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Commentary/ Editorial

Editorial

By Randy Townsend

The first published content in the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* marks the starting line for conversations that shape the publishing industry. The idea of a student-run journal focused on publishing ethics is an exciting concept that speaks to several key areas supporting the industry. The complexity of issues that feed into misconduct and questionable behavior are often hidden behind the walls of confidentiality and historic taboos that deconstruct the publisher's brand reputation. In recent years, publishers have become more comfortable sharing experiences and agreeing on practices that present consistent interpretations of scenarios and a framework for thinking through circumstances introduced into evolving landscapes.

The students of George Washington University's Masters of Professional Studies in Publishing program share a unique vantage point, reflecting industry newcomers, experienced professionals and all segments in between. For many, the *GW Journal of Ethics* is their first opportunity to gain practical experience applying lessons they've learned in the classroom. This includes copyrights and permissions, peer review management, schedules, and deadlines.

On another hand, they are learning the business and strategy of launching and managing a journal from its inception. This involves acquiring EISSN, registering for a DOI, and understanding marketing personas and segments. Decisions about the publishing platform to use and the creation and determination of a logo design aligned with the broader university marketing guidelines are just two examples that demonstrate student input.

The tale of our journey is, indeed, interesting. With a dedicated editorial board of industry leaders, we've guided the students through discussions to establish long-term strategies. This includes a framework for cycling in future

cohorts and allowing space for them to incorporate the latest standards and features, keeping our journal and the content valuable and accessible. Much has been accomplished, but there is still much to do.

Some early contributors have already moved on in different directions, but their fingerprints will remain a part of the journal legacy. While celebrating graduations and new careers, we've welcomed new voices with new ideas that picked up and carried on.

The early support from the Society for Scholarly Publishers (SSP) demonstrates an unwavering commitment from the publishing community that is invaluable. Access and exposure position the students and contributors to expand networks, connect with industry leaders and have conversations that advance the way in which we safeguard content.

I am grateful for the many friends, colleagues, professionals, organizations, and alumni that continually express a desire to support the students and the journal. The first pieces of published content advance ethical conversations and challenge traditional 'business as usual' approaches to safeguarding content, representing contributions from students and professionals. I hope that they inspire respectful discussions that we can grow from together. I sincerely thank you for exploring our journal and invite you to consider submitting your own research, ideas, and voices to the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing*. Please continue to watch this space.

Respectfully,

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Publisher's Note

Reasons to Launch a Journal

By John W. Warren

Abstract

As we launch the new *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing*, this commentary outlines reasons for launching the journal and a brief history of its evolution to date. The journal was envisioned as a forum to publish articles, case studies, applied ethics projects, and other works on diversity and inclusion, accessibility, copyright, and other topics of ethics in publishing. Goals for the journal include providing a forum for students in the Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Publishing program at the George Washington University to publish their Ethics in Publishing capstone projects; offering graduate students an opportunity for hands-on experience managing a professional-level journal; and involving the wider community of publishing, library, media, and scholarly communication professionals and scholars in the effort, as board members, peer reviewers, authors, and readers. The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* welcomes scholarly articles and case studies presenting research about ethical issues in publishing, applied ethics articles and projects that explore ways of contributing to communities, invited editorials and commentaries, reviews of books and digital projects with a focus on ethics in publishing, and GW Ethics in Publishing Conference presentations.

Goals of the GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing

There are several reasons why an organization may decide to launch a new journal and more than a few reasons why not to do so. In our case, why launch the new *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing*? Two simple answers to that

question include: because we can, and because we hope to contribute to the publishing field.

The three overarching goals, as I began to contemplate the idea of launching a new journal focused on ethics and publishing, were to provide a forum for students in GW's Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Publishing program to publish their Ethics in Publishing capstone projects; offer our program's students an opportunity for hands-on experience managing a professional-level journal; and involve the wider community of publishing and library professionals and scholars in the effort, as board members, peer reviewers, authors, and readers.

Ethics in Publishing has been a capstone course in the MPS in Publishing program since the establishment of the program in 2006. The course has evolved over the years, and for the past several years, students in the course are charged with developing an applied ethics project, or a case study on ethics in publishing. For an applied ethics project, students conceive and implement a project with the aim of "making the world better," getting involved with their community or their workplace. For a case study, students research and write a paper on a topic such as diversity and inclusion in publishing, accessibility, etc. While the latter are closer to a traditional scholarly paper in approach, students in the former category likewise submit outstanding and significant work worthy of publication and perseveration. Notable examples in the applied ethics category include a student who wrote the first ethics statement for her organization's journal, while surveying and creating learning tools for authors and peer reviewers on publication ethics; one who launched a mentorship program for underrepresented voices in her organization; another who collected more than 200 books in a book-drive for homeless children and yet another who created several Little Free Libraries and placed them in low-income neighborhoods with diverse books for children, teens, and adults; and a student who launched an effort to teach data and design ethics to high school journalism students; among many others. In the case study category, notable examples include an outstanding study of the lack of university presses and library publishing programs among Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); an ethical, marketing, and legal argument for publishers to make comics born-accessible for visually-impaired readers; regulations pertaining to and ethical implications of unpaid internships in publishing; case studies on underexploited copyright and orphan works; and case studies on the lack of diversity in children's book publishing, among others. All these works, and many others, deserve a venue for publication.

Students entering the MPS in Publishing program come from diverse

backgrounds and levels of experience; one of the key strengths of the program is the diversity of our students, and our faculty. Some students enter the program with publishing experience, sometimes twenty or more years of professional experience, though more typically five or so; some students have experience in a field such as education, marketing, law, finance, etc.; and other students enter the program with relatively little professional experience, as recent college graduates. All our coursework emphasizes the professional application of publishing skills, with the overarching goal of preparing students for managerial and leadership positions across all publishing industry segments and specialties. Coursework emphasizes "real-world" learning, participation, group work; creative and analytical approaches, in skills and topics such as acquisitions, editing, copyright and permissions, business and management, marketing, design, production, and digital technology. For the latter two broad categories of students, those pivoting from a related field and those emerging as recent college graduates, the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* offers the opportunity to contribute professionally, gain experience and confidence, and discover new talents and passions. Students lead or contribute to committees, including the Editorial, Marketing, Strategy and Sustainability, and E-Publishing committees; one serves as Managing Editor, and one serves as a student representative on the Editorial Board.

Involving the great publishing and library community is an important goal of the journal. The Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP) agreed at the commencement to become an official sponsor of the journal, providing guidance and mentorship. We have been involving professionals on our editorial board and as peer reviewers, and we hope to find publishing and library professionals both receptive to reading the articles the journal publishes, as well as contributing as authors to this effort.

In our graduate-level publishing courses, such as Business and Publishing, Marketing Strategies, and now Publishing Entrepreneurship, we discuss the importance of the niche, or the micro-niche. "Dominate the micro-niche" is a goal I frequently mention. In this case, there are several excellent publishing journals that we read, recommend, and respect, such as the *Journal of Electronic Publishing*, *Learned Publishing*, *Publishing Research Quarterly*, and *Information, Medium, and Society: Journal of Publishing Studies* (formerly *International Journal of the Book*), among others. All of these publish articles about ethical issues in publishing. Naturally, there are also numerous journals of ethics, including *Ethics*, *The Journal of Ethics*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *Ethics and Information Society*, etc. Most of these would likewise consider publishing articles on ethical issues in publishing, of which there

are many. There are also outstanding organizations working and contributing to the field, in particular COPE, which for twenty-five years has worked to build a community and bolster support, education, and debate in publication ethics, and publishes invaluable case studies, and other resources, on the topic. Professional organizations such as SSP, the Association of University Presses (AUPresses), the Library Publishing Coalition, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), the Council of Science Editors (CSE), Association Media & Publishing Network, and many others, have committees or task forces, and conduct advocacy, for diversity and inclusion and other ethical issues in publishing. Most recently, the Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly Publishing (C4DISC; https://c4disc.org/) is conducting important work in this area, including the creation of Toolkits for Equity on antiracism and disabilities. Alongside this significant work, our new journal is the only one specifically focused on ethics in publishing.

Beginnings of the GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing

Looking back at my now more than 1,100 emails that mention the topic, I started gestating the idea of launching this new journal back in late 2019, as I was preparing to relaunch the GW Ethics in Publishing Conference. The conference was part of the capstone Ethics in Publishing course, a requirement of the Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Publishing program, and was organized by the previous director, Arnie Grossblatt, for nine years, until 2016. The conference was attended primarily by students; publishing experts spoke about different aspects of publishing ethics, and the students were required to write a capstone, a sort of mini thesis, on a topic that was meaningful to them. As the MPS in Publishing program went online in 2012, and as the online program grew, few people attended the annual conference and for this and other reasons it was discontinued. I became the program's director after Arnie retired in 2018, and among my goals was to re-launch the conference, and transform it into an event for the publishing and library communities, writ large. One issue I discovered around the previous conference was a lack of documentation surrounding most of the conference's session topics and presenters. With some previous experience publishing conference proceedings, the idea of using a new journal to preserve and document the conference proceedings was an important consideration. With the help of co-organizer Puja Telikicherla, professor in the MPS in Publishing program and licensing and subsidiary

rights manager at the American Psychiatric Association, we relaunched the Ethics in Publishing Conference as an online event in 2020 and 2021, and are looking forward to hosting it again in 2022.

For the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing*, an initial Call for Papers was open to submissions, in a "soft launch," beginning in early 2020, welcoming "articles, case studies, and conference presentations from scholars, students, and publishing professionals on topics including, but not limited to, diversity and inclusion, accessibility, peer review, open access, sustainability, publishing metrics, equity, and other aspects and issues of ethics in publishing." In addition to the goals discussed in the section above, another impetus for the Call for Papers was a new course, Editing Special Projects, which I had conceived to offer students practice and practical experience in editing and peer review for both book and journal projects, with assignments and activities encompassing actual, on-the-job work in editing and peer review, and, as much as possible, leading to publication. As publishing professionals, many of us spend significant time managing the peer review process, yet at the same time, many publishing professionals have little or no experience conducting peer review of an article. This course was designed in part for that purpose, providing students with opportunities to conduct positive, helpful peer review feedback based on values of equity, openness, collegiality, respect, quality, and community. During the course, students also contribute to the development and refinement of the journal's peer review guidelines.

In April 2020, I put out a call for nominations for an inaugural Editor-in-Chief and formed a search committee with students and alumni of the publishing program and a College of Professional Studies colleague. Serving with me on this committee were Aliza Becker, Managing Editor, MediaSphere Medical, MPS Publishing graduate 2020; Tiffany Clark, Editorial and Social Media Specialist, American Society of Hematology, MPS Publishing graduate 2020; Emily Everhart, Associate Product Manager at National Geographic, MPS Publishing graduate 2019; and Johanna Galt, Faculty Affairs Specialist, College of Professional Studies, Master's in Higher Education graduate, 2020. The emerging COVID-19 pandemic delayed our progress somewhat, but we nevertheless received several excellent nominations, interviewed four finalists, and selected Randy Townsend—graduate of the MPS in Publishing program (2011) and then-Manager of Publishing Operations at the American Geophysical Union, now Director of Publishing Operations at PLOS—as our new EIC, in October 2020. Randy, a publishing leader with significant contributions to the field with SSP, CSE, and other organizations, also joined our faculty to teach the Ethics in Publishing course.

Randy moved quickly to appoint an editorial board and to refine the mission and vision of the journal. Joining the editorial board, in January 2021, were Lois Jones, a 2014 graduate of the MPS in Publishing program and then-Peer Review Manager (now Director) for the Journals Department at the American Psychological Association (APA); Josephine E. Sciortino, a 2019 graduate of the MPS in Publishing Program, professor of the program's The Professional Editor course, and Managing Editor at Canadian Science Publishing; and Julie T. Vo, Editorial Manager for JAMA Pediatrics. Soon thereafter, in February 2021, Gabrielle Bethancourt was appointed the student representative to the journal's editorial board.

Randy and I worked together to recruit student volunteers to form and serve on four committees, and in May 2021, four committees were formed: an Editorial Committee, led by Giuliana Macaluso; a Marketing Committee, led by Emily Hatcher; an E-Publishing Committee, led by Jeremy Ottley, and a Strategy and Sustainability Committee, led by Ashley Warren. Over the next several months, the committee leads and members, the editorial board, EIC, and others worked to define and establish the new journal.

The journal committees, editorial board, EIC, and I undertook an evaluation of publishing platforms for the journal, in June-July 2021. We evaluated the Manifold platform (https://manifoldapp.org/), developed by the University of Minnesota Press, the CUNY Graduate Center's Digital Scholarship Lab, and Cast Iron Coding, with a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; as well as PubPub (https://www.pubpub.org/), developed by MIT Press, the MIT Media Lab, and Knowledge Futures Group. After deliberation, with meetings and presentations from representatives of both platforms, we chose Manifold. GW's Publishing program was initially selected as a participant in Manifold's pilot program, in June 2019, and we have continued to use the platform for e-publishing courses, to publish the new journal, and the Ethics in Publishing Conference proceedings.

In November 2021, committee leads and membership were refreshed as students graduated or took other responsibilities. Ashley Warren was selected as our new managing editor, Aimar Galarza assumed responsibilities for the editorial committee as well as student representative on the editorial board, Donna Prideaux became lead of the marketing committee, Julie McClenahan became lead of the e-publishing committee, and Madison Neuner became the strategy and sustainability committee lead.

Scope of the GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing

The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* solicits and accepts papers from publishing and library professionals, scholars, faculty, and publishing students in five main categories of articles:

- Scholarly articles and case studies presenting research about ethical issues in publishing
- Applied ethics, "Making the World Better" articles and projects that explore ways of contributing to communities, including local, regional, or global publishing communities or other communities on aspects of publishing, literacy, and so on
- Invited editorials and commentaries
- Reviews of books, websites, digital projects, and other web resources with a focus or considerable aspect of ethics in publishing.
- GW Ethics in Publishing Conference presentations

Scholarly articles, case studies, and "Making the World Better" projects are generally subject to peer review, except for invited editorials. Peer review will generally comprise "Anonymous Reviewer/Anonymous Author" peer review (i.e., double-masked, wherein neither the author nor the reviewer knows each other's identity), but we also plan to experiment, with authors' permission, in open peer review and alternative forms of peer review. We invite alumni of and current students in the GW Master of Professional Studies in Publishing program to submit their Ethics in Publishing Capstone projects, including both "Making the World Better" projects and Case Studies. Papers from underrepresented voices are especially encouraged. We also welcome and encourage innovative forms of scholarship, such as video or audio recordings, podcasts, or narratives, which can exploit the flexible, multimedia capabilities of the Manifold publishing platform.

We intend the journal to be broad in scope, and invite papers from publishing, library, and media professionals, scholars, and students on topic areas such as:

- Ways to ensure publishing is inclusive: in all its dimensions.
- Making sure diverse voices are part of the conversation about inclusion, equity, and accessibility.
- Work to ensure peer review, authorship, editing, publications metrics, etc., are equitable and free of bias.

- Can equitable, inclusive, and accessible publishing become a reality instead of a goal?
- Institutional efforts to increase diversity, for example, within the Association of University Press (AUPresses), Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP), and other publishing institutions.
- Financial equity and sustainability, including institutional support, and access to research and publications, as ethical issues.
- Accessibility as an ethical issue.
- How publishers can ensure publications are more accessible.

The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* also requires that all published articles meet basic digital accessibility standards for visual resources. Papers accepted for publication that include images, charts, videos, or other visual assets must include alt-text (or long descriptions) for each visual asset, as well as appropriate captions. For more information on the basic principles of describing visual resources for accessibility in arts and humanities publications, please visit Describing Visual Resources.

Looking Forward

As we work to establish and publish the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing*, we expect it to evolve over time. We invite your contributions of articles and projects as described above, as well as your suggestions for additional types of articles and projects on topics of ethics in publishing. MPS in Publishing students and committees, faculty, and the editorial board will continue to refine our journal's mission and strategy, our peer review guidelines, and our outreach. Work remains on editorial processes, e-publishing workflows, identifiers, and indexing, providing additional avenues for students to gain experience. An aspect of this student-managed journal is identifying and recognizing how much guidance and direction students need or appreciate, as they build confidence and experience in the field of scholarly publishing.

As we publish our initial articles, we still have much work to do, and we welcome your contributions, collaboration, and active participation.

Author Bio

John W. Warren (he/his), Director and Associate Professor, Master of Professional Studies in Publishing, George Washington University, formerly held the positions of director of the George Mason University Press; marketing and sales director at Georgetown University Press; and director of marketing,

publications at the RAND Corporation. He has a master's in international management from the School of Public Policy and Strategy at the University of California, San Diego. He is also a classical guitarist and composer and writes about guitar technique, composition, and improvisation. Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese, John is a frequent speaker at international conferences and has authored several articles on digital publishing and other topics.

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Articles

The Ethical Imperative of the University Press

By Peter Berkery (he/him), Executive Director, Association of University Presses (AUPresses) and Annette Windhorn (she/her), External Communications Manager, Association of University Presses (AUPresses)

Abstract

University presses are unlike other publishers in a number of ways; arguably, one of the most important distinctions is a unique relationship to the ethical implications of our actions. This article, based on a presentation to the GW Conference on Ethics in Publishing in fall 2020, uses the strategic planning process through which the leadership of the Association of University Presses (AUPresses) identified and iteratively defined our community's four core values as a lens to examine our community's ethical imperatives. We'll focus on how ethical considerations, particularly with regard to diversity, inclusion, and equity, have informed those values and how the Association and our individual members are putting our values in action.

Introduction

AUPresses currently comprises 158 member presses in 17 countries, 100 of which are affiliated with US colleges and universities (Association of University Presses, 2021). Our member presses published more than 12,000 new books and 1,500 journals in 2021 alone, with more than 330,000 titles in print. The business of the Association is carried out by 21 committees and task forc-

es (AUPresses, 2021a), a 13-member Board of Directors (AUPresses, 2021b), and 7 central office staff (AUPresses, 2021c).

Fundamentally, AUPresses is a mission-driven, professional community. As a community, the leaders, volunteers, and staff work collaboratively with each other and with member presses and press staff, home institutions, authors, scholarly and general readers, freelancers, booksellers, service vendors, journalists and reviewers, and other associations and scholarly groups.

Mindful of these reference points and relationships, the Association's Board of Directors set out in 2014 to articulate our identity and values, set our goals as a community, and create a new strategic plan.

Mission Statement

There's no single right way to craft a strategic plan, but all good strategic plans include a mission statement. The Association's is: "AUPresses advances the essential role of a global community of publishers whose mission is to ensure academic excellence and cultivate knowledge." As we discuss in this paper, the key concepts of our mission are profoundly shaped by our understanding and pursuit of diversity, inclusion, and equity: Who is included in "community," what constitutes academic excellence, and how is knowledge cultivated? All of these concepts merit continuing interrogation.

