Author's response to reviews

Title: Identifying the Tuskegee Syphilis Study: Findings and Implications based upon Recall vs Recognition Questions

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Version: 5 Date: 8 November 2009

Author's response to reviews: see over
Editor  
*BMC Public Health*  

Re: Manuscript ID 1027493451261217 at BMC Public Health

Dear Editor,

On behalf of my co-authors, I am pleased to re-submit, for the 2nd time, our revised manuscript “Identifying the Tuskegee Syphilis Study: Implications of Results from Recall and Recognition Questions” to *BMC Public Health*. We have responded to the latest set of questions and suggestions of the Reviewers, and in the instances in which we differ with the reviewers, we have explained why we prefer our original approach. Overall, we thank you and the reviewers for their suggestions which continue to improve ‘the flow’ of our manuscript.

**DETAILED RESPONSES to Comments by Reviewer #1-3**  
11/6/09

**REVIEWER #3 (L.B.)**
- this Referee had no remaining questions, and appear to find the ms to be ‘publishable’

**REVIEWER #1 (A.D.)**  
**Reviewer #1 Comments and our Responses**

**Major Compulsory Revisions:**
1) DONE, as we have conducted a thorough edit of grammar and word agreement
2) DONE (I guess), as we have no
   - additional experiments or controls to add to the ms
   - no statistical mistakes to correct in the ms
   - no errors in data interpretation in the ms

**Minor Essential Revisions:**
1) Done, (see #1 above)

**Discretionary Revisions:**
1) NOT DONE, as it was ‘discretionary’ according to the reviewer. First, our Puerto Rican Hispanic sample is drawn from both New York City and from San Juan (not just San Juan as the Reviewer suggests)...and the current details given in both the Results and Discussion sections
2) NOT DONE, as it was ‘discretionary’ according to the reviewer. While we mention ‘other reasons’ as a ‘remaining possible explanation’ (vs ‘detailed knowledge about the Tuskegee Syphilis Study’), our very next sentence in the Discussion section makes it a ‘mute’ point, as it provides evidence that ‘no difference in enrollment behavior seems to exist’ when active and good recruitment practices are followed.
REVIEWER #2  (G.T.)
Reviewer #2 Comments and our Responses
Major Revisions:  NONE lists

Minor Essential Revisions:
1) NOT DONE, while this reviewer indicated a preference that the 28 citations at the end of the 2nd paragraph of the Introduction Section be ‘reduced’ to ‘several key references’ only, we feel that providing readers with a ‘rather full list’ of the relevant previous literature is a ‘plus’ for the reader (and apparently the other two reviewers agree with us as neither mentions this issue)
2) DONE, while the other two reviewers had no difficulty ‘seeing’ our ‘straightforward’ Chi-squared analyses (just testing the frequency distribution of the 4 categories across the 3 race/ethnicity groups), we have re-worded the key sentence (2nd sentence in the Fig 1 paragraph in Results) to now read: “....and despite this, 2) that Blacks were the most likely to provide an open-ended answer that at some level identified the TSS, as compared to Whites and Puerto Rican Hispanics (11.3% vs 6.3% vs 2.9%, respectively) with the two-way contrasts between Blacks vs Whites and between Blacks vs Puerto Rican Hispanics also being statistically significant (all p values <0.002).”

We also added a ‘missing p-value for one of those contrasts’ in Fig 1.

We hope that our responses to the above cited issues (i.e., the complete list from the three Reviewers) will now lead to a conclusion of ‘accepted for publication’ by you. Would you please inform me, so I can inform my co-authors, of ‘the process from here’ (for example, does the Editor now make the final decision....or does our response once again get re-distributed back to the Reviewers for their individual input?). Also, whichever is your process, how long now until we hear if our manuscript is ‘accepted for publication’ or not, as we initially submitted this manuscript to you early last March?

Sincerely,

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