COPE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS

USE OF COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS AS EDITORIAL SUPPORT

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Baltimore, 10/18/11

Introductions

- My role as a Wiley-Blackwell journal editor
- History of involvement with publication ethics issues
- Role with COPE
- Disclosure: 5% salary support from Shire Pharmaceutical for research

Objectives of the Presentation

- Identify COPE, its purpose, and the ways it can be helpful to you
  - Work of the organization
  - Web-resources for editors
  - COPE flow charts around plagiarism, authorship, and parameters of scientific misconduct
- Discuss exemplar cases of publication ethics violations
- Time for Questions?

Why does publication ethics matter?

- Published research influences other researchers and changes practice!

- Journal reputation
  - Editors as guardians of the research record
  - Editors' role in fostering research integrity

Why does research integrity matter?

- Public trust in research
- 283 retractions in MEDLINE in 2010
- Many continue to be cited (or included in systematic reviews) after retraction

COPE

- The work of COPE is guided by an elected Council
- Current officers are: Liz Wager (Chair), Sabine Kleinert (Vice-Chair), Ginny Barbour (Secretary) and Chris Graf (Treasurer)
- Council members are trustees of COPE as a charity and also directors as COPE is also a limited company
- Day-to-day management of COPE's business affairs is the responsibility of the permanent staff:
  - **Operations Manager** (Natalie Ridgeway)
  - **Administrator** (Linda Gough)
  - **Web Manager** (Cynthia Clerk)

COPE Code of Conduct

Editors should be responsible for everything published in their journals. They should:

- Strive to meet the needs of readers and authors
- Constantly improve the journal
- Ensure the quality of the material they publish
- Champion freedom of expression
- Maintain the integrity of the academic record
- Preclude business needs from compromising intellectual standards
- Always be willing to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions and apologies when needed

Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Code of Conduct

Organization History…

- COPE began in 1997 as an informal forum for discussing ethical issues relating to research and publication in biomedical journal publishing

- Membership of COPE was aimed primarily, but not exclusively, at editors of scholarly (learned) journals

2007 - 2008

- COPE was more formally established as a limited company and as a UK-registered charity
- COPE's stated aim is "*The promotion for the public benefit of ethical standards of conduct in scientific research and the publication of science journals*"
- In 2007/08, membership increased substantially: from around 350 editors to around 3500

In 2011....

- COPE currently has about 6400 members
- COPE is now international in scope and fully inclusive in subject matter
- All academic disciplines and fields are now covered, for example:
  - Biomedicine
  - Pure and applied sciences
  - Engineering and technology
  - Arts, humanities and social sciences

COPE in action: website

COPE has produced:

- A series of flowcharts (also available translated into select languages – more being added)
- A Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guide for Journal Editors (revised and launched Mar 2011)
- A Code of Conduct for Publishers (Mar 2011)
- Sample letters for handling common problems
- Retraction guidelines
- Presentations
- Other guidance (e.g. for editorial boards)

All are available at www.publicationethics.org

The flowcharts cover:

- Redundant (duplicate) publication
- Plagiarism
- Fabricated data
- Changes in authorship
- Ghost, guest or gift authorship
- Conflicts of interest
- General suspected ethical concerns
- Reviewer misconduct
- How COPE deals with complaints

COPE in action: advice and guidance to members

- COPE offers advice and guidance to its members, primarily through its quarterly **Forum** meetings
- Forum meetings are held in London but members can take part via tele-conference
- The Forum allows members to benefit from the views and experience of other members
- Forum meetings are now recorded and the audio published with a summary of the case on the website

Latest Misconduct Case in the News*

Institutional and editorial misconduct in the MMR scare

Fiona Godlee, editor, *BMJ (British Medical Journal)*

> This week, in the last of his series of three articles on the secrets of the MMR scare (doi:10.1136/bmj.c7001), Brian Deer describes the events of 2004 when he first raised concerns about Andrew Wakefield's research with the *Lancet*'s editor. Rather than calling for an investigation as Deer had expected, Richard Horton moved quickly—with Wakefield, his co-authors, and their former institution—to publicly deny all but one of Deer's allegations. Six years later, at an estimated cost of £6m, the General Medical Council found all the allegations to be true.