Top-Level Goals

Another critical step in strategic planning is the setting of top-level goals. Together, the Association's Board and staff identified these:

- Advocacy – to increase the visibility of our members and their work
- Collaboration – to build membership and to foster internal and external partnerships
- Research – to provide data and analysis to support advocacy and to inform publishing operations and new business models
- Education – to provide professional development leadership training
- Infrastructure – to support the Association's goals with sustainable, flexible, and robust financial and technological infrastructure

The pursuit of these goals has guided the Association's activities since their adoption in 2014. Upon revisiting the strategic plan in early 2019, our Board and staff agreed that the infrastructure goal had been largely achieved—most visibly through key technology upgrades as well as our redesigned public

website and new member collaboration and discussion space, UP Commons. While maintaining robust, carefully crafted, and agile infrastructure will continue to be important to the Association, we felt that infrastructure no longer needed to be the focus of a stand-alone strategic goal.

Core values

Core values are another essential component of any strategic plan, offering guiding principles and touchstones for a community's work. Coming out of the 2014 exercise, ours were:

- Intellectual freedom
- Integrity
- Stewardship
- Diversity

AUPresses has continued to devote a good bit of care and thought to refining our understanding of the principles that define our community and the ethics of our practices. In fall 2019, our Board members revisited these core values, with the goal of more fully defining what each meant to our community and how each was enacted in university press publishing work. We presented this value definition to our wider membership during the 2020 Annual Meeting via a graphic illustration (Fig. 1), a compass of co-equal, interrelated quadrants.

Figure 1: AUPresses, "Our Core Values"

The ongoing process of review and reconsideration is as central to value-setting as it is to scholarship, and its impact is particularly clear when we look at how it has affected how we conceive one of our core values. Originally labeled "Diversity," in 2019 we renamed this value to encompass "Diversity and Inclusion," intending to highlight our growing understanding of the real work that must underlie any appearance of diversity. Diversity is image-based, representational, and easily quantifiable, while inclusion aims to embrace, engage, and empower formerly excluded individuals. Further, as our volunteer leaders on the Board and in our committees have continued to do critical work in this area, they are increasingly expressing that work, and seeking to measure its outcomes, in terms of equity and justice. As Professor Dafina-Lazarus Stewart succinctly described in *Inside Higher Ed*, equity and justice work operates on a systemic level, aiming to revise abusive systems, increase support for people who have been targeted, and eliminate policies and practices that have disparate impacts on minoritized groups (Stewart, 2017). While we acknowledge that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is the standard descriptor, we'll use equity, justice, and inclusion (EJI) in this article instead, to indicate more clearly where our community's sights are set and how much there is yet to do to affect real and lasting change. It is worth noting that our current committee charged with guiding this important work is called the "Equity, Justice, and Inclusion Committee," perhaps forecasting yet another refinement of this core value.

At the outset it is essential to recognize what is baked into "we," the subject of each value-defining statement in this paper. Because these statements were proposed and workshopped by our Board members, in person and in a lovely, sun-filled conference room, the "we" construction arose quite organically: "we" represented those individual leaders, thinking and planning on behalf of our member presses and their staff worldwide. Referencing "we" in these statements also recognizes that many individuals, mostly volunteer leaders in press working groups and Association committees and task forces, are essential to enacting the group's shared values at member presses and at the Association level.

But it is also crucial to acknowledge from the outset that our "we" is not diverse. Systemic racism pervades our industry and the academy, and actively limits participation by all. The university press segment of the Lee & Low Books Diversity Baseline Survey (DBS 2.0) in 2019—comprising 35 publishers and more than 900 individual staff responses—shows a workforce that is even whiter than the full Lee & Low DBS 2.0 surveyed landscape (81% vs. 76%) and is 64% cis female, 79% straight-identifying, and 88% non-disabled (AUPresses, 2021d). These data demand that AUPresses and our members acknowledge and address this imbalance and build new practices to support eq-

uitable knowledge production. It is imperative to cultivate continual awareness of who "we" are and how that "we" requires intentional and sustained expansion.

The remainder of this paper focuses on unpacking how these considerations undergird each core value and can inform ethical actions springing from them.

Intellectual Freedom

> "We promote the free exchange of ideas, the unfettered pursuit of scholarly inquiry, the emergence and evaluation of new theories, and the expansion of human knowledge. We champion the freedom to think, research, publish, and read as pillars of an open and just society."
>
> —AUPRESSES, OUR CORE VALUES

Embracing the value of intellectual freedom is a natural foundation for a community like ours that prioritizes the cultivation and advancement of knowledge. At the Association level, we regularly add our community's voice(s) as scholarly, mission-driven publishers in defense of intellectual freedom. Most recently, we have defended the freedom to think and read by denouncing the propagandistic report of the White House's 1776 Commission (AUPresses, 2021e) and condemning the White House Executive Order on Race and Gender Stereotyping (AUPresses, 2020a), which would have implemented a fundamentally misleading prohibition on the acknowledgment of systemic racism in the US. We've protested instances of academic censorship, as when Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube refused to provide a streaming platform for an online roundtable at San Francisco State University that included a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (AUPresses, 2020b). We've also encouraged all who support the publication of open access scholarship to recognize the needs of multiple and diverse constituencies, including researchers, authors,

and readers who may face unequal access to digital technologies, institutional infrastructure, and funding (AUPresses, 2019).

Our member presses are engaged daily in defending the right to think, research, publish, and read. The EJI dimension to our intellectual freedom value is perhaps most compellingly demonstrated by the way that mission-driven university presses advance knowledge by championing new authors, ideas, and communities. Groundbreaking thought, especially in interdisciplinary or intersectional fields and beyond the scope of mainstream publishing, has long been fostered by university presses. For example, the University of Arizona Press—along with the University of Minnesota Press, the University of North Carolina Press, and the Oregon State University Press—began collaboratively publishing the first books in Indigenous studies in 2009, just as that field was emerging. Since 2014, Duke University Press's *Transgender Studies Quarterly* has published interdisciplinary work that explores the diversity of gender, sexuality, and identity in ways not addressed by medical studies or feminist and queer scholarship. Most recently, the MIT Press and Penn State University Press have amplified the emergence of new ideas at the intersection of science, medicine, art, and design.

Integrity

> "We conduct our work ethically and honestly, earning and sustaining the trust of our authors, our readers, and our institutions. We establish best practices in peer review to ensure rigor and reliability in the scholarly record."
>
> —AUPRESSES, OUR CORE VALUES

Our integrity as member presses and as a community is drawn directly from the ethical manner in which we conduct our work of discovery, publication, and promotion with a variety of stakeholders, earning and re-earning their trust through transparent processes and communication. Ongoing attention, evaluation, and advancement of best scholarly publishing practices—through

the work of hundreds of volunteers and widespread member participation in AUPresses webinars, listservs, and UP Commons discussion groups—are essential to maintaining our professional integrity and transparency. The Association's participation in the broader scholarly communications community also advances this work, through membership in the International Publishers Association and the Book Industry Study Group and in frequent collaborative projects with the Association of American Universities and the Association of Research Libraries, among others.

Conducting the work of scholarly publishing honestly also means acknowledging underlying biases. Association members are particularly mindful of the vestiges of privilege and systemic racism that lurk in scholarly editorial processes as they collaborate to improve standard practices. For example, virtual conversations on diversity and trust in peer review, hosted by our Acquisitions Editorial Committee as part of recent, international Peer Review Week observances, have provided spaces for needed discussion and evaluation of this distinguishing feature of university press publishing. Currently, this committee is iteratively engaging in the revision of Best Practices for Peer Review, an influential and public-facing resource.

The Association and its members also support and advance integrity in scholarly publishing by establishing ethical codes of conduct and encouraging their widespread development and use throughout our community. These documents—e.g., from AUPresses, the American Historical Association, the University of North Carolina Press, and Princeton University Press—establish parameters of conduct, civility, respect, and professionalism, and protect all by creating a common language and set of expectations.

Stewardship

It is customary to consider stewardship as primarily pertaining to natural and financial resources. Design and production professionals in our community have long taken environmental stewardship concerns seriously, carefully evaluating and making smart and sustainable choices with regard to paper, ink, and, increasingly, digital means of publishing. The entire staff of each member press also works together to make myriad financial decisions as good stewards of their parent institution's financial support. (For a more robust discussion of this aspect of university press stewardship, see "Why a University Press is a Good Investment," (Pratt and Doerr, 2019)).

EJI concerns become visible in this core value when we envision the ways that university presses act as good stewards of a richer and more inclusive

scholarly record. Every day, university press professionals painstakingly evaluate, contract with, and edit authors; skillfully produce and publish their work, often in elegant form and multiple formats; and connect their ideas with both the scholarly community and the wider world. Considering demographic information about their authors, peer reviewers, and freelancers, and explicitly seeking to expand those talent pools is a starting place for many of our members. Notably, some are also creating entirely new publishing models with a focus on the collaborative, equitable preservation and sharing of knowledge, such as Ravenspace, developed by the University of British Columbia Press, Indigenous communities, and other partners, including the University of Washington Press.

> "We invest resources mindfully in the development and dissemination of scholarship, respecting the fundamental labor of publishing and conscious of our responsibilities as global citizens. We amplify authors' voices, and work to advance and preserve an inclusive scholarly record."
>
> —AUPRESSES, OUR CORE VALUES

As an international community of publishers contributing to the global knowledge ecosystem (the multilingual expressions of our mission statement present just a few of the languages spoken, written, and published by our member presses and their authors), the Association's good stewardship also means facilitating equitable, transnational dialogue and exchange of scholarly publishing knowledge. The recently launched AUPresses Global Partner Program is the latest example of this approach to stewardship. During its pilot year, the program paired member presses Duke University Press in the US and Liverpool University Press in the UK with nonmember presses African Minds in South Africa and Makerere University Press in Uganda, respectively, for direct interaction; it will also include nonmember press staff in Association's online

discussion groups, webinars, and annual meetings and offer them access to AUPresses online professional resources.

