

February 10, 1937

Dear Anderson,

Thanks for your letter of January 28, and for your offer of the Iris data. I think, myself, that there is little purpose in your sending me a copy of these merely as a deposit in a biometrical laboratory where workers might be tempted to do something with them. It would be far better to wait until some specific problem, even if its general interest is quite minor, arises in your mind as to the treatment in combination of simultaneous measurements or observations. In fact, the point of my method is rather the development of discriminants specifically designed for the special purpose immediately in view, than for anything like the production of a taxonomic panacea, against which you, I think rightly, offer some words of warning.

What I hope to have shown is that one can often do better, after making separate comparisons for a number of different observables, than puzzle one's head vaguely about their possible physiological, or genetical, connections, and finally throw out of account all those characters which one cannot bear to look at any longer. In fact, what I put forward is a step towards objectivity in judgments based on multiple observations.

Yours sincerely,