**BMJ 2011; 342:d378 doi: 10.1136/bmj.d378 (Published 19 January 2011) BMJ 2011; 342:d378*

"Medical Madoff"*

- Over 12 years Scott Reuben published at least 21 studies on post-op pain in orthopedic surgery that were "pure fiction"
- Ten of those studies have been published in *Anesthesia & Analgesia*
  - Editorial in *A&A* 2007 stated Rueben was at the "forefront of redesigning pain management protocols" with his "carefully planned" and "meticulously documented" research
- His fabricated data demonstrated that pre-op administration of COX2 inhibitors in combination with gabapentin and pregabalin were better at reducing post-op pain than first generation NSAIDs and less dangerous than narcotics
- After the investigations, the conclusions were that the combination probably slowed healing, records of money from Pfizer were suspect at best, and the belief is that the money went to Reuben directly and not to his institution

*http://www.scientificamerican.com

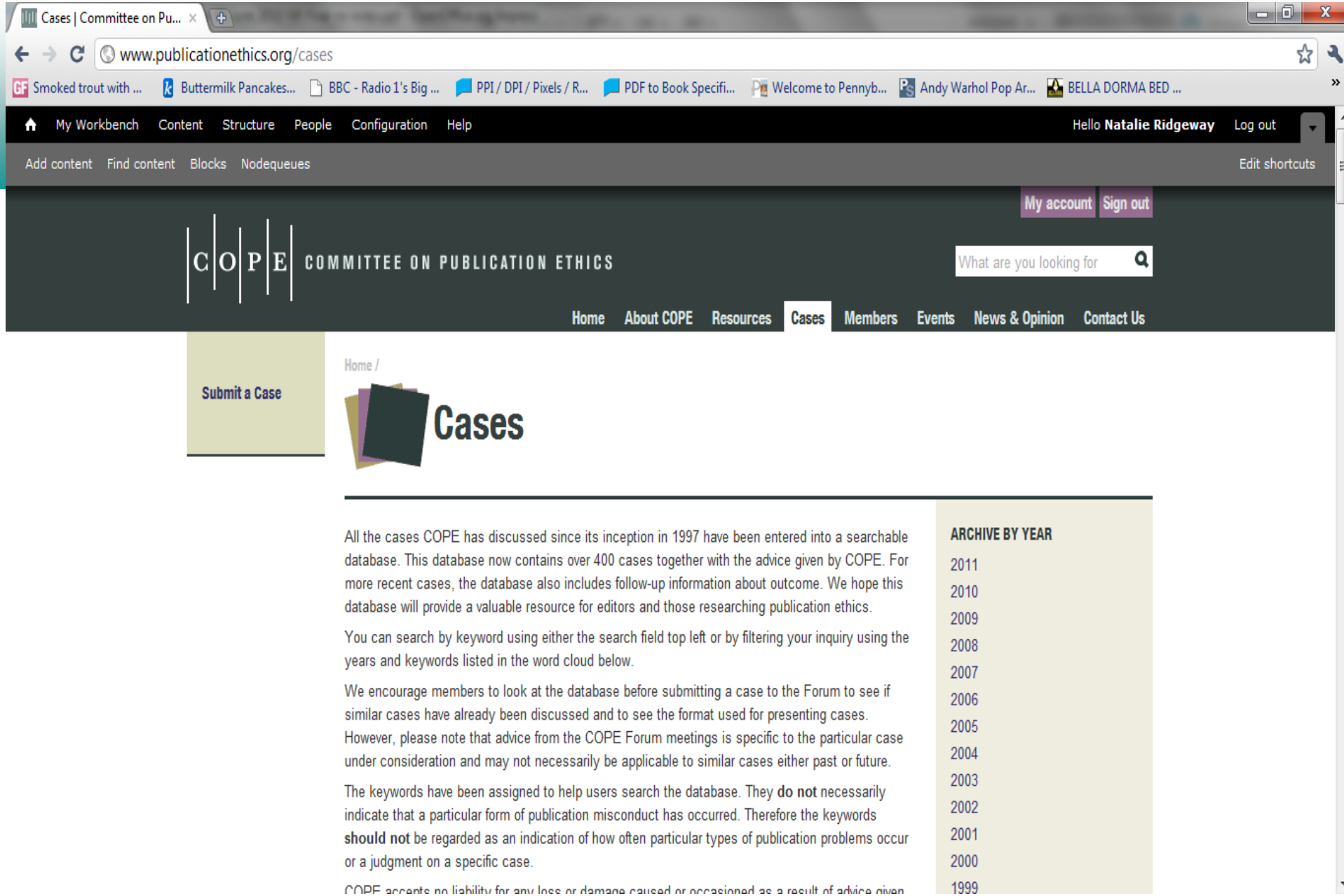
COPE in action: advice and guidance to members