With respect to valuing and stewarding the labor of publishing, the Association provides resources for developing staff potential in the form of numerous professional education opportunities—including webinars, rich annual meeting programming, and multiple residency programs—as well as comparative, anonymized salary data by job title that enables informed conversations about equitable compensation. It also advocates for the recognition and proper valuation of those skills and labor as the larger scholarly community contemplates the sustainability of open access publishing initiatives.

Diversity and Inclusion

Above, we've addressed the ways that a deepening awareness of equity, justice, and inclusion in our industry inform our community's ethical actions and can be understood to advance all of our core values. So why maintain diversity and inclusion as a separate core value? (Remember, strategic plans are living documents; goals can be achieved and sunsetted; and values' names and aims can be reviewed and brought into sharper focus, while their underlying principles are unchanging.)

Quite simply, continuing to explicitly situate diversity and inclusion as a core value is important because AUPresses as a professional association and our individual member presses are not yet diverse, inclusive, or equitable. Retaining diversity and inclusion as a core value motivates all of us to continue to focus the requisite thought, energy, and resources on integrating equity, justice, diversity, and inclusion into every aspect of scholarly publishing.

As an Association, we've begun grounding this hard work of change in anti-racism, as articulated in the Association's Statement of Equity and Anti-Racism—proposed and painstakingly drafted by our 2017-2018 Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, peer-reviewed by our 2019-2020 Equity, Justice, and Inclusion Committee, and adopted by our Board in 2020. The anti-racist lens recognizes pervasive and devastating impacts of structural racism and white supremacy across virtually every aspect of the publishing industry, higher education, and society itself. It concludes that our most-lasting solutions will "protect and lift up those who have been historically harmed and silenced by our collective inaction" (AUPresses, 2020c).

In addition to helping to recast our diversity and inclusion efforts toward equity, justice, and anti-racism, the dedicated members on our EJI Committee are identifying common needs across our community, collecting best practices

to share, and committing to host difficult conversations, locally and via Association-sponsored webinars. Among this group's signal contributions so far: a year-long series of webinars aimed at activating press directors in EJI work, set in motion in response to feedback from press staff members that press leaders were not yet fully engaged in or equipped to tackle EJI issues. The first of these directors' webinars, held last fall, discussed and processed training that our Board of Directors, Central Office staff, and many member press directors received from the Racial Equity Institute, LLC—a data-rich analysis of the devastating impacts of structural racism. Subsequent directors' webinars have examined and discussed the implementation of the *Antiracist Toolkit for Allies*, which was developed by a team including several university press staff members and published by the international Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly Publishing, of which AUPresses is a founding member.

> "We strive to give voice to the breadth of human knowledge and experience. We recognize, value, and encourage diversity among our community and partners as part of our ongoing commitment to equity, justice, and inclusion."
>
> —AUPRESSES, OUR CORE VALUES)

Our EJI Committee also has organized several informative Community Reads, in which all member press staffers are encouraged to read a designated book, selected from member press suggestions, and subsequently gather and discuss the insights it raises. Books engaged thus far have been *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo (2018), *Invisible People* by Alex Tizon (2020), and *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter* by Daniel Heath Justice (2018).

Mindful that accessibility also contributes to a diverse and inclusive community, and of the acute need to improve our individual and collective performance in this area, the Association also has worked to make our own resources and programming accessible, with live captioning now standard at virtual Association-sponsored events. In addition, our committees are assisting

member presses with understanding and meeting publication accessibility requirements and best practices: for example, the 2019 Annual Meeting Program Committee organized several sessions on accessibility, including "Creating and Using Accessible Scholarly Ebooks" (AUPresses, 2020d), and the current Digital Publishing Committee is developing and annotating a list of resources for accessible publishing.

The Association and its members also acknowledge that, after years of talking about and seeking diversity, more must be done to both introduce individuals from a wider variety of backgrounds to potential careers in scholarly publishing and also retain these individuals over a career. To this end, AUPresses no longer accepts ads for unpaid internships on its job-listing site, understanding that unpaid positions unduly privilege students and early-career professionals who have the means to volunteer their time and labor without compensation. Of equal importance, the presses that are currently participating in the second 3-year cycle of the Mellon University Press Diversity Fellowship Program are attempting to apply early lessons to the persistent issue of longer-term retention. (Read more about the Association's diversity and inclusion efforts thus far in "Towards Inclusive Scholarly Publishing," (Coggins et al., 2020).)

Conclusion

Supporting ethical imperatives, especially but not exclusively with regard to EJI considerations, requires deliberate attention and review. Essential first steps include introspection, owning privilege, and acknowledging systemic bias that is pervasive throughout the scholarly publishing community, and indeed, throughout much of higher education. It is then possible to define community itself as well as methods of community engagement that are likely to be most productive and beneficial. And finally, ethical work requires the articulation and application of flexible tactics in all areas of agency—among individuals, at presses and institutions, on national and even international scales—and ultimately the establishment of new norms for scholarly publishing. On their own, as participants in their parent institutions' work and planning, and as members of this Association, university presses and their staff have important roles to play in the construction and adoption of robust ethical goals and just strategies that will improve and advance the global knowledge ecosystem.

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Addressing the Continued Circulation of Retracted Research as a Design Problem

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Abstract

In this article, we discuss the continued circulation and use of retracted science as a complex problem: Multiple stakeholders throughout the publishing ecosystem hold competing perceptions of this problem and its possible solutions. We describe how we used a participatory design process model to co-develop recommendations for addressing this problem with stakeholders in the Alfred P. Sloan-funded project, *Reducing the Inadvertent Spread of Retracted Science* (RISRS). After introducing the four core RISRS recommendations, we discuss how the issue of retraction-related stigma gives rise to recommendation #4, *Educate stakeholders about retraction and pre- and post-publication stewardship of the scholarly record*. This recommendation is important for training publishing professionals and realizing this recommendation will require further collaborative design work across scholarly communications. We highlight ongoing stakeholder work which is now re-starting the design cycle. We conclude with a discussion of ongoing activities facilitating uptake and refinement of RISRS research and the implementation agenda.

Introduction

In this paper, we present a case study of a multi-stakeholder, action-oriented research project related to ethics in publishing. The project, *Reducing the Inadvertent Spread of Retracted Science: Shaping a Research and Implementation Agenda* (RISRS), was funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation from 2020-2022. As its name suggests, the goal of the project was to develop an actionable agenda for handling the continued spread of retracted research.

This case study has two aims. First, it presents one possible process model for stakeholder-engaged projects in scholarly publishing. This highlights our thinking in developing the project, based on concepts such as sociotechnical systems (Topi, Tucker, and Tucker 2014) and wicked problems (Rittel and Webber 1973), which we believe may be broadly relevant to scholarly publishing. Second, it presents selected outcomes of the project, with particular attention to two recommendations relevant to publishing professionals.

Below, we first describe retraction as a social and technical problem; the continued citation and use of retracted publications; and how wicked problems can be addressed through a participatory design process model. Then, we discuss our case study and how it instantiated the participatory design process model. We then discuss the findings from and outcomes of our case study, with attention to the problem redefinition process which led to our core recommendations. We then detail one particular recommendation regarding the need for stakeholder education, which arose from reframing the relationship between stigma, prestige and stewardship of the scholarly record. We close the paper by discussing ongoing activities facilitating uptake of RISRS research and the implementation agenda, limitations, and a summary of the paper.

Retraction as a Social and Technical Problem

Retraction apprises readers about unreliable material, effectively removing from the scholarly record (while generally leaving publicly accessible) articles that are deemed to be unreliable or seriously flawed whether due to honest error or misconduct.

Since the 1980's, retraction of scientific articles has been publicly recognized as a problem affecting the integrity of the scientific record (Lewin 1989; Culliton 1988; Shapiro and Charrow 1989), often framed as driven by falsification, fabrication, and/or plagiarism. In short order, several efforts

to ameliorate misconduct followed: in the U.S. Congress (Anderson 1992b; 1992a); through the efforts of editors to innovate in publishing practice (Woolf 1987; Ancker 2004); and more recently, through clarifying the role of research integrity offices in the retraction process (Collaborative Working Group from the conference "Keeping the Pool Clean: Prevention and Management of Misconduct Related Retractions" 2018; Wager et al. 2021). Since 2010, in a direct public intervention, the blog Retraction Watch, has reported on retraction, and in October 2018, Retraction Watch released a comprehensive database of all known retractions (Brainard 2018), which, as of late 2021, contains more than 30,000 items (Retraction Watch 2021). Retraction Watch has broadened public understanding of retraction as a phenomenon by highlighting the limited publicity that many retractions received, the widespread impacts of retraction, and the continued circulation of retracted materials.

Continued Citation and Use of Retracted Research

Retracted publications may be perpetuated into the scientific publication network via citations and distribution of the publication, both before and after retraction, which inadvertently propagates the reliance on publications that have been deemed as problematic. Citations to retracted publications should document that retracted status. Continuing to cite retracted publications without that awareness can propagate errors for generations of scientific literature (Schneider et al. 2020; van der Vet and Nijveen 2016). It can also cause problems in evidence synthesis, when retracted publications are cited as evidence in systematic reviews (Gray et al. 2018). The guidelines of the 2019 Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) mention that systematic reviews must consider correction or retraction following the retraction of a publication they synthesize (COPE Council 2019), since retraction may change the evidence base (Wiedermann 2018).

