



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

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Ralph S. Paffenbarger, Jr., M.D.
California State Department of Health
University of California
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2151 Berkeley Way
Berkeley, CA 94704

Dear Ralph:

I'm really seriously confused as to how a competent epidemiologist can repeatedly forward a thesis, talk about threshold effects, and speculate on mechanisms of fibrinlysis and myocardial excitability for the purported salubrious effects of exercise, in the absence of any improvement, as far as I can see, in design or analyses which would indicate whether activity is related to or independent of other risk attributes in its influence on CHD.

Your New Orleans reply implied that in two-way analyses with a number of variables the active group was always better off, but first you didn't give the data and second you know that 2-way analysis has its values but its severe limitations. We couldn't even see, as finally after 10 years we could see with the London Busmen, whether the active men had different characteristics at entry!

I simply didn't hear or was too thick, and need education on how you can say anything more than the most superficial comment that these data are consistent with a hypothesis that active occupations are protective but with strongest qualifiers because there is no way to handle the selection question and that the analyses are premature in terms of adjusting for confounding factors.

What am I missing that allows one to accept these data as anything more than the many previous occupational studies which most people now regard as very weak evidence indeed for a protective role of activity?

Regards,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.

HB:jp