"Few journals have the internal resources to deal with all the complex ethical and procedural issues that arise from misbehaviour by a small minority of authors. Fortunately, COPE provides a supportive community of experienced editorial staff ready to offer useful advice and share lessons learned from dealing with similar problems. Decisions can be made with much greater confidence knowing that they are supported by one's peers."

Philip Steer, British Journal of Obstetrics & Gynaecology

COPE in action: advice and guidance to members

- All cases are entered into COPE database
- All cases and subsequent COPE recommendations are available at: www.publicationethics.org
- Cases are searchable by keyword


Cases | Committee on Pu...
www.publicationethics.org/cases
Smoked trout with ...
Buttermilk Pancakes...
BBC - Radio 1's Big ...
PPI / DPI / Pixels / R...
PDF to Book Specifi...
Welcome to Pennyb...
Andy Warhol Pop Ar...
BELLA DORMA BED ...
My Workbench
Content
Structure
People
Configuration
Help
Hello Natalie Ridgeway
Log out
Add content
Find content
Blocks
Nodequeues
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My account
Sign out
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Cases
All the cases COPE has discussed since its inception in 1997 have been entered into a searchable database. This database now contains over 400 cases together with the advice given by COPE. For more recent cases, the database also includes follow-up information about outcome. We hope this database will provide a valuable resource for editors and those researching publication ethics.
You can search by keyword using either the search field top left or by filtering your inquiry using the years and keywords listed in the word cloud below.
We encourage members to look at the database before submitting a case to the Forum to see if similar cases have already been discussed and to see the format used for presenting cases. However, please note that advice from the COPE Forum meetings is specific to the particular case under consideration and may not necessarily be applicable to similar cases either past or future.
The keywords have been assigned to help users search the database. They do not necessarily indicate that a particular form of publication misconduct has occurred. Therefore the keywords should not be regarded as an indication of how often particular types of publication problems occur or a judgment on a specific case.
COPE accepts no liability for any loss or damage caused or occasioned as a result of advice given
ARCHIVE BY YEAR
2011
2010
2009
2008
2007
2006
2005
2004
2003
2002
2001
2000
1999

COPE in action: cases over time

	97 - 99	00 - 02	03 - 05	06 - 08	09 - 10
Total	76	80	80	109	93
Unethical editorial decisions	3	3	10	11	3
Plagiarism	4	6	11	13	7
Authorship	17	23	9	18	21
Fabrication/ Falsification	9	4	3	7	5
Unethical research	32	40	41	38	14

COPE in action: complaints, advice and guidance

- Individuals can bring complaints against COPE members if they consider that they have not followed the Code of Conduct
- COPE will only consider a complaint after all appropriate internal mechanisms at the journal have been exhausted
- COPE does **not** adjudicate on the merits of individual cases (eg whether publication misconduct has occurred) but simply on whether the COPE member followed appropriate procedures

