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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted in Jamaica on 401 patients consisting of 228 clinically diagnosed cases of syphilis, 20 cases of yaws, 50 cases of leprosy, and 102 "problem cases", from among patients interviewed who were attending the Government clinics at May Pen and Kingston. In addition there were patients from the Hospital of the University of the West Indies, and the Hansen Home, a leper hospital in Spanish Town.

The purpose of the investigation was to determine the significance of the V.D.R.L., R.P.C.F. and F.T.A.-Abs. tests in the serology of syphilis in this island, where yaws was once very prevalent, and to determine the incidence of biological false positives in some cases of leprosy.

The V.D.R.L. test was reactive in 67.3 percent; the R.P.C.F. test was reactive in 77.5 percent; and the F.T.A.-Abs. test was reactive in 86.0 percent of all cases.

Cases of yaws still appear, but the characteristics of lesions may be changed due to environmental and other factors. An incidence of 6.7 percent and 5.8 percent biological false positives were obtained with the V.D.R.L. test in lepromatous and tuberculoid leprosy respectively, using the F.T.A.-Abs. test as the criterion for determining true positives.

The incidence of congenital syphilis appears to be high. Syphilis as a whole appears to be more concentrated in the poorer areas as well as in a relatively young age group in Kingston. The necessity for increased health education in these areas is suggested and an epidemiological survey on an island wide basis is indicated.

Since none of the tests used adequately differentiates between yaws and syphilis, a detailed clinical history and examination of "problem cases" appears necessary before a final diagnosis is made and treatment given.

personal guidance and assistance in many ways during
the course of my study.

To Dr. E.A. Belle, my adviser, for his guidance, va
criticism. I travelled to a distant town,

To Dr. A. I could not find my mother,
at the C. I could not find my father,

facilities I could not hear the drum.
collection of Whose ancestor am I ?
patients.

To Dr. Evelyn Finnie for her advice and understandi
during (from "Masks" by Edward Brathwaite,
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