We distinguish two aspects of citation: whether or not citing authors were aware of the retraction and whether a citation is positive or negative. Negative citations[1] and citations documenting retraction status(es) only account for a small fraction of post-retraction citations. In a large-scale study of the PubMed Central database, Hsiao and Schneider found that only 6% of post-retraction citations in biomedicine showed awareness of the retraction (Hsiao and

1. A negative citation "disputes, corrects or questions, or negatively evaluates cited work" (Suelzer et al. 2019).

Schneider 2021). Citations that are not retracted at the time of manuscript authoring could subsequently become retracted; and generally, authors may not be aware of the retraction.

Researchers do find legitimate reasons to cite retracted publications (Hsiao and Schneider 2021); most commonly to provide related work but also for other reasons, including to provide an example of problematic science, to describe work being reproduced, or to justify exclusion from a systematic review or meta-analysis.

More often, however, citations do not show awareness of the retraction. To address this situation, Fu and Schneider (2020) developed a formal approach called the keystone framework, which combines argumentation theory, argument-based modeling of a scientific publication, and citation content analysis. It enables users to differentiate citations that do not impact the validity of the citing paper from citations that do impact the validity of said paper. In the former case, a mark can be placed next to the citation so that readers will be informed of the potential validity issues with the citation contexts. However, in the latter case, the validity of the entire citing paper is called into question. Additional measures (e.g., alerting authors to double-check their results) need to be taken to prevent science being built on "shaky" or "absent shoulders" (Azoulay et al. 2015).

High-profile retractions are more likely to be explicitly marked or used appropriately, when cited. Two COVID-19-related papers that were quickly retracted from the *Lancet* and the *New England Journal of Medicine* were heavily cited; but investigative journalist Charles Piller deemed only about half of the citations inappropriate (Piller 2021). The Wakefield autism/MMR paper was partially retracted in 2004 and fully retracted in 2010; most citations are negative (Suelzer et al. 2019) and more recent citations are more likely to mention the retraction (Suelzer et al. 2019). There is also limited evidence that, in high-profile retraction cases, publicity reduces post-retraction citation (Mott, Fairhurst, and Torgerson 2019).

Researchers have speculated that, beyond mass media attention, some features of the information environment may impact the extent to which researchers notice retraction. Balhara & Mishra (2014) found that the lack of a freely available retraction notice led to a statistically significant increase in post-retraction citations. In a case study of one retracted paper that has been repeatedly cited 11 years after its retraction for data falsification, Schneider et al. (2020) documented the difficulty of finding the retraction notice using database metadata and library link resolvers. Moreover, researchers outside a field tend to be more prone to citing

retracted publications than researchers inside the field (Bornemann-Cimenti, Szilagyi, and Sandner-Kiesling 2016). Even when retractions are well-marked on the publisher's website, there is significant variation in display (for examples, see Appendix A, page 6 in Suelzer, Deal, and Hanus 2020; Suelzer et al. 2021).

If authors copy references from others without checking the original paper or retrieving papers from unofficial channels (e.g., pirate copy sites, self-archives, academic social networks) (Dubin 2004; Simkin and Roychowdhury 2005; Wetterer 2006), merely improving the visibility of retraction status(es) on publishers' websites or databases will still be inadequate. Education of authors is important. Moreover, checking references during the publication process could identify citations to retracted publications; and ensure that, if cited, authors are aware of and document the retraction (Davis 2012). This could have a significant impact since, on average, retracted publications receive 22-35 citations each (both pre- and post-retraction) (Chen et al. 2013; Dinh et al. 2019; Pantziarka and Meheus 2019). Some retracted publications receive hundreds or thousands of post-retraction citations ("Top 10 Most Highly Cited Retracted Papers" 2015).

Addressing Wicked Problems with a Participatory Design Process Model

The RISRS project approached the problem of retraction, and the continued citation of retracted materials, as a "wicked problem." Wicked problems are social or cultural problems with many interdependent factors, often with disagreement over the nature of the problem (Hoffmann 2020). Wicked problems may be difficult, if not impossible, to solve because of incomplete or contradictory knowledge; the number of people and divergent opinions involved; the economic cost of proposed solutions; and their enmeshment with other perceived social and technical problems (Rittel and Webber 1973).

Addressing wicked problems involves bringing the disparate body of people and organizations affected by the problem together to build the will to shift perceptions of the problem. It also involves clarifying incentives for stakeholders to work with change processes, as their perceptions of wicked problems shift with re-evaluations of risk, changing values, and in response to emergent policy and technical resolution processes.

In a wicked problem, collaboration across major stakeholder groups may be challenged by the lack of common agreement about the scope of the

problem or the efficacy of strategies to address the issue. Problem definition is a long-studied issue in the social sciences; and a practical problem in the study of policy and planning, where problem definitions set the tone for ideas to move through processes of agenda setting, policy development, adoption, implementation, planning and evaluation (Baumgartner and Jones 2015; Kingdon and Stano 1984; Weiss 1989). How groups define the problem to be solved defines a horizon of possibility and expectation for proposed solutions, hence, opportunities for intervention. Although problem definitions shape the perceived scope of an issue, the perception of problems and their resolution(s) are often informed by incommensurate priorities. How a problem is scoped and framed may change following reprioritization or efforts to implement solutions. A common strategy for addressing wicked problems is to design a process of problem refinement and prioritization whereby stakeholders are asked to reflect on their values, goals, and background assumptions (Rosenhead 1996; Horn and Weber 2007) to help redefine the scope of a perceived problem in a new way.

The RISRS project sought to consolidate an actionable research and implementation agenda built from stakeholder input. Our goal was to understand variation and overlap in how the continued circulation of retracted research was perceived from different stakeholder vantage points: How does the issue look, for example, from the perspective of publishers or editors compared to researchers or integrity officers? We consolidated stakeholder insights into a continuum of perceived problems and opportunities; and asked stakeholders to work together to prioritize major goals, recommendations, and opportunities for implementing proposed solutions. This work became the basis for the RISRS report (Schneider, Woods, et al. 2021c), which outlines the consensus of stakeholder recommendations, short- and long-term, as well as a research and implementation agenda. We loosely modeled the agenda-setting cycle of the RISRS process on a five-stage participatory agenda-setting model (Rosa, Gudowsky, and Warnke 2018; Abma and Broerse 2010) involving exploration, engagement, prioritization, integration, and dissemination (illustrated in Fig. 1). The purpose of this process is to synthesize stakeholder feedback to create an actionable agenda to guide research and change activities.

Figure 1: Decision-making process according to the TRANSFORM participatory agenda-setting project (TRANSFORM Project n.d.)

Applying the Participatory Design Process Model to Scholarly Publishing: A Case Study from the RISRS Project

RISRS was designed as an 18-month process with a stakeholder workshop at the halfway point. This structure drew on our colleagues' previous work, hosting a national forum about text mining with limited access text (Sandor

Namachchivaya 2017; "Data Mining with Limited Access Text: National Forum" n.d.; Senseney et al. 2021). Planned pre-workshop activities included a literature review, a citation analysis, stakeholder interviews, and stakeholder statements to seed the workshop discussion. Planned post-workshop activities focused on creating and disseminating coherent, actionable recommendations for next steps.

In designing the RISRS process, we mapped the basic structure of TRANSFORM to our work with scholarly communications stakeholders. Accordingly, the design process moved through five stages (see Figure1). We began with an exploration phase, which consisted of preliminary literature review and the formation of a stakeholder advisory board. This was followed by a stakeholder engagement and consultation process, where stakeholders were individually consulted regarding problems within their own domain of expertise. Here, stakeholders were encouraged to reflect on strategies for mitigating the issue; encouraged to reflect upon and actively provide feedback on why the continued citation of retracted research is a problem; and how it can be solved. We used this information to design the "prioritization/refinement" and "integration" phases of the process, by creating structured opportunities for reflection and discussion during a series of stakeholder workshops. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshops were ultimately held online in three parts (October 26, November 9, and November 16, 2020). The "dissemination" phase of the process began shortly after the workshops with a series of presentations from February through November 2021. Said presentations included talks at NISO Plus 2021 (Bakker et al. 2021; Avissar-Whiting et al. 2021), the Society for Scholarly Publishing 2021 (Flanagin et al. 2021), the 2021 annual virtual seminar for the Committee on Publication Ethics (Bilder, Fanelli, and Schneider 2021), the International Society of Managing and Technical Editors (Oransky and Schneider 2021), and the Charleston Conference (Aalbersberg, Lehmann, et al. 2021). Dissemination and implementation remain ongoing as new stakeholder-initiated iterations of the design process develop. Below, we detail the methods that we used in each phase of this participatory agenda-setting process.

Mapping the RISRS Process to the TRANSFORM Participatory Agenda-Setting Project

The RISRS process used multiple methods to design and organize the overall process and to facilitate participation, small group dynamics, and stakeholder co-production. Additionally, the RISRS agenda-setting process was supported

continuously by the active research of the RISRS team. Here, we map out each element of these various methods relative to the stages depicted in the TRANSFORM dialogue process, which served loosely as our major map for the overall organization of the process.

Exploration

At the beginning of the process, we conducted a preliminary scoping review to systematically identify the literature on retraction, identify what we know about retraction from the empirical research literature, to clarify what has been studied, and how it has been studied. We prioritized areas with direct and obvious relevance to the RISRS' problems, such as citation and visibility of retraction status, and focused initially on 162 central papers (*RISRS Bibliography v.1 2021*).