COPE in action: complaints, advice and guidance

- COPE does **not** judge on authorship disputes or editorial decisions such as acceptance or rejection of papers or choice of reviewers.
- COPE has an Ombudsmen to arbitrate on cases where a complainant is unhappy with COPE's response
- COPE can only offer advice if the journal is a member of COPE

COPE: other services

- Website is the primary resource for editors
- Ethics Audit (members only)
- Newsletter (quarterly)
- Annual seminar (European, North American, and – new for 2011 - Asia-Pacific)
- Research Grants

COPE: Ethical Editing

C O P E COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS

Volume 3 Issue 1 Spring 2011

ethical editing

Theme: The Editor-Publisher Partnership

Right in the middle

The Ancient Egyptians believed that the pharaoh was a bridge between the human and divine realms. It was the pharaoh's responsibility to maintain justice and harmony in human society and order in the universe.

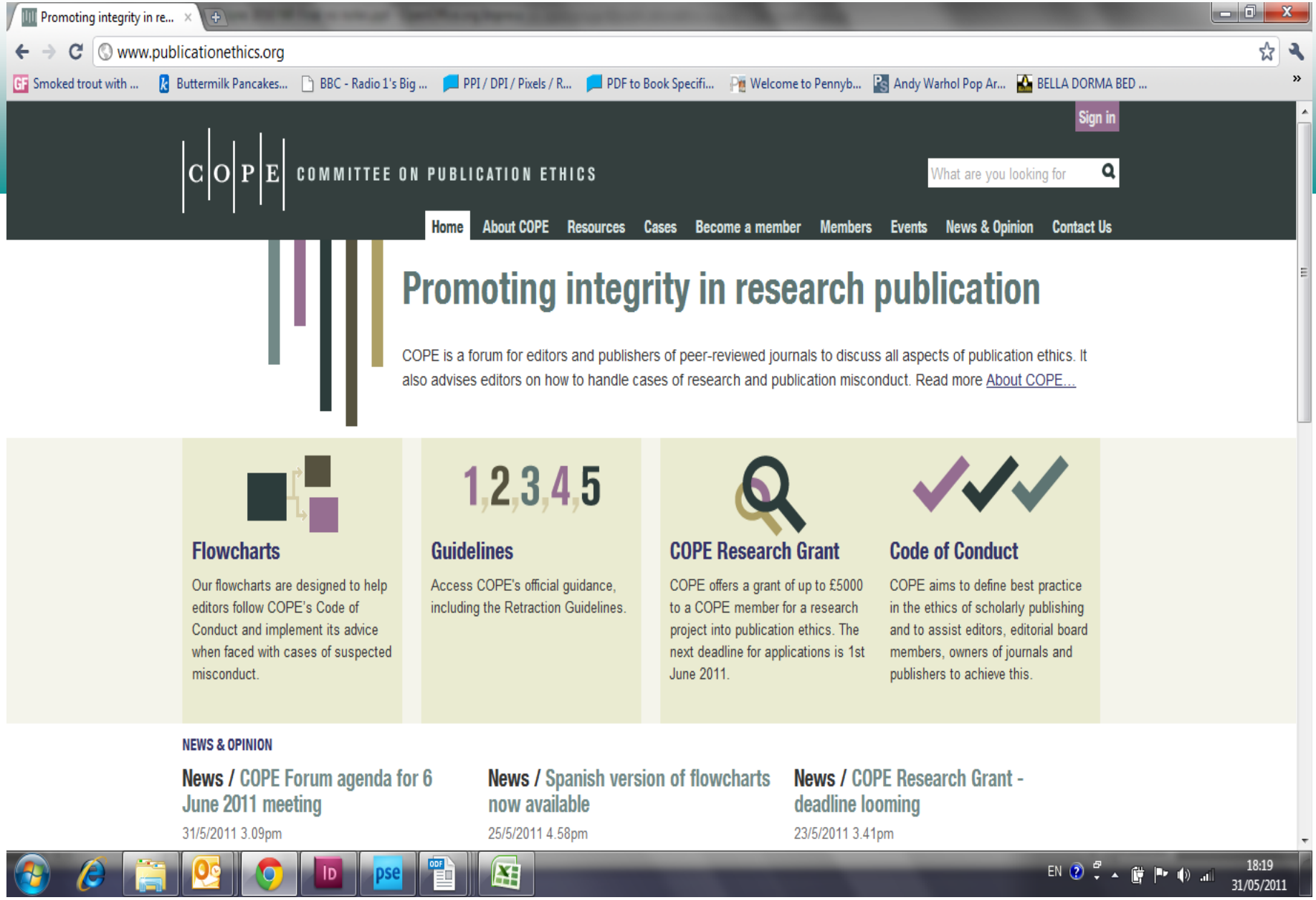
On a (much) smaller scale, publishers also maintain justice and order on behalf of their journals. The Editor-Publisher Partnership is the theme of the Spring 2011 issue of Ethical Editing, and in the Feature, "Working together to address ethical issues" (page 5), seven publishers describe what they do for their editors. "Publishers should be available to provide guidance and advice and ensure the editor feels fully supported throughout the process," says publisher Niki Haunch of Emerald Group Publishing.

