Sharing of information among editors-in-chief regarding possible misconduct: COPE Discussion Document

Charon Pierson, COPE Council Member

North American Seminar, August 13, 2014, Philadelphia, PA

What is a COPE Discussion Document?

- Specific topic posted on COPE website prior to the quarterly forum
- Topics suggested by members or related to difficult cases
- Members can post comments and responses
- Forum participants can add verbal comments
- Document is revised, formatted, posted

Sign in

COPE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS

What are you looking for

Home | About COPE | Resources | Cases | Become a member | Members | Events | News & Opinion | Contact Us

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...

Join here
What are the benefits of COPE membership?

FEATURED

FORUM DISCUSSION TOPIC: Sharing of information among editors-in-chief regarding possible misconduct

The Forum discussion topic on Wednesday 4 September is "Sharing of information among editors-in-chief regarding possible misconduct". Click below to learn more and leave your comments.

Learn more

NEWS & OPINION view all ▸

News / COPE's eLearning course relaunched

27/8/2013 7.50am

COPE is delighted to announce the relaunch of the eLearning programme on the COPE website. COPE members can now access the programme directly on the COPE website http://publicationethics.org/resources/elearning once they have logged in.

News / Clarification of COPE advice to editors on Geopolitical intrusions on editorial decisions

1/8/2013 6.11am

There has been much discussion recently on government, specifically US government, sanctions against Iran, the potential effect on Iranian researchers and some publishers have cautioned editors and reviewers about handling papers from Iran

Why is sharing information a problem?

- Manuscripts under review should be treated confidentially
- Legal risk of defamation
- Not clear who should be involved
- Logistics a problem with international submissions

What are the advantages?

- Discovery of multiple, near simultaneous submissions to diverse journals
- Speed of unraveling the problem
- Many reviewers review for several journals in their field and may have seen previous submissions by the author
- Collaboration of several editors provides strength to request for institutional investigations

Case in Point - Yoshitaka Fujii

- Prolific author for over 2 decades (169 RCTs in 12 years published)
- Worked at multiple universities and hospitals in Japan
- Published in more than 23 journals
- There may be 200 or more papers that end up being retracted
- Required complex, multi journal cooperation to initiate and complete analysis for possible retractions

Range of problems

- Variability of reported data was suspicious (analysis by statistician was published to demonstrate this fact)
- Overwhelming evidence of fabrication
- No raw data available to examine
- No record of research oversight and approval

Final Version Posted

COPE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS

Sharing of information among editors-in-chief regarding possible misconduct: COPE Discussion Document

Steve Yentis on behalf of COPE Council
February 2014

This paper aims to stimulate discussion about the sharing of imformation among editors-in-chief regarding possible misconduct in their journals. We encourage journal editors and publishers to comment (whether or not they are COPE members), and also welcome comments from researchers/authors and academic institutions. Please email all comments to Natalie Ridgeway, COPE Operations Manager at http://publicationethics.org/contact-us

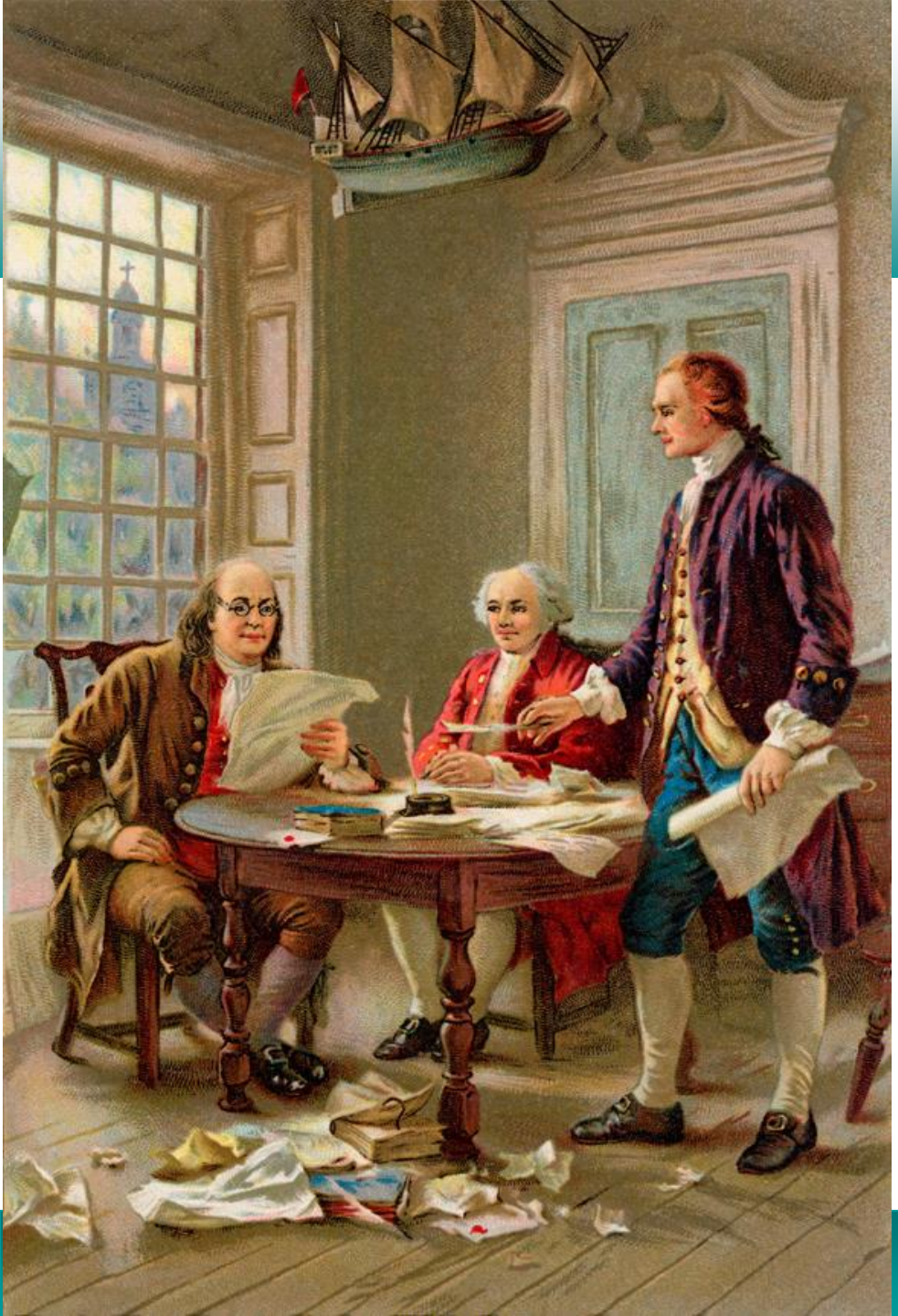
Introduction

This document has been drafted following a COPE Discussion Forum, in the wake of a number of high-profile cases of research misconduct in which the sharing of information between the relevant editors-in-chief (EiCs) was crucial to the final settlement of the cases[1].

Background

Key Points

- Sharing of information is necessary at times
- Email communication is appropriate and practical
- Limit the content and circulation list to the absolute minimum required
- Information should be factual only
- <u>Be consistent in your process</u>



Enjoy Philadelphia

COPE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS