Reviewer's report

Title: Causal inference based on counterfactuals

Version: Date: 8 June 2005

Reviewer: Michael Oakes

Reviewer's report:

General - Because it is accessible to a trained but perhaps non-expert audience, this is paper is an excellent review of the counterfactual framework. It is well written, organized, and exceptionally well researched. Clearly the author glossed over some nuance but doing so seems necessary in such papers.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached) - None

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct) -

Page 17, last sentence of the first paragraph: there is a missing or incorrect word; as it is the sentence is non-sensical.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

(1) The paragraph on randomization tests on page 17 seems to detract from the overall theme. There is no space to fully develop the arguments. I think the paragraph should be deleted.

(2) The subsection of instrumental variables (page 18) also seems out of place. It ought to be better integrated or deleted. Given space constraints, I think deletion is best.

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What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.