Publishers are also go-betweens, transferring knowledge to their editors from organizations like COPE. "Publishers sit in a unique place: right in the middle," says publisher and COPE Council member Chris Graf in this month's Peer to Peer essay on the role of publishers (page 8).

COPE, meanwhile, has been busy supporting both publishers and editors, among other things by revising the Code of Conduct for editors (page 2), producing a "Short guide to ethical editing for new editors" (page 3), awarding a grant for a project to develop

Editor Jeannie Wurz in Egypt

Inside this issue


Promoting integrity in re...
www.publicationethics.org
Smoked trout with ...
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PDF to Book Specifi...
Welcome to Pennyb...
Andy Warhol Pop Ar...
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Promoting integrity in research publication
COPE is a forum for editors and publishers of peer-reviewed journals to discuss all aspects of publication ethics. It also advises editors on how to handle cases of research and publication misconduct. Read more About COPE...
Flowcharts
Our flowcharts are designed to help editors follow COPE's Code of Conduct and implement its advice when faced with cases of suspected misconduct.
1,2,3,4,5
Guidelines
Access COPE's official guidance, including the Retraction Guidelines.
COPE Research Grant
COPE offers a grant of up to £5000 to a COPE member for a research project into publication ethics. The next deadline for applications is 1st June 2011.
Code of Conduct
COPE aims to define best practice in the ethics of scholarly publishing and to assist editors, editorial board members, owners of journals and publishers to achieve this.
NEWS & OPINION
News / COPE Forum agenda for 6 June 2011 meeting
31/5/2011 3.09pm
News / Spanish version of flowcharts now available
25/5/2011 4.58pm
News / COPE Research Grant - deadline looming
23/5/2011 3.41pm
EN
18:19
31/05/2011

COPE: other services

Planned services for 2011 include:

- eLearning programme
- 1st Asia-Pacific Seminar (Australia) and the 3rd North American seminar in San Diego for 2011
- Launch of new website
- Development of an International Advisory Board

COPE: Support for Members

- Bring cases to the COPE Forum for advice
- Minutes of the Forums with podcasts of the case discussions
- Free attendance at COPE Seminars in Europe, North America, and Asia-Pacific
- COPE resources
- Support for editors via email and telephone
- The good public relations of supporting the only international group devoted to publication ethics

COPE: Support (2)

- COPE support for editors may encourage responses from authors or institutions

"Adding COPE into the equation, makes negotiations easier for editors and adds the weight of an outside body!"

How can we improve our support for our members?

- COPE is committed to improving communication with its members about its activities and encouraging debate about publication ethics.

- Some of the areas we will be working to improve this this year include:

  - Brochures and leaflets for use at conferences/seminars
  - Further improvement to website functionality
  - LinkedIn page

How can we improve our support for our members?

- We want your views!
- How can we improve our service?
- Your feedback is essential

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  www.publicationethics.org

QUESTIONS?