Engagement/Consultation Activities

70 stakeholders participated in the overall consultation process, in various ways.

Advisory Board

An advisory board composed of leaders in the field of scholarly communication helped identify and attract stakeholders from diverse fields related to scholarly communication and ensured that people with diverse perspectives were invited to participate. Advisory board members were: Annette Flanagin, Executive Managing Editor and Vice President, Editorial Operations, JAMA and The JAMA Network; C.K. (Tina) Gunsalus, JD, Director, National Center for Professional & Research Ethics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Daniele Fanelli, PhD, Fellow in Quantitative Methodology, Department of Methodology, London School of Economics and Political Science; and Ivan Oransky, MD. Co-Founder of Retraction Watch & Editor in Chief of *Spectrum*.

Stakeholder Enrollment

The RISRS stakeholder consultation played a central role in identifying problems, possible solutions, and collaborative implementation strategies. Stakeholders were actively consulted throughout the RISRS process, contributing to ongoing rounds of feedback, integration, and dissemination, with the aim of introducing change into the scientific publishing ecosystem.

Stakeholder dialogue and synthesis has been a key to deriving a clear understanding of how retracted science is understood in different professional and sector domains. To facilitate this process, the RISRS team designed a stakeholder enrollment and consultation process and asked stakeholders to help develop a working ecosystem map of concrete actions needed to support cross-sectoral collaboration, which will ultimately help identify pathways for effective implementation.

Stakeholders were invited to engage with the project in July of 2020. Broad inclusivity measures were built into the invitation of potential participants. All stakeholders were invited on the basis of their professional expertise, role(s) in publishing, research, information technology, university, and government. However, our efforts for racial and gender diversity were limited by structural factors. In particular, the scholarly communication industry as a whole is not racially diverse; 80-90% of respondents to recent surveys have self-identified as White (Greco, Wharton, and Brand 2016; Taylor et al. 2020). Even so, White people are overrepresented in leadership. Likewise, although women comprise a majority of the scholarly communication industry, they are underrepresented in board and C-suite positions (Greco, Wharton, and Brand 2016; Michael 2017).

Stakeholders were invited to participate in the RISRS project in multiple ways, and were given the choice to participate in an hour-long interview, to contribute an original position paper, to be included on the project's website, and/or to participate in an online workshop series.

Stakeholders from the scholarly communications ecosystem were enrolled in this process; this included funders, editors, peer reviewers/authors based at both universities and government research facilities, commercial and scholarly publishers, individual researchers, librarians, platform and database providers, software developers, metadata experts, university research integrity officers, lawyers, science journalists, staff at professional organizations, and members of standards-setting organizations.

Stakeholder Interviews

47 stakeholders from the scholarly communications ecosystem were interviewed. During the interviews, stakeholders were asked about their experience with retracted research, their opinions and attitudes towards the variety of retractions, and the harms associated with retraction, as well as any perspectives or experiences that they might offer related to retracted research, its continued citation, and the work of maintaining or correcting the scientific

record.

Prioritization/Refinement

By identifying problems, and iteratively brainstorming about problems and opportunities, stakeholders also identified obstacles and pathways to implement particular solutions. We drew upon elements from expert forecasting or group facilitation methods to help structure stakeholder feedback and problem solving. This included problem-structuring methods (Mingers and Rosenhead 2004) during the prioritization phase. Workshop activities drew on Liberating Structures (Lipmanowicz and McCandless 2014; n.d.) such as the "15% Solution" brainstorming activity (Lipmanowicz and McCandless n.d.) which invited stakeholders to identify areas where they already had the ability to take action, and the "Min Specs" collaborative agenda-setting exercise (Lipmanowicz and McCandless n.d.) which asked stakeholders to imagine how to implement particular recommendations and then rank implementation ideas by priority. In this sense, the agenda-setting cycle described above was an ongoing feature of the overall RISRS design process.

Each workshop session was developed around a particular group task: Day 1 focused on listening and learning about stakeholder experience with retraction from a variety of participants; Day 2 on collaborative agenda-setting, where stakeholders prioritized problems and opportunities; and Day 3, which focused group conversation on implementation topics such as barriers to cooperation and sustaining commitment to act in the short- and long-term.

Integration

In the integration phase, stakeholders from different backgrounds and with different perspectives were brought together to participate in structured dialogues, working to synthesize across a variety of proposed topics and solutions through discussion, argumentation, and problem refinement activities. Our recommendations were built from this process and were iteratively updated and developed through a series of surveys and public drafts (Schneider, Woods, et al. 2021a; 2021b) as well as at a virtual follow-up meeting on February 16, 2021. These recommendation development and synthesis cycles were based loosely on a Delphi approach to qualitative synthesis (Fletcher and Marchildon 2014).

Additionally, to help guide sense-making and problem structuring activities, results from our qualitative analysis were built into the structured conversations that organized the three-day workshop and integrated

throughout the agenda-setting cycle.

Qualitative analysis occurred in three stages. Interview transcripts and other documents were coded in three stages, culminating in a thematic analysis of the text (Braun and Clarke 2006). Additionally, and parallel to the interview coding, articles from the preliminary literature review were to identify problems and opportunities in the literature. Interview and document coding resulted in 41 distinct codes associated with problems and 38 distinct codes associated with opportunities for addressing the problem of retracted research in the scholarly communications ecosystem.

These analytic codes were written up using illustrative quotes that exemplified elements of the themes. This document was circulated prior to the workshop as a type of "member check," or respondent validation (Birt et al. 2016; Candela 2019). The coding sets and themes were subsequently used to enrich the analysis of materials; to create a composite portrait of how retraction and the continued citation of research is framed as a problem; how it is encountered within discrete roles in the scholarly communications ecosystem; or how it relates to broader assumptions about the purpose of publishing, the composition of the scholarly record, and the meaning of retraction.

In the workshops, we built a bridge between prioritization and problem refinement. In the prioritization phase of the cycle, the qualitative analysis derived from the consultations and preliminary literature reviews were initially presented to stakeholders for feedback in Workshop 1 described below. Workshops 2 and 3 initiated the integration phase, where stakeholders were asked to refine and prioritize the identified problems and opportunities, and to nominate new ones where relevant. Finally, in the dissemination phase, stakeholders were involved in several rounds of direct feedback on the elaboration of recommendations that contributed to the final RISRS report.

Dissemination

Through stakeholder dialogue, problem refinement, and prioritization, aspects of an evolving agenda move on to phases of "integration," where stakeholders further develop the agenda in sector-specific, meaningful ways; and "dissemination," where the agenda and its supporting elements may be further developed in implementation coalitions. In some cases, aspects of the evolving stakeholder agenda may move through further rounds of development. This iterative process not only helps develop policy agendas with stakeholder investment but also works to help address problem re-definition, an acknowledged feature of wicked problems (Rittel and Webber 1973; Jentoft

and Chuenpagdee 2009).

Restarting the Cycle: Starting Another Round of Participatory Decision Making

Simple problems are those which are already defined whereas wicked problems are seemingly intractable and indeterminate because stakeholders cannot agree on a definition. Indeed, given the indeterminate nature of wicked problems, attempts to solve the problem may result in further complications, if not more problems (Roberts 2000; Sherman and Peterson 2009). For example, in agenda-setting processes, the first stage of problem refinement may be undermined through the efforts of stakeholders to actively redefine the problem to be solved—behavior which may overpower previous problem definition and agenda-setting work (Wood and Doan 2003). Wicked problems "never end" (Rittel and Webber 1973; Vermaas and Pesch 2020). As wicked problems are linked to other problems, solutions often have unexpected consequences over time. Design processes have been particularly effective at taming wicked problems (Rith and Dubberly 2007; Buchanan 1992) by explicitly engaging stakeholders in collaborative refinement of perceived problems and the dynamics of problem redefinition. The RISRS process has begun the work of addressing a complex issue through stakeholder engagement and problem refinement, resulting in a series of action-oriented recommendations. As these recommendations are developed by stakeholders, further design processes will be required to help build effective and meaningful implementation.

Findings from and Outcomes of the Case Study

Multiple Interlocking Problems

Shortly after we started talking to stakeholders, the RISRS Team discovered that we were not working with one single problem, but rather a confluence of multiple problems, all loosely related to the continued spread and use of retracted research. Some interviewees framed the issue around individual misconduct or accountability while others focused on breakdowns in editing and publishing processes. Still, others described the need for engineering solutions across multiple overlapping systems. These three frames for retraction—moral failings, publishing process issues, or technical coordination problems—each imply different approaches for successfully mitigating the perceived problems. Refined publishing processes, for example, may not have traction if authors are reluctant

to engage in dialogue with editors around post-publication amendments for fear of the stigma associated with perceived moral failings. Likewise, technical solutions, such as reference management checks for retractions or automated reviews of manuscripts during the submission or publication process, will not be effective unless researchers or publishers are incentivized to use them. By designing opportunities for stakeholder participation and interaction, we have tried to clarify differences in perception as well as identify areas of agreement over both the problem definition and perceived solutions.

During Workshop 1, it became apparent that the group was not only contending with different problem definitions but also with competing perspectives on the ultimate goal: Are we trying to clean up the literature? Or are we trying to reform science? Or are we trying to reform science publishing? These may be overlapping goals but the scale of interventions and the actions stakeholders should take to address them would depend on which of these overlapping goals was taken as primary. That meant that we needed to first clarify the scope, problem, and goals. As our conversations evolved, we focused on actionable recommendations and sought to draw out intersections between the goals rather than to focus on achieving one or another. To this end, the RISRS recommendations focus on opportunities to cooperate across professional roles and domains.

