**Format for ANSWERING REVIEWERS**

April 11, 2013

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 2700-review.doc).

**Title:** Cervical Adjacent Segment Pathology Following Fusion: Is it Due to Fusion?

**Author:** Philip Rosenthal, M.D., Kee D. Kim, M.D.

**Name of Journal:** *World Journal of Orthopedics*

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 2700

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1 Format has been updated (added brackets to superscript citations)

2)Reviewer #1 states 1] The editorial does not mention heterotopic ossification, [ HO,] or other potential complications of artificial disc surgery; Our piece is a brief editorial on the subject of adjacent level surgery after ACDF vs ACDA. While the subject of HO is significant, it is ‘off subject’ to the editorial. There are multiple theories on the etiology of HO and the complication is associated to both ACDA as well as ACDF. The paper by Blumenthal quoted by the reviewer finds significantly increased reoperation for ACDF over ACDA without any cases for HO.

3)Reviewer #2 states the proposed editorial is “invalid” because of published series finding no difference in reoperation rates for adjacent level disease between ACDA and ACDF index surgeries. The editorial bases evidence primarily in level one data from randomized controlled trials,[ RCT.] The RCT paper cited by Reviewer #1 ; Blumenthal, has a follow up mean of 4.5 years. Our editorial is a prediction based on evidence of greater radiographic adjacent segment pathology, [ RASP,] after ACDF surgeries. The prediction is for a much longer period, perhaps ten or more years, which would be very significant to the mean age 43 year old patients with expected longevities of about forty more years. While we have no evidence of such a result, an editorial is an appropriate venue for such a prediction. According to The Merriam Webster Dictionary, an “editorial” is an “opinion.” The reviewer may certainly disagree with that opinion but this does not make it “invalid.”

4)Reviewer #3 states the piece should have “no less than 50 refs.” With all due respect, we submit that our 14 references is more appropriate for the very brief editorial proposed here.

5) Contributions; Both doctors Rosenthal and Kim contributed to the writing and editing of the piece. Dr.Kim contributed the theory of the editorial.

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Orthopedics.*

Sincerely Yours,

Philip Rosenthal, M.D.

Kee D. Kim, M.D.