Resurgence of Syphilis in China: A Biosocial Introduction

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PART 1: SYPHILIS ROOTS

PART 2: SYPHILIS RESPONSE
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PART 2: SYPHILIS RESPONSE
Increasing Reported Adult & Congenital Syphilis in China

Data are from the National Center for STD Control and Prevention in Nanjing, China (Chen et al., *Lancet*, 2007; Tucker et al., *NEJM*, 2010).
Increasing Reported Adult & Congenital Syphilis in China

Congenital Syphilis Comparison:

United States (2008) – 10.1/100,000
China (2008) – 56.7/100,000

Reported overall syphilis and congenital syphilis reported cases per 100,000 population and per 100,000 live births respectively. Data are from the National Center for STD Control and Prevention in Nanjing, China (Chen et al., *Lancet*, 2007; Tucker et al., *NEJM*, 2010).
“Guangdong Boils”

Reported syphilis cases per 100,000 population by county/district in 2008

*PLoS ONE*, 2011, PMID: 21573127
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Syphilis Case
Biological Dilemmas
Protean clinical manifestations
Lesions naturally disappear
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50-60% transmission rate
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Protean clinical manifestations
Lesions naturally disappear
50-60% transmission rate

Social Issues
Sex partner contact tracing incomplete
Homophobia in some contexts

Diagram:
- John
- Bob
- Bill

John is connected to Bob and Bill.
**Biological Dilemmas**
- Protean clinical manifestations
- Lesions naturally disappear
- 50-60% transmission rate
- Possible lack of immunity in China
- Heterosexual and homosexual cases

**Social Devastation**
- Sex partner contact tracing largely absent
- Widespread homophobia
- Break up families, relationships, loss of face
- Large commercial sex sector
- High-risk businessmen and surplus men

![Diagram showing relationships among individuals labeled 小王, 小李, and 老张](attachment:image.png)
PART 1: SYPHILIS ROOTS

PART 2: SYPHILIS RESPONSE
Nascent China-US cooperation

George Hatem (马海德)

Right: Courtesy B. Bloom.
New Syphilis Policies: Momentum for Change

- National 2010-2020 Syphilis Prevention and Control Program
- Explicit benchmarks for decreasing adult and congenital syphilis
- Integration with other prenatal screening (HIV and HBV)

[http://www.gov.cn/gzdt/2010-06/21/content_1632301.htm]
“Compass for Action”
Social entrepreneurship for sexual health

• Sustained, multi-sectoral responses

• Horizontal organizational links emphasized

• Decentralization of testing, resources, and capacities

• Culturally appropriate and tailored responses

Sexual Health 2.0

Population Development and Community Association, Thailand

¹Tucker et al., PLoS Medicine, In Press
Multisectoral & Multilateral

• Cultivate local networks that bring together physicians, public health, entrepreneurs, and social entrepreneurs

• Health diplomacy framework
Thank you

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