入学考试基本词汇及其衍生词汇共计万余例。该书最大的亮点就是将词汇复习与考试紧密结合,将全国重点院校的词汇测试试题按照词汇的分类进行了详细深入的分析,让考生能巩固对该词的掌握和运用情况,做到记单词与考试紧密结合,对考试内容融会贯通。

《考博英语词汇、语法与完形填空高分突破》：该书以重点、难点和疑点为依据，在精心研究重点院校真题的基础上，组织编写了同步练习题，相信会对考生有所裨益。该书难易结合，试题与考试真题难易程度相当，它系统、全面地对大纲规定的知识点从多方位、多角度进行考查。通过做同步练习题，考生可以牢固掌握词汇、语法与完形填空的相关内容，融会贯通，举一反三，为最后赢得考试高分打下坚实的基础。

《考博英语阅读理解、翻译与写作高分突破》：该书在认真研究全国重点院校的阅读理解、翻译与写作部分的相关考点以后，编写了符合考试深度的同步辅导与强化练习题，让考生能见识、熟悉考查的各种题型，达到熟能生巧的境地。

实践证明，一套好的复习资料，能够帮助考生收到事半功倍的效果。我们以考博英语专家组辅导经验的深厚积累，以在继承中创新、在开拓中前进的精神，凭借阵容强大的专家编写队伍，向广大考生奉献这套辅导书，希望能帮助考生在考试中蟾宫折桂，夺得高分！

在这套丛书的编写过程中，得到了北京大学、清华大学、中国人民大学、中国科学院、中国科技大学、复旦大学、同济大学、南京大学、武汉大学、西安交通大学、厦门大学等高等院校给我们提供的大力支持，在此表示由衷的感谢。

由于时间仓促，错误和纰漏之处诚望广大读者批评指正。

编著者 于北大燕园

FOREWORD
前言

目前,我国博士生英语入学考试采取的是各招生院校自行命题、自行组织考试的办法,各个院校的考试重点、命题特点有相当大的不同。目前国内没有统一的考试大纲,这主要是由于国内没有对博士生入学英语考试采取统考形式。从整体上看,各院校博士生入学考试的难度越来越大,对考生的外语水平要求也越来越高,特别是听、说能力。国际化人才首先要具备良好的外语水平,包括听、说、读、写、译的综合能力。

教育部《硕士、博士学位研究生英语教学大纲》提出,博士生入学考试的3门课程之一——博士生英语入学考试的理论指导标准是:“博士生入学时,其英语水平原则上应达到或略高于硕士生的水平”;应具有“熟练的阅读能力”、“较好的写作能力”和“一定的听说能力”。博士生英语入学考试很大程度上是一种水平测试,很多考生能用英语进行流利的交流,但在博士生入学考试中外语成绩却没能达线。考博英语考查的不只是英语方面的基础知识,而是基础知识与实际应用能力的综合考查。从全国重点院校的博士研究生入学考试英语试卷来看,向主观题型发展是今后考试的趋势,如北京航空航天大学、西安交通大学考博试卷中全是主观题型,仅考汉译英与英译汉和写作;又如北京大学考博试卷中有篇章改错,还曾采用没有阅读类客观题、只有主观问答和阅后写总结的试题形式,现在又增加了英文解释和选择。因此,考生要想取得好成绩,应重视主观题型的备考和能力的提高。

英语考试是博士生入学考试中最大的障碍和挑战。许多考生并非由于专业课的缘故,而是英语考试未达到所报考学校最低录取分数线而与自己理想的学校失之交臂。外语成绩一直是筛选考生入选博士研究生的最重要的尺度。

根据统计可知,全国博士生入学英语考试录取分数线总体呈上升趋势,这主要是由于报考人数增加和整体考生水平增加。许多院校的录取分数线几年之内没有任何变化,呈持续稳定趋势,例如,中国社科院2000年为50分,之后几年为55分,2004为57分;北大2004年录取分数线为50分。近年来各院校博士生入学英语考试实际录取分数线在50~60分之间波动,有的院校少数专业破格录取分数也可能降到50分以下。从试题难度来说,难度最大的应当是中科院、社科院和北京大学的试题。通过分析全国大多数院校的历年考博英语试题,其他院校测试难度基本低于这三所院校。

听力的难度有所增大,是因为听写在听力考试中逐渐被采用和推广。听写与其他听力选择题的区别是,在听写时,当考生听不懂的时候,一分都不可能猜写出来,而其他听力选择题有可能猜对。翻译和写作都属于非标准化的题型,即主观测试题,这说明了博士生入学英语考试中能力测试的成分很大。尤其是有的院校还加了英语口语试。

通过对国内重点院校近年考题进行分析可知,翻译(汉译英和英译汉)和写作平均占总分的30分左右,最高的为财政部财料所的70分,最低的为北京大学的15分。一些院校考试题型中特别强调某一方面的测试,如北京师范大学的题型比较特殊,翻译写作占55分,阅读占30分,听力占15分;财政部财料所翻译和写作就占了70分,并且听力没有和笔试合计,这说明了该研究所将来对阅读和写作要求较高;而天津大学博士生入学英语测试中没有阅读理解,用其他考试题型代替阅读理解。因此在复习的时候,考生应该有针对性地强化训练。对于同时报考两所院校的学生,尤其要注意不同院校的题型差别。

为了更好地帮助考生复习,了解各高等院校考博英语命题特点和出题动态,我们参照一些名校博士生入学英语考试大纲,在认真研究50多所高校150多份历年考博英语真题,仔细分析近几年全国多所院校博士生入学英语考题中的考点、难点、重点及命题套路之后,倾情奉献了这本《考博英语模拟试卷与精解》。本书特点如下:

一、作者阵容强大,预测具有权威性

本书的编著者都是考博英语的首席主讲专家,他们都在全国一线亲自辅导广大考生的考前复习,有相当丰富的辅导和教学工作经验,深谙命题规律和出题的动态,集清华大学、北京大学和中国人民大学等名校的权威讯息,浓缩成本书。

二、紧扣最新考试形式与出题动态,高效预测

本书紧紧联系当前各个高校考博英语的考试动态以及最新考试形势与政策,注重实际操作演练。每套试卷均由一线著名专家精选材料,题题推敲,优化设计命题完成。

三、启迪备考,极具操作性

许多考生缺乏实际临场经验,本书将精辟阐明解题思路,全面展现题型变化,将浩瀚的习题浓缩于有限的模拟题精华中,迅速提高考生快速、准确、灵活的解题能力。为考生全程领航和理性分析,引领考生高效通过考博难关。每套试卷都有详细的标准答案和解析。考生可以利用模拟试卷进行考前模拟实战训练,检验自己的学习成果,及时进行查漏补缺,有针对性地进行复习备考。希望考生能在仿真的环境下进行模拟训练,这样效果最佳。

由于时间有限,不当之处在所难免,望广大读者和专家批评指正。

编著者

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博士研究生入学考试

英语模拟试卷一

Section I Vocabulary

Directions:

There are 20 incomplete sentences in this section. For each sentence there are four choices marked A, B, C and D. Choose the one that best completes the sentence and mark your answers on ANSWER SHEET 1.

1. Without the friction between their feet and the ground, people would _____ be able to walk.

- A. in no time B. by all means C. in no way D. on any account

2. While typing, Helen has a habit of stopping _____ to give her long and flowing hair a smooth.

- A. occasionally B. simultaneously C. eventually D. promptly

3. One reason for the successes of Asian immigrants in the U. S. is that they have taken great _____ to educate their children.

- A. efforts B. pains C. attempts D. endeavors

4. If any man here does not agree with me, he should _____ his own plan for improving the living conditions of these people.

