Reviewer's report

Title: Two different ways of investigating the importance of established risk factors and C-reactive protein in the explanation of socioeconomic differences in cardiovascular events

Version: 2 Date: 1 November 2007

Reviewer: Peter Muennig

Reviewer's report:

General

This is a very important article addressing an area of major debate in socio-economic disparities research. The research methods appear to be sound and of significance. However, to say that the article is poorly written is a vast understatement.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Foremost, the authors will need to find someone who is more familiar with the English language to help them with the paper. There are so many grammatical errors that I cannot list them here.

Grammatical errors aside, the authors are vastly under-selling themselves by failing to tell the story at hand. The title and the thesis of the paper do not perfectly coincide. The debate and background of the issue at hand has not been touched upon, and the significance of their findings is only superficially explored. I would highly recommend that these authors 1) meet to discuss how to lay out the background and importance of the article, 2) work with someone who is a strong writer to clearly convey what they mean and intend, 3) clean the paper up afterward. (In my opinion English is one of the worst languages to be adopted as an international standard as it is one of the least user friendly, but that's the way it is, I suppose!)

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

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

I might consider a more thorough review of the CRP/SES literature. For instance, our team looked at the relationship between SES and serological stress mediators using nationally representative cross-sectional data in the US that allowed us to control for nearly all known risk factors and still found an effect.
What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.