Reviewer's report

Title: The impact of economic recession on maternal and infant mortality: lessons from history

Version: 2 Date: 13 October 2010

Reviewer: Barbara Starfield

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions:
1. Add figure(s) on infant mortality. Why are the results figures limited to maternal mortality? Maternal mortality is very low in all of these rich country but infant mortality is more variable and, therefore, more interesting.
2. Add Limitation that findings cannot be generalize to other measures of health and why they might be different e.g., for working age mortality, social supports may well be very different than they are for maternal and infant mortality.

Minor revisions:
1. As countries differ, make sure to identify the country that studies were done in. For example, the third sentence in the paragraph starting "Health is also affected..' needs to say that the study was done in Japan.
2. I do not understand why the paragraph starting "The rich countrystudy group..' includes data before 1936, as the previous page says you are excluding the years before 1936.
3. Reference 3 needs a YEAR of publication

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.