

COPE Asia-Pacific Seminar 15 February 2013, Melbourne, Australia

On the 15th of February 2013, the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) held their second Asia-Pacific Seminar in Melbourne, Australia.

The seminar, titled 'Correcting the literature', took attendees through the potential challenges in correcting research, taking perspectives of legality, media, ethics policy, and technology.

COPE Treasurer Chris Graf began the seminar, using the group's growth from 8 in 1997 to its now 8000 strong membership to show the importance of trust and ethics in scholarly publication. This sentiment was clearly affirmed through the high attendance and engaged discussion of editors, publishers, and university management, with many taking every opportunity to discuss issues with speakers.

Wiley legal counsel Helen McLean presented the first session, taking attendees through the legal issues and pitfalls plaguing the publication of scholarly literature. The highlight of this session explored retractions, with McLean recommending a robust journal policy, combined with a reliance on an institution's investigations, in order to best address raised issues.

Anaesthesia & Intensive Care Editor John Loadsman then took to the podium, noting the danger of false or misrepresented research in the media, and delving into the issue that while it may reach a wider audience, corrections may not gain the same coverage. He also explored the risks of media releases, noting how research is often reduced to only the publically-digestible basics, and missing the associated background or limitations of the study.

Paul Taylor and Daniel Barr of the University of Melbourne approached the challenges from the other side, speaking on research ethics and how problems could be prevented early instead of corrected later. They discussed the methods used by the University of Melbourne's Office of Research Ethics, indicating its success lies in 3 ingredients: a strong voice from the top; education and training; and clear statements of expectations.

CrossRef Director of Strategic Initiatives Geoffrey Bilder then took the perspective of the researcher, presenting not how to correct or prevent changes in literature, but how technology can ensure the most up-to-date version of the research is exposed. Titled CrossMark, the tool appears as a symbol on journal articles, providing researchers with a consistent indicator of article revisions. The company is working to gain support from the major publishers, and hopes to see the feature available on all publisher's websites in the future.

The final session of the day, a hypothetical role play titled *The Down Under Blunder*, took a plagiarism issue from beginning to end, with speakers from each session of the day taking part. Led by Suzanne Morris of the University of Queensland, the session took the audience through a practical exploration of topics discussed in the seminar, entertainingly showing the extreme situations that can occur in scholarly publishing.

In exploring many diverse perspectives, the 2013 COPE Asia-Pacific Seminar provided an in-depth look at the challenges on achieving and maintaining trust in the publication of scholarly

literature. Overall, while sessions provided individual solutions, the speakers each reflected that both reactive and proactive methods require clear frameworks to be effective.

Chris Shorten, Wiley-Blackwell