- A. put on B. put out C. put in D. put forward

5. I support your decision, but I should also make it clear that I am not going to be _____ to it.

- A. connected B. fastened C. bound D. stuck

6. The English language contains a(n) _____ of words which are comparatively seldom used in ordinary conversation.

- A. altitude B. latitude C. multitude D. attitude

7. It's a serious crime that people _____ goods out of China to avoid paying customs duty.

- A. ship B. smuggle C. launch D. load

8. Recently the car factory had to carry out personnel _____ because of financial trouble.

- A. cuts B. demands C. reductions D. orders

9. Falling sales and rising overheads have obliged the company to review each customer's _____ limit.
A. credit B. currency C. check D. certificate
10. _____ of over 5% are attractive if the dollar really is going to stabilize.
A. Manufactures B. Yields C. Creating D. Receiving
11. The medicine is on sale everywhere. You can get it at _____ chemist's.
A. each B. some C. certain D. any
12. You cannot be _____ careful when you drive a car.
A. very B. so C. too D. enough
13. In general, the amount that a student spends for housing should be held to one-fifth of the total _____ for living expenses.
A. acceptable B. available C. advisable D. applicable
14. Every man in this country has the right to live where he wants to _____ the color of his skin.
A. with the exception of B. in the light of
C. by virtue of D. regardless of
15. Housewives who do not go out to work often feel they are not working to their full _____.
A. capacity B. strength C. length D. possibility
16. I hate people who _____ the end of a film that you haven't seen before.
A. reveal B. rewrite C. revise D. reverse
17. He's watching TV? He's _____ to be cleaning his room.
A. known B. supposed C. regarded D. considered
18. The old couple decided to _____ a boy and a girl though they had three children of their own.
A. adapt B. bring C. receive D. adopt
19. The government is trying to do something to _____ better understanding between the two countries.
A. raise B. promote C. heighten D. increase
20. The newspaper did not mention the _____ of the damage caused by the fire.
A. range B. level C. extent D. quantity

Section II Cloze

Directions:

Read the following passage. For each numbered blank there are four choices marked A, B, C and D. Choose the best one and mark your answers on ANSWER SHEET 1.

Many theories concerning the causes of juvenile delinquency (crimes committed by young people) focus either on the individual or on society as the major contributing influence. Theories 21 on the individual suggest that children engage in criminal behavior 22 they were not sufficiently penalized for previous misdeeds or that they have learned criminal behavior through 23 with others. Theories focusing on the role of society suggest that children commit crimes in 24 to their failure to rise above their socioeconomic status, 25 as a rejection of middle-class values. Most theories of juvenile delinquency have focused on children from disadvantaged families, 26 the fact that children from wealthy homes also commit crimes. The latter may commit crimes 27 lack of adequate parental control. All theories, however, are tentative and are 28 to criticism. Changes in the social structure may indirectly 29 juvenile crime rates. For example, changes in the economy that 30 to fewer job opportunities for youth and rising unemployment 31 make gainful employment increasingly difficult to obtain. The resulting discontent may in 32 lead more youths into criminal behavior. Families have also 33 changes these years. More families consist of one-parent households or two working parents; 34 , children are likely to have less supervision at home 35 was common in the traditional family structure.

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 21. A. acting | B. relying | C. centering | D. commenting |
| 22. A. before | B. unless | C. until | D. because |
| 23. A. interaction | B. assimilation | C. cooperation | D. consultation |
| 24. A. return | B. reply | C. reference | D. response |
| 25. A. or | B. but rather | C. but | D. or else |
| 26. A. considering | B. ignoring | C. highlighting | D. discarding |
| 27. A. on | B. in | C. for | D. with |
| 28. A. immune | B. resistant | C. sensitive | D. subject |
| 29. A. affect | B. reduce | C. check | D. reflect |
| 30. A. point | B. lead | C. come | D. amount |
| 31. A. in general | B. on average | C. by contrast | D. at length |
| 32. A. case | B. short | C. turn | D. essence |
| 33. A. survived | B. noticed | C. undertaken | D. experienced |
| 34. A. contrarily | B. consequently | C. similarly | D. simultaneously |
| 35. A. than | B. that | C. which | D. as |

Section III Reading Comprehension

Directions:

Read the following four passages. Answer the questions below each passage by choo-

sing A, B, C or D. Mark your answers on ANSWER SHEET 1.

1

Two main techniques have been used for training elephants, which we may call respectively the tough and the gentle. The former method simply consists of setting an elephant to work and beating him until he does what is expected of him. Apart from any moral considerations this is a stupid method of training, for it produces a resentful animal who at a later stage may well turn man-killer. The gentle method requires more patience in the early stages, but produces a cheerful, good-tempered elephant who will give many years of loyal service.