Design approaches are particularly useful in this situation, where problems are multi-faceted and where solutions involve multiple overlapping efforts. The problem definition and the scope of the perceived problem impact the space of possible solutions and determine the resources and collective action required to address the problem. A design perspective focuses on learning about the nature of a problem, often working backwards, from problems to solutions, without strongly preconceived plans or solutions or iteratively linking actions with new goals as the problem definition evolves.

By taking up the issue of problem definition directly, particularly as it relates to the perception of retraction as a social and technical issue in the scholarly communications ecosystem, we could narrow areas of divergence and intersection around potential areas of cooperation or collaboration. The benefit of this design approach is that it allows both researchers and stakeholders to understand the various dimensions attributed to the problem and to begin shifting from at-hand solutions to understanding how the problem could be understood in more collaborative terms.

Reframing the Problem: The First Round of Recommendations

Here we provide an overview of our core recommendations (Schneider, Woods, et al. 2021c), a major outcome of the process, by illustrating how the recommendations evolved; and through this process, reframe what types of actions could be bundled to address the continued citation of retracted research. We conclude with a discussion of one of these recommendations salient to the education of publishing professionals.

Our core recommendations (Schneider, Woods, et al. 2021c) are:

1. Develop a systematic cross-industry approach to ensure the public availability of consistent, standardized, interoperable, and timely information about retractions.
2. Recommend a taxonomy of retraction categories/classifications and corresponding retraction metadata that can be adopted by all stakeholders.
3. Develop best practices for coordinating the retraction process to enable timely, fair, unbiased outcomes.
4. Educate stakeholders about publication correction processes including retraction and about pre- and post-publication stewardship of the scholarly record.

We identified these core recommendations which were supported by a minimum general consensus from participants in the RISRS workshops. We prioritized recommendations for which there exists momentum to address the issue; known examples that can be used to model standards or best practices; current technologies that can be adopted; and proposals for which there is existing or strong agreement. Additionally, for each recommendation, we identified a list of supporting actions, derived from stakeholder input, as well as suggested pathways to effective implementation and areas for future research. The research and implementation agenda (Schneider, Woods, et al. 2021c) in the full RISRS report has 20 pages of detailed suggestions for collaborative action based on the four core recommendations.

Moving the Needle: Encouraging and Facilitating Uptake of the RISRS Research and Implementation Agenda

New bodies of stakeholders have now formed coalitions that are invested in further co-development of two of the recommendations. The first stakeholder action, established in the COPE orbit, concerns building an industry-supported taxonomy for identifying types of retractions in the publication process (Flanagin et al. 2021). In the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) orbit, a working group has been formed to develop a standards-setting process for the communication of retractions, removals, and expressions of concern (National Information Standards Organization 2021). Additionally, through research and organizing efforts, RISRS continues to support continued stakeholder elaboration of the basic recommendations from the RISRS report, as well as outlining and co-developing new avenues for implementation and problem scoping. For each of the problems associated with these recommendations, the RISRS design process created the context for stakeholder dialogue and problem refinement to shift the context of how perceived problems and solutions are organized. The agenda-setting cycle will continue for recommendations that have been adopted for further development. The issue of stakeholder education regarding *retraction and pre- and post-publication stewardship of the scholarly record* is still looking for an invested coalition for further development. This recommendation ties some of the problems associated with stigma and retracted research together.

From Stigma to Stewardship: The Need for Stakeholder Education

The issue of retraction-related stigma, which arose early in the interviews with stakeholders, is one of the most important topics that needs further stakeholder development and a home for said development. Here we discuss the issue of stigma as a particularly evocative example of an embedded, nested problem and how perception of the problem may be reorganized to encourage action. From our interviews, stakeholders associated retraction—and other post-publication amendment processes—with misconduct; with questions of litigation and responsibility; and issues of prestige. Often, this cluster of issues was framed as an impediment to productive cooperation in the publishing process and as an obstacle to effectively address the continued citation of retracted materials.

Stigma is broadly relevant to the publication ethics community: along with beliefs about the conduct of science, issues of stigma and prestige form a nested set of beliefs and attitudes about retraction that shaped how the continued citation of retracted research, as a sociotechnical problem, is disparately perceived at a very general level by different groups of stakeholders. For some of the stakeholders we consulted, the continued citation of retracted research is perceived to result from misconduct in the conduct of science: getting rid of misconduct would alleviate these problems in the literature. To prevent the dissemination of retracted materials, in their view, the most efficient course of action is to root out misconduct, either by strengthening the social norms of science, emphasizing penalties for norm deviation, or by transforming the culture of science to address issues of prestige and productivity which many identify as the root of scientific misconduct. For others, the solution to the continued citation of retracted research is to clean up the literature, where retraction is but one tool of many in the process of post-publication amendment. Here the issue is not to reform science, but rather to effectively communicate post-publication amendments and to address how the scientific literature is used.

These differences in perception were at play in the RISRS problem-refinement workshops; they mark important stakeholder positions on problems, opportunities, and mitigation strategies. However, these are not mutually exclusive issues, but rather related social issues for which there is not a clear technological solution. While stigma is often associated with negative impacts for researchers, in our interviews with and in the collaborative workshops with stakeholders, we found that issues of stigma and prestige also affect those working in publishing. For example, researchers who discover mistakes in their published work and who feel inspired to take action to "clean up the literature," often face multiple obstacles in doing so. Authors worry about the stigma associated with retraction and the possible negative effects on their careers. Editors also worry about the stigma of retraction and its association with misconduct. They may feel reluctant to retract because of the perceived negative perceptions associated with retraction; and the effects that this may have on the way prestige is attributed to their journal, or on their career as editors. Furthermore, publishers and editors worry about how retractions open them up to litigation. For smaller publications stewarded by societies, libraries, and/or individual researchers, retraction and post-publication amendments may be perceived as costly in terms of time and money, as well as risky, in terms of reputation. By contrast, researchers may feel reluctant to report mistakes because of the perceived career risks associated with retraction and the potential

judgements they may face from peers, collaborating colleagues, and their home institutions. Addressing the issue of stigma was a priority for the stakeholders attending the RISRS workshops; and there was a broad consensus that one pathway forward on this problem is to engage with stakeholder education.

By teasing out how stigma operates across professional domains, we came to understand how, as a wicked problem, the continued circulation of retracted research is anchored in multiple social and technological contexts and conditions. Here we highlight the role stigma plays in the scholarly communications ecosystem to illustrate how the work of problem-refinement can help encourage action, by re-organizing a broadly distributed perception of risk into opportunities for further collaboration.

An example of this refinement and reframing is the RISRS recommendation: *Educate stakeholders about retraction and pre- and post-publication stewardship of the scholarly record*. The full recommendation covers actions that researchers, authors, topic editors, and other publishing professionals can take to educate themselves about the continued citation of retracted research. It also includes areas where these stakeholders can contribute to a collaborative effort to develop stakeholder-specific education materials (Schneider, Woods, et al. 2021c). In some cases, the issue is expanding through educationthe reach of existent resources. For editors and publishers, the most relevant starting point is the COPE. COPE's eLearning Module, "Introduction to Publication Ethics" is freely available on the internet (Committee on Publication Ethics n.d.). COPE also offers editorial flowcharts to help guide editorial decision-making in publication ethics; and many are available in multiple languages. However, based on stakeholder feedback, additional materials are needed to provide guidance for other stakeholders navigating the process of retraction, particularly for the variety of post-publication amendments, to help guide the use of amended and retracted material circulating in the scholarly communications ecosystem.

Additionally, we identified a need for all editors and publishers to be aware of "honest retraction," which Retraction Watch refers to as "doing the right thing" (Retraction Watch n.d.). Not all retraction is associated with misconduct. Pervasive error can also be a reason for retraction, whether requested by the author or when a reader discovers a pervasive mistake or error in the data.

During our consultations, stakeholders conveyed a strong sense that the value of retraction is in "cleaning up the literature," but that this is made more difficult due to the stigma associated with retraction. Well-known cases of honest retraction are often championed as examples of science as a "self-correcting" practice (Fanelli 2016; Retraction Watch n.d.; The Editors of The Lancet 2015). However, while these examples are often celebrated, there are

impediments to honest retraction at multiple points in the publication chain (Alberts et al. 2015; Rohrer 2021; Vorland et al. 2020). Such challenges were mentioned in our interviews with stakeholders. Some authors seeking to do an "honest retraction" need funding to help offset the possible effects on the careers of their trainees and other members of their lab; some authors report that they need to persuade an editor to pursue an "honest retraction" of their own paper. Because retraction may be (incorrectly) taken to imply misconduct, stakeholders voiced concerns about the negative impact retractions could have on graduate students and early-career researchers, as well as lab managers and collaborators, even when there is no misconduct or when they are not responsible for the misconduct. This illustrates the types of obstacles for author-initiated post-publication amendments and some of the impediments to the widespread development of a robust, broadly distributed, ethic of stewardship for the scientific and scholarly record.

This recommendation is the outcome of stakeholder-informed co-development. During our workshops, there was acknowledgement that the issue of stigma was complex. To be properly addressed, stakeholders would need to work together to speak to its importance and collaborate with their peers to address the needs of specific groups. Publishing professionals can help reduce the stigma of retraction by assisting in the creation of educational materials that link the variety of post-publication amendment processes to real world examples and to illustrate that not all retraction is due to misconduct. Likewise, these educational materials should reflect the challenges that researchers and others working in the scholarly communications ecosystem face in active stewardship of the scholarly record, such as time constraints and unfamiliarity with the publishing process. Additionally, to help contextualize the strong association between post-publication amendment and misconduct, there is some acknowledgment that discussion of publication ethics and post-publication amendments be incorporated into Responsible Conduct of Research education.

