Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences: what do they need from COPE?

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Looking back …

1997  COPE established by a group of medical journal editors
1999  Good Publication Practice Guidelines drafted by 8 leading medical editors/physicians
2004.. Code of Conduct for Editors established calling on editors “to take seriously their role as guardians of biomedical science”
↓
   COPE membership survey recommends more engagement with the Arts and Humanities sectors to make COPE services more relevant to their needs
Perceptions of COPE

“An organization dealing with ethical issues related to scientific publishing.”

“COPE is an organization for editors and publishers of medical journals to consider publication ethics, including providing guidelines and advice.”

“My impression is that it is far more relevant to a scientific journal than to ours.”

“A central point of contact and advice for publisher-wide discussions and policy formulations as they apply to the ethics of scientific publishing.”
Prevalence of ethics cases in AHSS

- Ethics cases are perceived as less prevalent in AHSS but those that are picked up are often more serious, needing legal advice, when they occur
  - Only 1/3 of the ethics cases logged at T&F over the past 12 months were AHSS, but 83% of the cases dealt with by the T&F legal counsel are AHSS

- On the Retraction Watch leaderboard, 5 of the top 20 are from non-STM subjects
Similarities and differences

• Authorship disputes
  – Different definitions of authorship apply
• Plagiarism
  – Definitions are the same
• Human subjects
  – Same rules around ethics approval but different language needed
• Libel and Defamation
  – more focus on subjective analyses of other people’s views and the world around us, rather than “raw laboratory data”, so greater libel risks
Looking forward

• Seminar/workshop late 2017 in USA to bring together experts to discuss the specific needs of AHSS editors and how COPE can support them, for example through providing:
  – Guidelines and training which support AHSS-specific problems and are written in the language that is clearly for the audience
  – More cases covering AHSS in forums and digest
  – Digest to cover more AHSS topics

• What else?