The first essential in elephant training is to assign to the animal a single mahout who will be entirely responsible for the job. Elephants like to have one master just as dogs do, and are capable of a considerable degree of personal affection. There are even stories of half-trained elephant calves who have refused to feed and pined to death when by some unavoidable circumstance they have been deprived of their own trainer. Such extreme cases must probably be taken with a grain of salt, but they do underline the general principle that the relationship between elephant and mahout is the key to successful training.

The most economical age to capture an elephant for training is between fifteen and twenty years, for it is then almost ready to undertake heavy work and can begin to earn its keep straight away. But animals of this age do not easily become subservient to man, and a very firm hand must be employed in the early stages. The captive elephant, still roped to a tree, plunges and screams every time a man approaches, and for several days will probably refuse all food through anger and fear. Sometimes a tame elephant is tethered nearby to give the wild one confidence, and in most cases the captive gradually quietens down and begins to accept its food. The next stage is to get the elephant to the training establishment, a ticklish business which is achieved with the aid of two tame elephants roped to the captive on either side.

When several elephants are being trained at one time, it is customary for the new arrival to be placed between the stalls of two captives whose training is already well advanced. It is then left completely undisturbed with plenty of food and water so that it can absorb the atmosphere of its new home and see that nothing particularly alarming is happening to its companions. When it is eating normally, its own training begins. The trainer stands in front of the elephant holding a long stick with a sharp metal point. Two assistants, mounted on tame elephants, control the captive from either side, while others rub their hands over his skin to the accompaniment of a monotonous and soothing chant. This is supposed to induce pleasurable sensations in the elephant, and its effects are reinforced by the use of endearing epithets, such as "ho! my son", or "ho! my father", or "my mother", according to the age and sex of the captive. The elephant is not immediately susceptible to such blandishments, however, and usually lashes fiercely with its trunk in all directions. These

movements are controlled by the trainer with the metal-pointed stick, and the trunk eventually becomes so sore that the elephant curls it up and seldom afterwards uses it for offensive purposes.

36. The ill-treatment of an elephant during training _____.

- A. can have unpleasant consequences later
- B. is the most effective method available

C. increases the time it takes to train the animal

D. ensures loyal service for years to come

37. An elephant will only be trained successfully if _____.

A. the mahout is a responsible person

B. elephant calves don't refuse to feed

C. the mahout and the elephant get on well together

D. several trainers are assigned to the job

38. The main attraction of training mature elephants is _____.

A. early financial returns

B. their willingness to obey their trainers

C. the avoidance of anxiety in the elephant

D. that elephants are difficult to keep

39. A mature elephant is only subjected to training when _____.

A. it is with other elephants

B. the mahout has established a good relationship with it

C. the animal is feeding normally

D. it needs to be controlled with a sharp pointed stick

40. This passage mainly discusses _____.

A. two techniques used for training elephants

B. the unhumane method used in training elephants

C. how to train the elephant

D. through the tough method we cannot train the elephant successfully

2

Men have often been praised by being told that they were as smart as a Philadelphia lawyer. No one knows why there is something special about Philadelphia lawyers, but the expression "smart as a Philadelphia lawyer" seems to have come from a famous trial early in the 18th century.

An Englishman, William S. Cosby arrived in New York as the royal governor of the province. He was a tyrant. He wanted to make money quickly and he ruled the province with no thought for the law or the rights of the people. Among those who opposed his rule was John Peter Zinger who came to America from Germany. Mr. Zinger started a newspaper which praised liberty and sharply criticized the governor. Governor Cosby arrested

Mr. Zinger, charged him with slander and kept him in prison for 9 months. Mr. Zinger could not find a New York lawyer to defend him because of the governor's power. But a leading lawyer from Philadelphia agreed to defend Mr. Zinger. He was Andrew Hamilton, white-haired and almost 80 years old.

The trial opened, the jury chosen and charges read. At that time, the law on slander said that jury could decide only if the person accused published in the newspaper named in the charges. The question of whether words published were true or not was to be decided by the judge. Mr. Zinger told the court he was innocent. Then the lawyer from Philadelphia rose, admitted that Mr. Zinger did publish the newspaper as charged. But Mr. Hamilton continued. The publishing of a newspaper does not make a person guilty of slander. He said that words themselves must be proved false or slanderous. Otherwise Mr. Zinger is innocent. The judge warned Mr. Hamilton that he, the judge, would decide if the words were slanderous or not. Mr. Hamilton quickly turned to the jury and asked them to decide. He said that it was their right to decide whether the alleged slander was in fact the truth. In his final statement to the jury, Mr. Hamilton said the question was much bigger than the charges against Mr. Zinger. He said the question was liberty and right of people to oppose dishonesty and tyranny by speaking and writing the truth. After a brief discussion the jury declared that Mr. Zinger was not guilty and cheers broke out in the courtroom. The decision established the principle of freedom of the press in the American Colonies. Mr. Hamilton was praised as a hero. Through the years the fame of Mr. Zinger trial and praise for Mr. Hamilton has spread throughout the country. And so it is believed that the expression "as smart as a Philadelphia lawyer" honors the man from Philadelphia who successfully defended the freedom of the press to print the truth.

41. Many people opposed Governor Cosby's rule because _____.

- A. he wanted to make money quickly B. he was the royal governor
C. he was a tyrant D. they were biased

42. John Zinger was arrested _____.

- A. because he was smart as a Philadelphia lawyer
B. because he criticized the Governor in the newspaper
C. because of his stupidity
D. because the Governor was powerful

43. Which of the following statements is true?

- A. In Mr. Hamilton's opinion, only when the words are proved slanderous can the writer of the words proved guilty of slander.
B. Mr. Zinger was proved innocent because he criticized the tyrannical governor.
C. Mr. Zinger made up stories about the governor in the newspaper.
D. Nobody wanted to defend Mr. Zinger because he had come from Germany.

44. Mr. Hamilton was considered as a hero because _____.

- A. he taught the cruel Governor Cosby a lesson

- B. his successful defence in the trial
 - C. he defended the freedom of the press to print the truth
 - D. his courage to defend for John Zinger in spite of the tyrannical Governor
45. The purpose of this passage is _____.
- A. to tell people how the principle of freedom of press was established
 - B. to show the significance of the trial
 - C. to tell people where the expression "as smart as a Philadelphia lawyer" comes from
 - D. to tell people something special about the Philadelphia lawyer

3

For scientists who study human evolution, fossil remains provide the only direct evidence of our ancient ancestors. Access to these paleoanthropological Rosetta stones, however, is limited by protective curators who are often reluctant to lend the fragile fossils. And in the case of fossil skulls, nature preserves critical information in the largely inaccessible interior. But help is on the way. At the annual meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists in Salt Lake City this past April, researchers discussed how medical imaging, virtual reality and computer-controlled modelling technologies get around these obstacles noninvasively.

Three-dimensional medical imaging based on computed tomography (CT) scans was developed in the early 1980s. On a computer, surgeons could electronically remove the patient's soft tissue and then explore the virtual skull inside and out before operating. It wasn't long before Glenn Conroy of Washington University and his colleagues demonstrated that these same techniques could also be applied to fossils, in which sediments take the place of soft tissue.

With advances in computer graphics and computational power, paleoanthropologists can now perform on their computers a wide range of investigations that are impossible to attempt on the original fossil. Missing features on one side of the skull can be re-created by mirroring the preserved features (postmortem deformations can be similarly rectified), and tiny, hidden structures such as the inner ear can be magnified for closer examination. Moreover, as Christoph P. E. Zollikofer and Marcias Ponce de Leon of the University of Zurich and others have shown, anthropologists can reconstruct fragmented fossils on-screen.

The standard repertoire of measurements can also be made virtually, in most cases with the same degree of accuracy afforded by handheld calipers. And with the creation of a virtual "endocast", brain volume can be determined reliably. In fact, Conroy's recent research has revealed a major discrepancy between the estimated and actual brain volume of an early hominid called Stw 505 (or Mr. Pies). Conroy suspects that the estimated cranial capacity of some other fossils might also be incorrect—a hunch that, if substantiated, could have important implications for our understanding of brain evolution.