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The questions asked in developing a biological or demographic profile for an individual include the following: What is the ancestry of the individual? What is the sex of the individual? What is the age of the individual? What is the stature of the individual? What pathologies did the individual have? What traumas did the individual have? The methods used to estimate age depend on the relative age of the individual. Developmental traits used to estimate the age of subadults include tooth eruption and epiphyseal union. In addition to fusion of the medial clavicle epiphysis and the cranial sutures, adult ages are estimated using degenerative traits such as changes in the morphology of the pubic symphysis and auricular surface of the ilium, changes in the morphology of the sternal ends of the ribs, cranial suture morphology, dental attrition or wear of occlusal surfaces, bone reabsorption, osteon counting, and joint degeneration. Because developmental traits develop more regularly and consistently than degenerative traits, age estimates for sub-adults tend to be more accurate and within a smaller range of error than age estimates for adults and the elderly. However, if you remember from your previous activities, identifying sex and attributing ancestry are difficult in sub-adult remains; therefore there is a trade-off in identifying demographic characteristics. Although anthropologists have gained a good idea about the general stages of age changes in the skeletal system that hold true for the most part, there are numerous factors that accelerate or decelerate the process, including nutrition and lifestyle. This can result in unexpected morphologic manifestations that may cause errors in age estimation – so an estimate may suggest degenerative age and not chronological age. In addition, race and sex differences must always be considered in age estimation standards and decisions Siegel, et al. As with sex estimation, the more indicators used to determine age, the more accurate the results. However, a forensic anthropologist is analytically limited by the bones present and their condition. For this activity, we will be examining four of the methods used to age adult individuals – these are based on degeneration of bone. The methods used to age sub-adults examine the stages of development, such as dental eruption and epiphyseal union. Remember, this activity for age estimation does not cover all skeletal indicators of age, but it will give you a good idea of how a forensic anthropologist estimates the age of an individual using the bones. Estimation of Age Compare the elements identified in the specimens below, representing four different individuals, to the known pelvic bones, ribs and skulls in the reference materials. Based on the ageing methods, estimate the age for each specimen. This is not a timed exercise and you can use your book or other materials to assist you. The assessment is due October 7 th at Submit the completed assessment in the Age Assessment Dropbox. Elements often exhibit characteristics of more than one phase. In these cases, assign phase group to the phase that has a majority of traits; however, broaden your age range to incorporate both phases. Zoom in the document if you want a closer look at a particular feature. You may have to look at multiple images to identify a trait. Refer to the characteristics in the Activity Reference Materials and your textbook for help. Pelvis One of the best bones to estimate age in an adult is the pelvis. Many changes can be observed on the face of the pubic symphysis and the auricular surface of the ilium. The surface morphology of the pubic symphysis changes with age. The morphological transformation of the pubic symphysis follows a pattern that is divided up into phases. The auricular surface is the irregular, L-shaped articular surface on the medial aspect of the ilium that articulates with the sacrum. Statistical analysis showed that the age-related changes in auricular surface are not significantly different for males and females. Pubic Symphysis – Female Figure 1: Anterior view of pubic symphysis – Note: Right pubis on left side of image ANTH Introduction to Forensic Anthropology Week 7 Activity Suchey-Brooks Method Suchey and Brooks Suchey and Brooks identified 6 phases of pubic symphysis morphology for males and females each sex aging differently and determined the average ages associated with each phase. We will use the figures in

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the textbook to estimate age mean and standard deviation based on the pubic symphysis. Using the Suchey-Brooks method for the appropriate sex, what is the phase of pubic symphysis morphology for the figure above? What is the age range estimate for this individual? Pubic Symphysis Left describe the appearance of the element Phase: Right describe the appearance of the element Phase:

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