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**3, 163 – 309.**

### ***Preamble***

The proceedings of this conference are available online (at <https://archive.org/details/proceedingsofcon00chal>).

### ***Aims***

*This is the report of a conference sponsored by The Kroc Foundation held in November 1981 at its headquarters in the Santa Ynez Valley of California. We, the organizers, thought the great number of randomized clinical trials since the mid 1960s and the attention given them in the establishment of new therapies made it advisable to take a broad look at them. Most meetings and publications on randomized clinical trials have dealt with specific trials or specific aspects of the methodology of trials. To keep the subject matter manageable, discussion was limited to the history of trials in cardiovascular disease and cancer. The articles here show that there has been continual innovation in the design of trials and that there is a healthy skepticism about some fundamental aspects of them. One such aspect is the effect on the individual patient of being treated within a trial. The common assumption that care within a trial is on the average better than care outside of a trial was agreed to, and the usefulness of trials to patients who later receive better therapies established by trials is abundantly illustrated. Some striking differences between trials in cardiovascular disease and in cancer emerged during the conference. There was also a lot of attention paid to the interactions between the scientific and ethical goals of trials, including the effects on both of differences in design and execution. The papers published in this volume are edited versions of the oral presentations at the conference. Not all of the authors returned their edited manuscripts, and their formal presentations have been omitted. Discussion after each presentation has been either omitted, summarized by the editors, or included as corrected by the speakers (Introduction, page 163).*

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Photograph of participants

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Section IV: General discussion sessions

A potpourri of RCT topics (Thomas C Chalmers)

Conference on Recent History of Randomized Clinical Trials: concluding session general discussion (edited by Thomas C Chalmers and Peter Amacher)

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