COPE Seminar 2021

How do publication ethics practices for journals apply to book publishing?

Friday 1 October, 15:00 - 16:00 (BST)

Tamara Welschot

Jennifer Wright

Deborah Poff
(Moderator)

#CØPE2021

PROMOTING INTEGRITY IN SCHOLARLY RESEARCH AND ITS PUBLICATION

WELCOME FROM THE PAST-CHAIR OF COPE

> The big question is how we create the culture we want, and who is best placed to act with the most impact. It is collaboration that's key, because cultural change is hard.
>
> This is a road we have to travel together: funders, institutions, researchers, editors, journals and publishers.

Deborah Poff
Chair

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SPEAKERS

Jennifer Wright
Cambridge University Press

Leads for Cambridge University Press's Research Integrity and Publication Ethics team, and supports Cambridge's books, journals, higher education programme, and preprint platform in publication ethics best practice. Jennifer is also part of Cambridge's Scholarly Communications Research & Development team and supports a broad range of activities in open research, impact, capacity development, and other research services.

Tamara Welschot
Springer Nature

Head of Advisory and Assurance, Research Integrity, Springer Nature. Looks after resources on research integrity and publication ethics for editors, authors and reviewers and oversees projects on preventing and detecting misconduct. Previously Tamara was Director of Research Integrity and Publishing Services with overall responsibility for Springer's strategy and standards on publication ethics.

Today's session

1. Introduction
2. Landscape changes and current COPE activities
3. Characterising the issues
   - COPE survey results
   - Perspectives from two publishers
4. Discussion: where should we go now?

Why are we asking this question?

- Many publishers are using COPE resources and “translating” them for books context
- Some researchers don’t see the COPE guidance as relevant to book publishing
- Our experience suggests books are only recently starting to adopt policies/tools/checks that have been common amongst journals for many years (e.g. standard plagiarism checks, ethics/consent/disclosure statements, COI statements)
- Indexing for books currently in infancy, but indications are that requirements will emerge
- Key mechanisms for correcting scholarly record not easily transferrable to books (Corrections, Expressions of Concern, Retractions)
- The infrastructure for books publishing is different (formats, structure, identifiers, distribution channels)
- The process for publishing books is different (acceptance can come *before* receipt of content, book projects can take > 10 years!)

COPE Activities

Working Group

Discussion document

What are we looking at when we talk about books?

- Key differences between books and journals
- Discussion questions

https://publicationethics.org/resources/forum-discussions/book-publishing-ethics

COPE Forum: March 2021

Some comments from the Forum:

- Statements and disclosures – at what level should they apply?
- Responsibility for ethics in book publishing
- Impact of retractions of single chapters on rest of book
- “Plagiarism of ideas”
- Simultaneous submission to multiple publishers – acceptable and even advised for books, contrary to journals

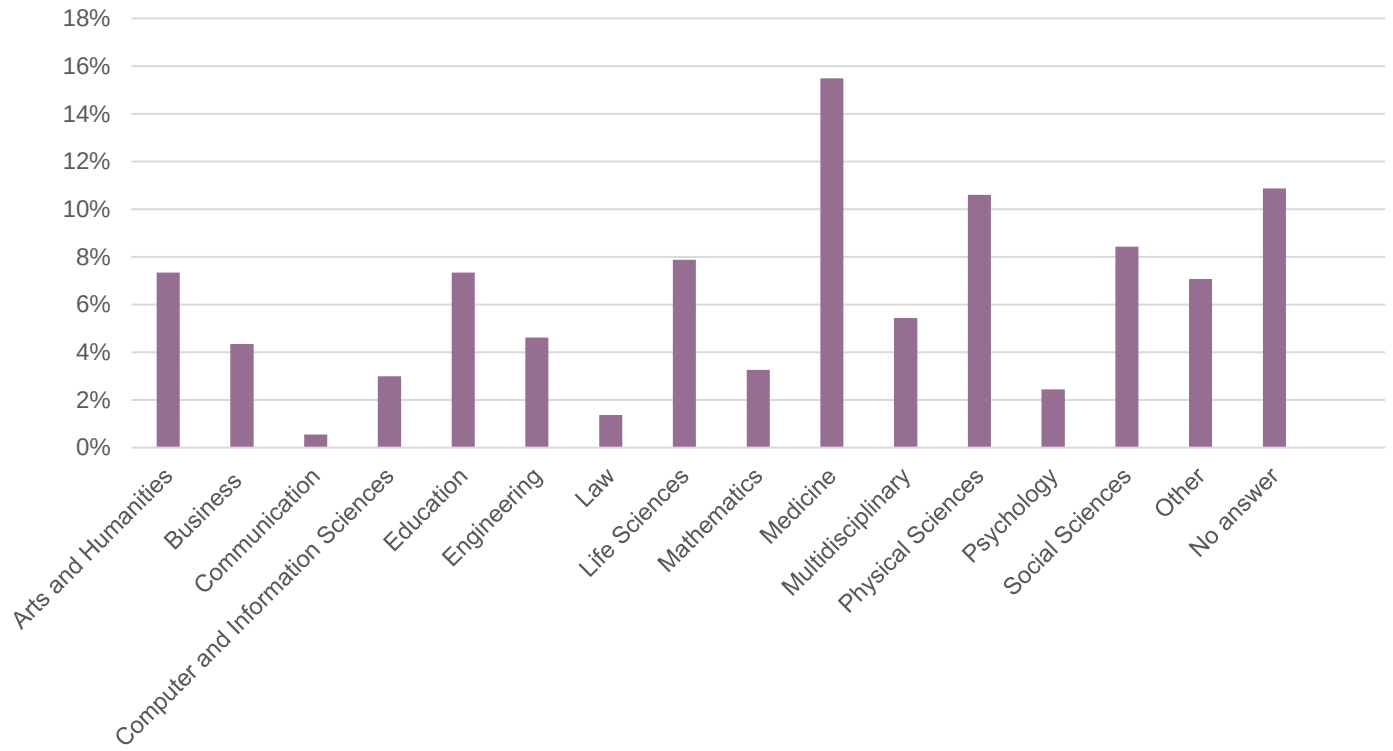
COPE Survey: August 2021

- Do you think books publishing adheres to the same publication ethics standards as journals?
- What do you think would be the biggest benefit of creating and adopting publication ethics best practice guidelines for books?
- Do you think drive for more OA books publishing will require books to be more transparent on issues like COIs, consent, ethics approval?
- Common issues (by COPE Core Practice area)

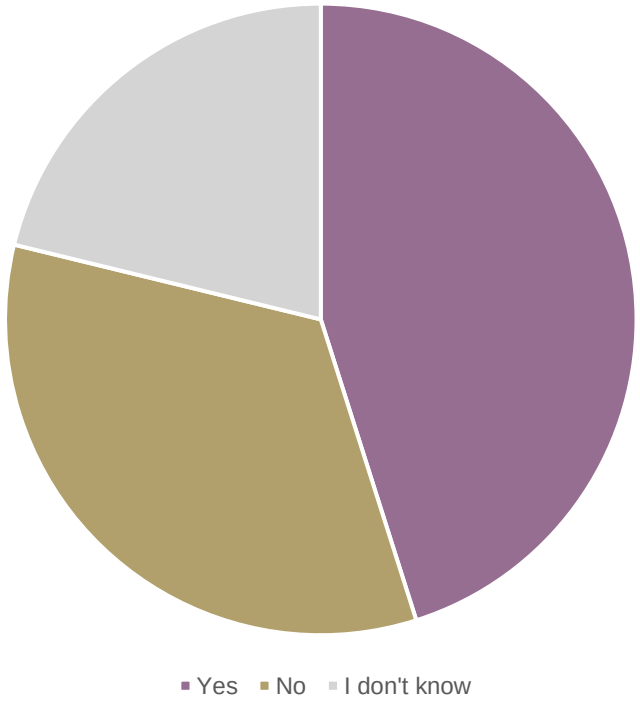
A bit more about the survey…

Demographics

Participants: 368
Completion rate: 82%



Do you think books publishing in your discipline adheres to the same publication ethics standards as journals?



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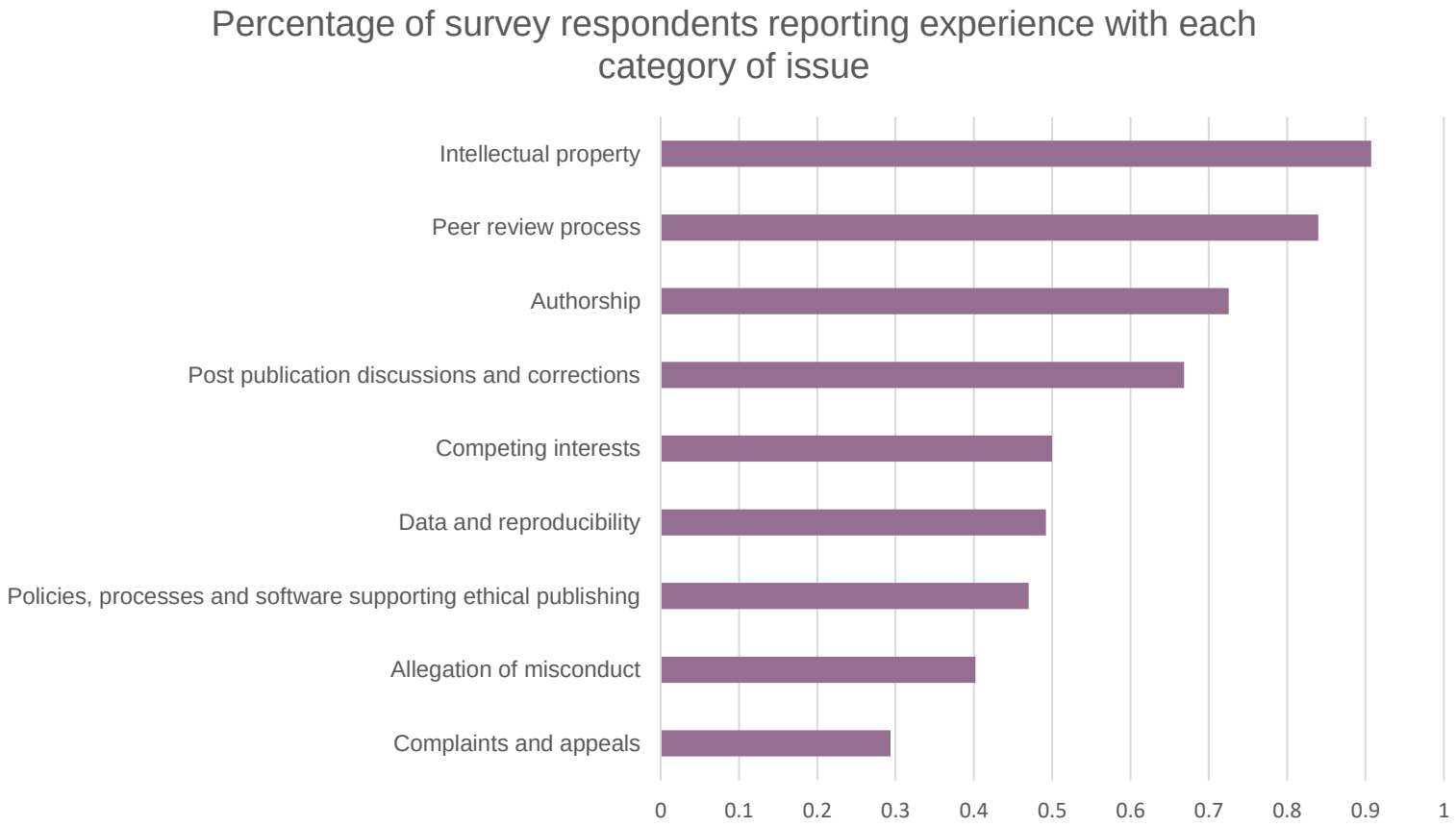
Typical Issues: COPE Survey



Some comments from the survey…

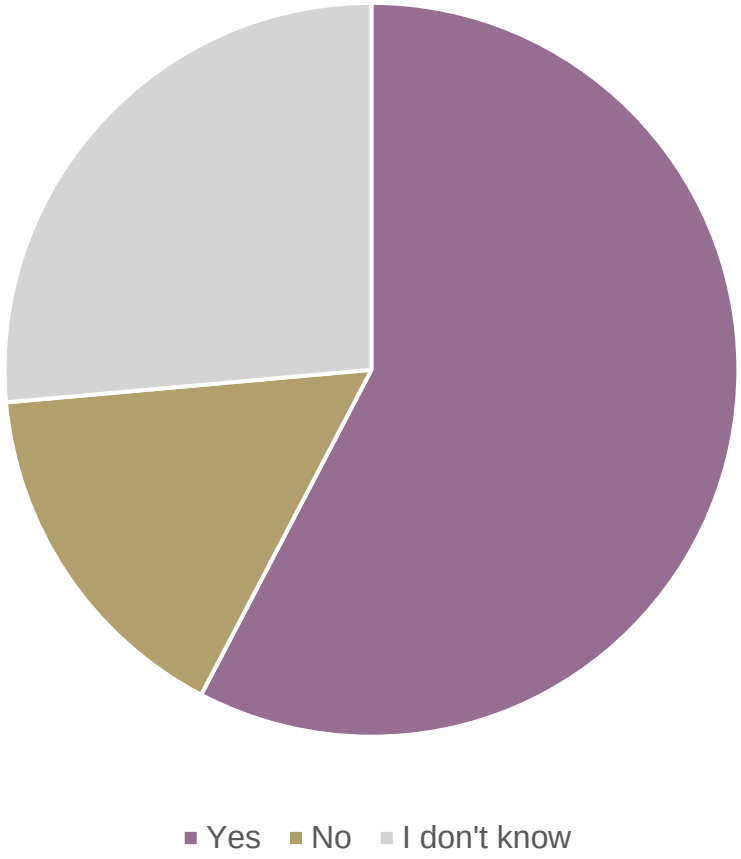
"Authors and volume editors seem to have the mistaken impression that because they are writing books and not journal articles, that the due processes are somehow more **'flexible' and 'lax', or less rigid than what is applied as the norm in journal article publishing, when this is not, and should not be the case."**

"A major problem is a lack of awareness among scholars (series editors, volume editors, authors) about conflicts of interest, bias in peer review, possibilities for plagiarism, and copyright/IP. They have a general idea but not enough specific knowledge or training to apply it to specific projects."

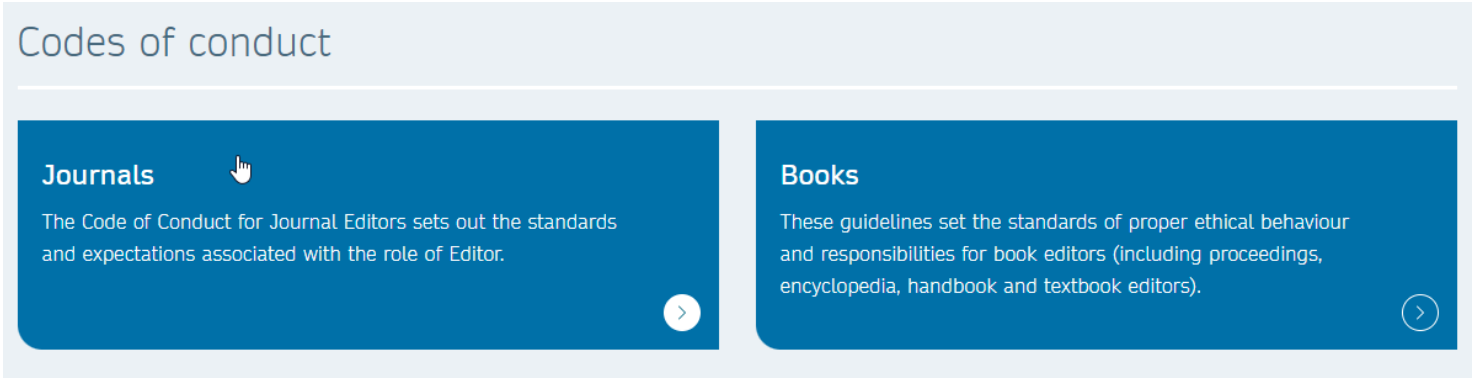
"I always understood that books allowed authors the leeway to be present a point of [view] that may not be possible in a journal article, **so I am wondering why there is even a push to go this way with books. Surely books and journals can be a little different?"**

"I think the **lighter touch is a good thing for books** because they are generally more **comprehensive and 'personal'** than most journal paper reviews."

Do you think the drive for OA books publishing will require books to be more transparent on publication ethics?



Publisher 1: Springer Nature



Book Author’s Code of Conduct

- Research and author conduct
- Authorship principles
- Originality
- Redundant publication
- Acknowledgement of sources
- Related manuscripts under consideration for publication
- Concurrent/secondary publication
- Permissions
- Figures and illustrations
- Copyright
- Conflict of interest
- Ethical approval and informed consent
- Avoiding defamation
- Dual use of research
- Fundamental errors
- Confidentiality
- Suspected transgression of ethical standards

Code of Conduct for Book Editors:

- Submitting a proposal for a volume
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- Originality
- Redundant publication
- Acknowledgement of sources
- Related manuscripts under consideration for publication
- Conflict of interest
- Ethical approval and informed consent
- Fundamental errors
- Confidentiality
- Suspected transgression of ethical standards

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Springer Nature queries by publishing group: Books versus journals

Books: Applied Sciences	28
Books: Humanities	10
Books: Medicine and Life Sciences	10
Books: Social Sciences	9
Books: Business, Economics and Politics	8
Books: Sciences	7
Books: German-Language Science	5
Books: Computer Science	4

Journals: Medicine and Life Sciences	346
Journals: Mathematics, Physical and Applied Sciences	156
Journals: Nature Research and BMC	82
Journals: Humanities and Social Sciences	52

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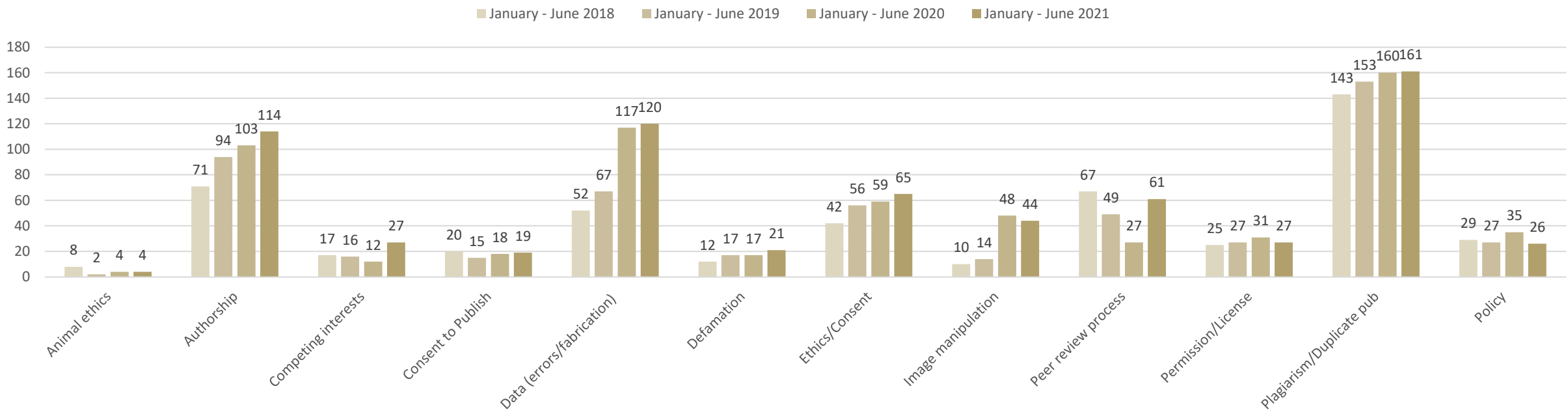
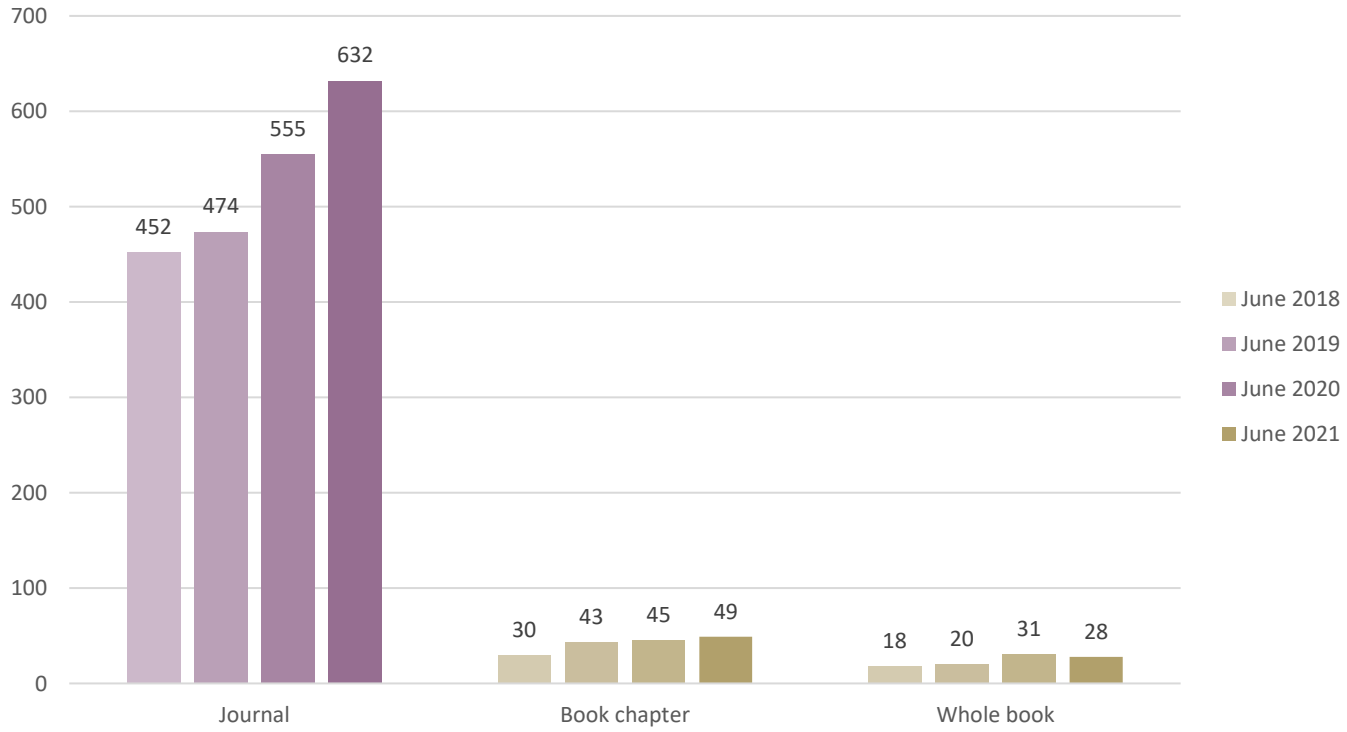
Proportion of Issue: Springer Nature data January – June 2021



Proportion of Issue Springer Nature: Books versus journals



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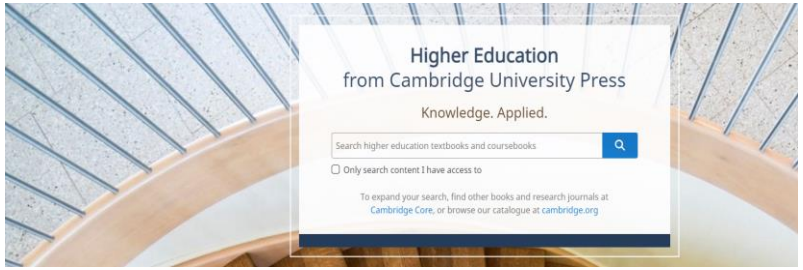
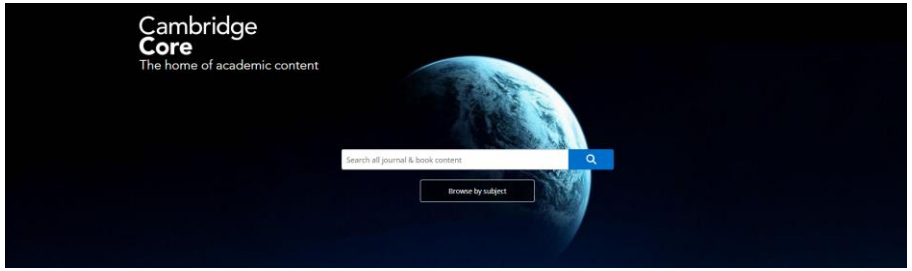
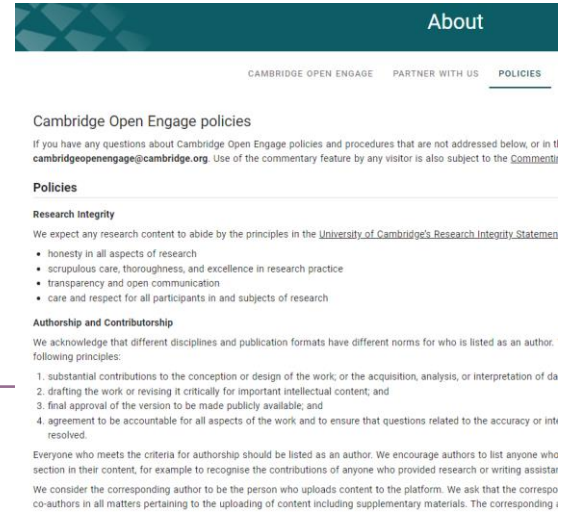
Publisher 2: Cambridge University Press





Books, journals, Elements (book/journal hybrid)

Preprints and other early research outputs



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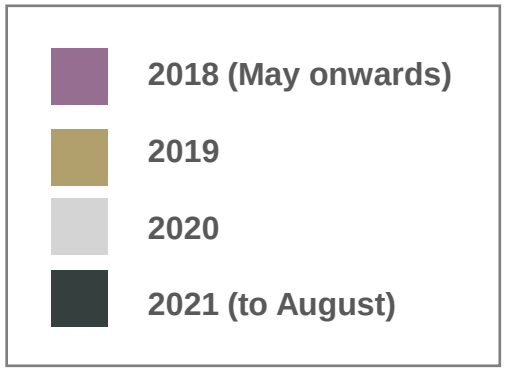
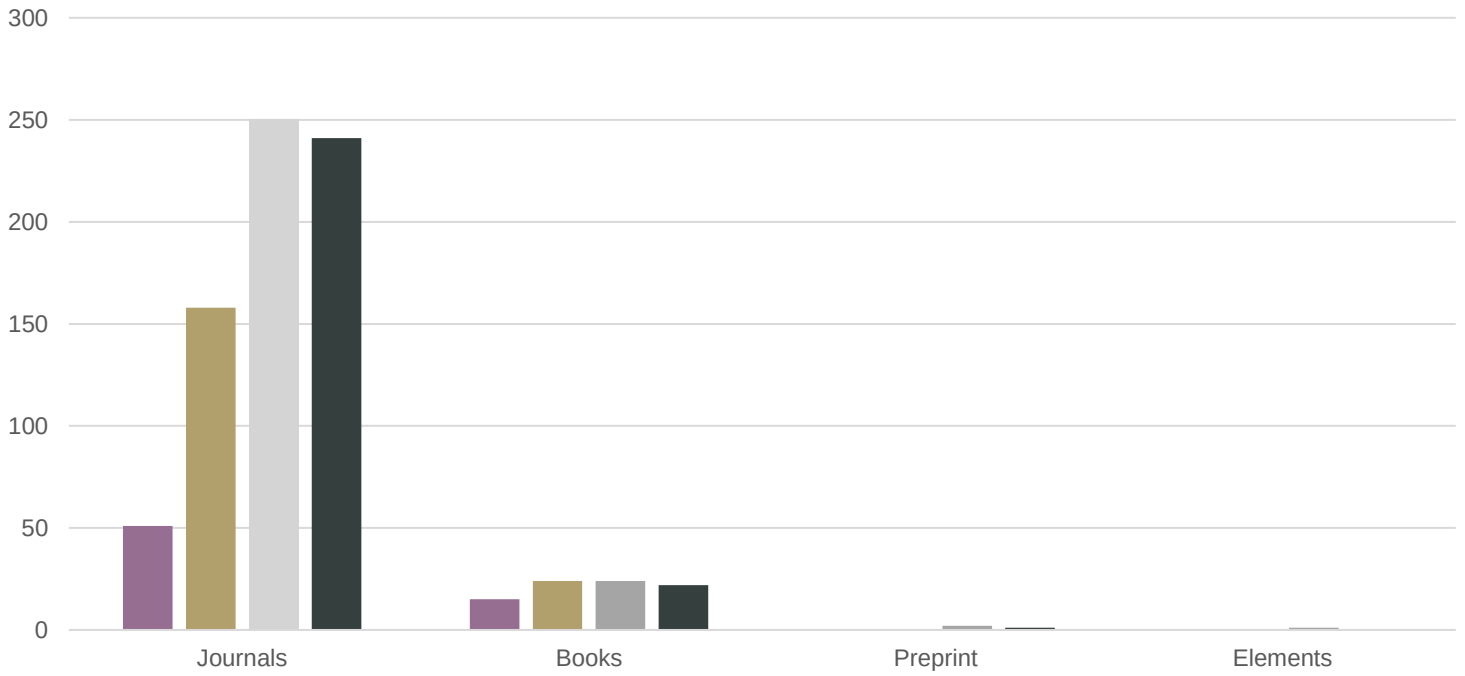
Volume of ethics cases by year and publication type





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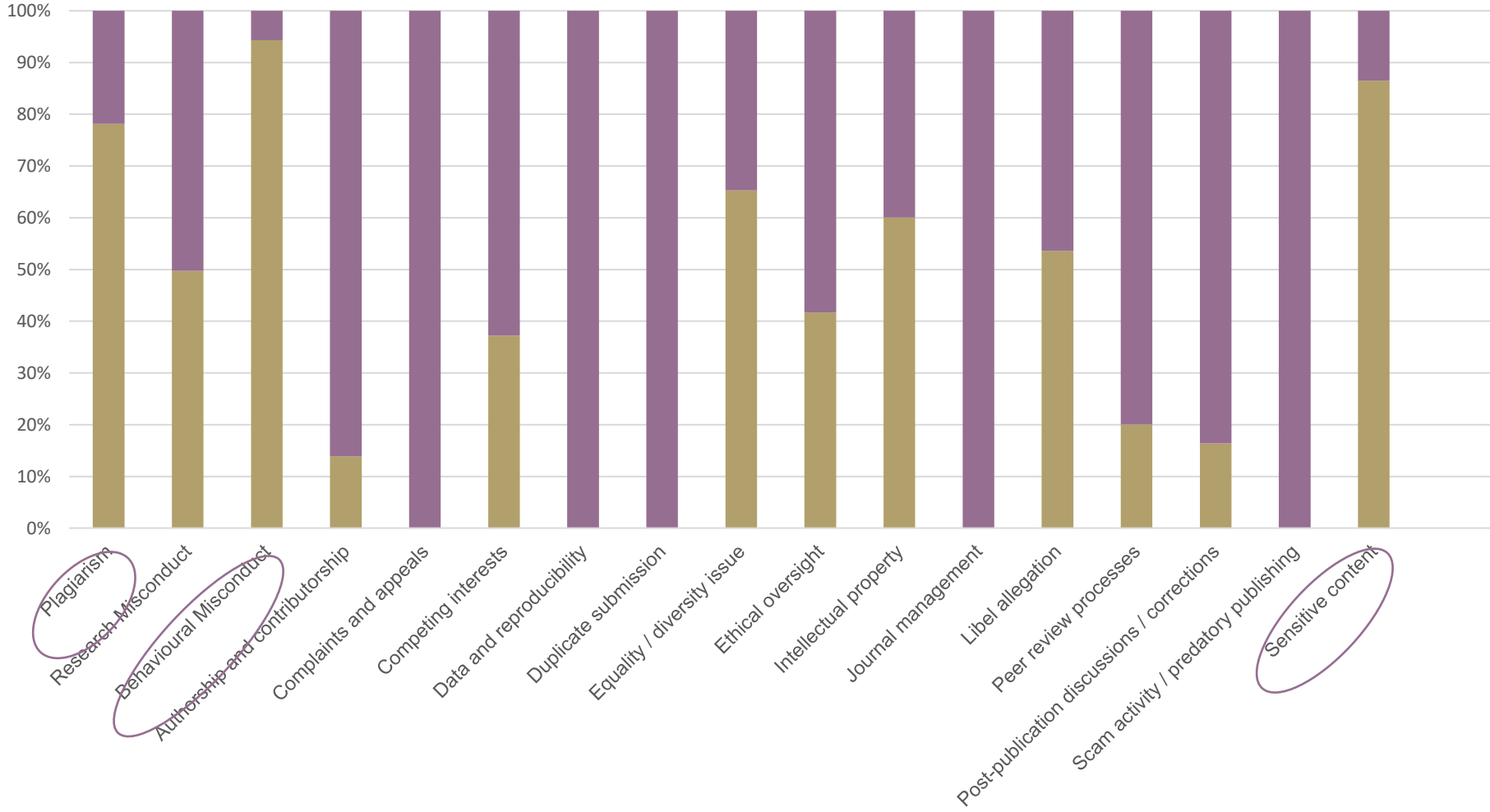
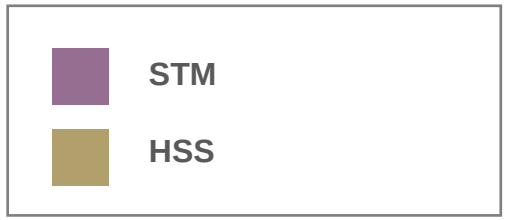
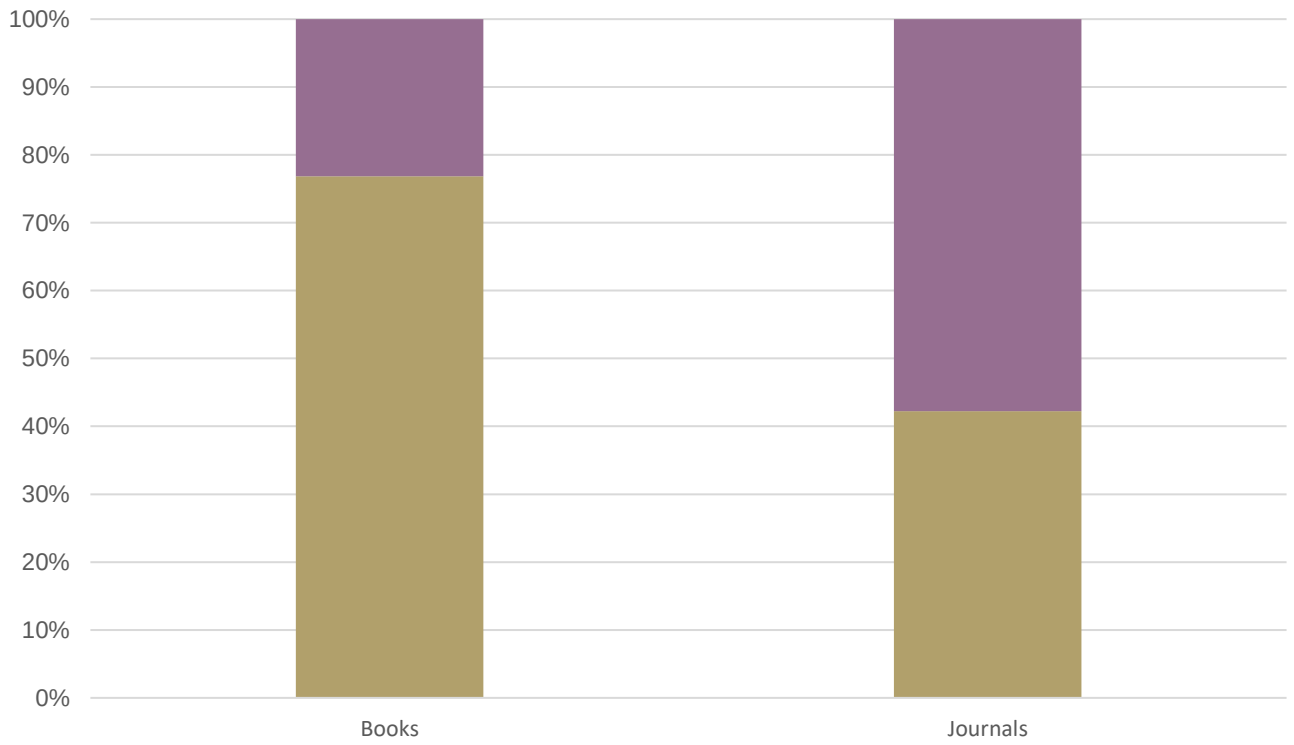
Proportion of publication ethics queries/cases: books vs journals



Proportion of books and journal cases by subject area





Conclusions

- **Seems to be consensus that there's a growing expectation of greater transparency around book publication policies and practice**
- **But less consensus around whether books and journals *should* adopt the same principles and practices**

Initial guidance based on adaptation of existing principles	Books and journals fundamentally different?*
• Retractions and corrections • Declarations (competing interests, research ethics and consent, data availability)	• Authorship • Peer review • Author behavioural misconduct • Sensitive content/language • Governance and editorial independence? • Plagiarism

*and is the difference really books? Or something else?

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