

behavioral sciences

PUBLIC HEALTH

Gonorrhea up, syphilis down

In a survey by the American Social Health Association, Pittsburgh was found to be the urban area with the lowest rate of gonorrhea. Its average of 415.6 per 100,000 population contrasts with the 727.6 national average.

Compared with the last survey, conducted in fiscal 1962, the new study of 37 major U.S. cities showed an overall increase of 35.3 percent in incidence of gonorrhea and a decrease of 29.3 percent in syphilis.

Milwaukee and Minneapolis were tied in the latest study, for the lowest incidence rate of syphilis with an average of 9 per 100,000 population. The national average incidence of syphilis was 37.8.

Neither the American Social Health Association nor the health departments of the various cities can explain the low incidence rates.

Among the cities surveyed during fiscal year 1968 for both diseases, those showing the highest rate of gonorrhea were Atlanta, San Francisco, Washington, Chicago, Jacksonville and Detroit. Cleveland, Detroit, Washington, Philadelphia, Newark and Cincinnati led the list for the highest incidence of syphilis.

ORTHOPSYCHIATRY

Many children impaired

Out of 1,034 Manhattan children, 88 percent are emotionally impaired, Dr. Thomas S. Langner and researchers at the Department of Psychiatry of the New York University School of Medicine, reported to the 46th annual meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association.

Twelve percent of the children were well to minimally impaired, 42 percent had mild impairment, 34 percent moderate impairment, 11 percent marked impairment and 1 percent severe impairment or incapacitation.

Absence of a natural father, illness or abandonment of mother, family quarreling and low socioeconomic family levels were factors found to be linked to a higher likelihood of mental disorders in the children.

Eight percent of white children showed a severe disorder, whereas twice as many Negro and Spanish-speaking children had similar impairments.

As socioeconomic levels increased, the incidence of disorders decreased for both the white and the Spanish-speaking children.

ALCOHOLISM

LSD disappointment

LSD is useless as a therapeutic aid in the treatment of alcoholism, report scientists from the Topeka, Kans., Veterans Administration Hospital, after one year of treatment and tests. The results contradict earlier optimistic reports (SN: 6/15, p. 578).

Five groups were included in the hospital's alcoholic treatment program. Three groups were given varying dosages of LSD. Of the two groups that received no LSD, one was given treatment in the hospital's human relations laboratory.

In measurements of social abilities, William T. Bowan, Dr. Robert A. Soskin and Dr. John W. Chotlos told a conference on Cooperative Studies in Psychiatry in Houston that no appreciable differences were found in comparisons of the five groups.

More important to the cure of alcoholism, the Topeka group finds, is stability in work and marital relations and completion of a course of treatment.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Ancient Egyptian mummy

A month-long expedition into Upper Egypt, co-sponsored by the University of Michigan and Alexandria University, has resulted in X-rays and photographs of what may be the oldest mummy yet discovered—Lord Nefer, a Fifth Dynasty Egyptian noble who died about 45 centuries ago.

The mummy was found in its original resting place and in nearly perfect condition. The X-rays so far reveal that Nefer had good teeth, strong healthy jaws and superb occlusion. The X-rays also indicate that he was probably of Mediterranean origin.

The researchers have spent time gathering facial X-rays and physical data from Nubian schoolchildren near Aswan and Kom Ombo and X-raying mummies around Cairo in the tombs and the National Museum.

Dr. James E. Harris, University of Michigan's chief investigator on the expedition, indicates that the evidence collected by the dental research team, added to information from previous expeditions, aids in understanding the genetic and evolutionary changes that have occurred in the Nubian and Egyptian people across the centuries.

GRADUATES

Foreign students fill gap

Bleak forecasts from the Scientific Manpower Commission (SN: 10/5, p. 340) that the draft would reduce engineering graduate school enrollment have not come true. But the gap caused by the draft was filled largely by foreign students, reports the Engineering Manpower Commission of the Engineers Joint Council.

The findings result from a survey of the draft status of more than 12,000 engineering graduate students in 55 major universities.

Higher than expected enrollment is due to the large numbers of foreign students, who constitute as much as 36 percent of the first-year full-time enrollment for advanced engineering degrees.

Veterans, fathers, overage and those physically disqualified from the draft also add to the first- and second-year graduate enrollment. Women only make up one percent of the total.

Still a matter of concern is the draft vulnerability among teaching and research assistants, most of them part-time students. There is a smaller concentration of foreign students in this group.

Total graduate school enrollments have not decreased sharply, but the survey discloses that the planners in industry, education and government may have to revise their estimates when the male U.S. citizens of draft age are singled out.

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