In the future, retraction should be understood as standing on a continuum of post-publication amendment—continuous with corrections, versioning, etc.—and functioning ultimately to help uphold the value and quality of the peer-reviewed literature. Education across multiple roles in and around scholarly communication is needed, such as for researchers, research managers, scholarly and professional societies, institutional officers, literature users and the broader research ecosystem, including clinicians and other practitioners, policy experts, regulators, corporate actors, editors, preprint managers, peer reviewers, and publishers. As with our other recommendations, RISRS

recommendation #4 will require further iterative development by an invested stakeholder coalition.

Limitations

We focused on the English-language publishing community; and our attendees were largely drawn from Europe and North America due to the logistics of hosting online meetings with people from a variety of time zones. Stakeholders were primarily from universities, government, large scientific societies, large publishers, technology organizations, and funders. We had trouble identifying small publishers and Global South publishers; we also did not seek to identify industry researchers. Retraction has been addressed in the medical community for longer and with more emphasis than in the wider industry; other fields in the sciences and social sciences have occasionally been the subject of empirical research on retraction, however very little research has examined humanities-related retractions (Proescholdt et al. 2021).

Conclusions

Design processes can be helpful for problems that seem like "stuck" problems, for which there is no agreed upon solution or which require the collaboration of a great number of people to find appropriate solutions (Rittel and Webber 1973). In this paper, we have outlined our process for moving the needle on one stuck problem: the continued citation of retracted research. Multiple competing perceptions of this problem, retraction-related social stigma, and unclear lines of authority or responsibility for addressing it complicate stakeholder coordination. The RISRS project brought stakeholders together to reflect on the nature of the problem, divergent viewpoints, and areas of intersection. This participatory design process led to a series of recommendations delineating areas where there is broad agreement, where stakeholders might productively collaborate to implement proposed solutions and engage in further collaborative problem solving. As a case study, our work highlights the potential benefit of participatory design processes for addressing problems in scholarly publishing by building investment and cooperation amongst stakeholder groups. Given the nature of the problem, the core recommendations derived from our stakeholder-engaged process are a successful but limited outcome; further efforts will be needed to continue the design process. Some recommendations have already been taken up by professional groups for additional, iterative participatory design while other recommendations, such as stakeholder

education on stewardship of the scholarly record, need an invested coalition.

In general, the scholarly publication ecosystem is composed of multiple overlapping communities with different evaluation systems addressing different audiences for a variety of purposes. Consequently, publication ethics cannot be addressed as a monolith. Although ethics in the publication process are often understood in terms of individual actions and professional decisions, no single individual and no single professional body alone, can fully address problems in this ecosystem. Consequently, sociotechnical approaches such as participatory design and frameworks like wicked problems may be beneficial for iteratively addressing challenges. Scholarly publishing professionals should become familiar with the diversity and complexity of issues in publication ethics, including the continued citation of retracted research. This is an important area to consider in the ethical education of publishing professionals.

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A negative citation "disputes, corrects or questions, or negatively evaluates cited work" (Suelzer et al. 2019).

Submission Guidelines

Call for Papers

GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing

Submit your article using this Call for Papers Submission form.

The George Washington University Master of Professional Studies in Publishing program solicits papers for the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing,* a new, open access journal. The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* (*GWJEP*) welcomes articles, case studies, and conference presentations from scholars, students, and publishing, library, and scholarly communication professionals on topics including, but not limited to, diversity and inclusion, accessibility, peer review, open access, sustainability, publishing metrics, equity, and other aspects and issues of ethics in publishing. This online journal is managed by students in the GW Publishing program and overseen by Editor-in-Chief Randy Townsend and an editorial board of publishing professionals.

We welcome papers professionals, scholars, faculty, and students, from the fields of publishing, library scholarly communication, journalism, and related fields, on topic areas such as:

- Ways to ensure publishing is inclusive: in all its dimensions
- Making sure diverse voices are part of the conversation about inclusion, equity, and accessibility
- Work to ensure peer review, authorship, editing, publications metrics, etc., are equitable and free of bias
- Can equitable, inclusive, and accessible publishing become a reality instead of a goal?
- Institutional efforts to increase diversity, for example, within the Association of University Press (AUPresses), Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP), and other publishing institutions
- Financial equity and sustainability, including institutional support,

and access to research and publications, as ethical issues
- Accessibility as an ethical issue
- How publishers can ensure publications are more accessible

Alumni of and current students in the GW Master of Professional Studies in Publishing program are invited to present on their Ethics in Publishing Capstone projects, including both "Making the World Better" projects and Case Studies.

Scholarly articles, case studies, and "Making the World Better" projects are subject to peer review, unless invited. Peer review will comprise double-blind peer review (wherein neither the author nor the reviewer know each other's identity), although the journal may also experiment, with authors' permission, in alternative forms of peer review. Papers from underrepresented voices are especially encouraged.

GWJEP is published in conjunction with the GW Ethics in Publishing Conference. Conference presentations as well as papers based on previously-presented material are also encouraged.

The journal will be published utilizing the Manifold Scholarship platform developed by the University of Minnesota Press, the Graduate Center at the City University of New York, and Cast Iron Coding, though a grant from the Mellon Foundation.

The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* accepts five main categories of articles:

- Scholarly articles and case studies presenting research about ethical issues in publishing
- Applied Ethics/"Making the World Better" articles and projects that explore ways of contributing to communities, including local, regional, or global publishing communities or other communities on aspects of publishing, literacy, and so on.
- Invited editorials and commentaries
- Reviews of books, websites, digital projects, and other web resources with a focus or considerable aspect of ethics in publishing.
- Conference presentations

Instructions for Authors

GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing

The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* is an open-access, online journal managed by students in The George Washington University Master of Professional Studies in Publishing program.

We welcome articles, case studies, and conference presentations from scholars, students, and publishing professionals on topics including, but not limited to, diversity and inclusion, accessibility, peer review, open access, sustainability, publishing metrics, equity, and other aspects and issues of ethics in publishing.

Innovative forms of scholarship, such as video or audio recordings, podcasts, or narratives, are also encouraged.

Each submission should include:

- The e-mail address of the primary author as well as names and e-mail addresses of other contributing authors.
- A narrative biography of each author, of no more than 125 words.
- A short abstract of your article of no more than 300 words.
- The URL of the author's personal home page, project or university department.
- Article or presentation (as an attachment). Articles of 6,000-7,000 words are recommended, but shorter articles will also be considered.

Scope of the GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing

We intend the journal to be broad in scope, and invite papers from publishing, library, and media professionals, scholars, and students on topic areas such as:

- Ways to ensure publishing is inclusive: in all its dimensions.
- Making sure diverse voices are part of the conversation about inclusion, equity, and accessibility.
- Work to ensure peer review, authorship, editing, publications metrics, etc., are equitable and free of bias.
- Can equitable, inclusive, and accessible publishing become a reality instead of a goal?
- Institutional efforts to increase diversity, for example, within the Association of University Press (AUPresses), Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP), and other publishing institutions.
- Financial equity and sustainability, including institutional support, and access to research and publications, as ethical issues.
- Accessibility as an ethical issue.
- How publishers can ensure publications are more accessible.

Article Types and Section Policies

Article Types

The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* accepts five main categories of articles:

- Scholarly research articles and case studies, presenting research about ethical issues in publishing
- Applied ethics, "Making the World Better" articles and projects, that explore ways of contributing to communities, including local, regional, or global publishing communities or other communities on aspects of publishing, literacy, and so on
- Invited editorials and commentaries
- Reviews of books, websites, digital projects, and other web resources with a focus or considerable aspect of ethics in publishing
- GW Ethics in Publishing Conference presentations

Scholarly Research Articles and Case Studies (Peer-reviewed by default)

Scholarly research articles and case studies present original findings resulting from qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research should be submitted for this section.

Scholarly research articles and case studies must include an abstract of no more than 250 words, with an abstract structure that summarizes the sections in the article outlined below.

Scholarly research articles and case studies should generally include a conclusion and recommendations, with 3-5 items (arranged in a bulleted or numerical list) describing the implications of the article's findings for publishing, library, media, or scholarly communication practice. Authors should emphasize why the article should be of concern/interest to readers of the publishing community and how its conclusions will influence and impact best practice.

Research articles should generally include the following sections (primary sections and subsections may vary by paper):

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion / Recommendations
- Bio: Include a brief biography of each author at the end of the article, including your name, institutional/professional affiliation, and a brief description of your expertise in the relevant field.

Scholarly research articles and case study submissions should generally be between 3,000-6,000 words, though exceptions will be considered.

Applied Ethics, "Making the World Better" Articles and Projects (Peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed)

Applied ethics projects explore ways that publishing, library, media, and scholarly communication professionals, scholars, students, and others contribute to their communities, including local, regional, or global publishing communities or other communities on aspects of publishing, literacy, and so on.

Applied ethics, "making the world better" projects and articles should be submitted for this section.

Applied ethics projects may vary considerably, depending on the project and actors, but include work in:

- Advocacy: publishing, library, media, and scholarly communication professionals contribute to many causes, which may include diversity and inclusion, accessibility, censorship, literacy promotion, and other

ways to promote knowledge and understanding.

- Engagement: Enhancing participation on issues of the public good, working to close the gap between the number of people affected and the number taking action on issues such as online piracy or accessibility in publishing, etc.
- Volunteerism: Efforts of individuals and organizations dedicated to making the publishing ecosystem, literacy, librarianship, and scholarly communication better through volunteer opportunities.
- Organization: Efforts to organize and engage communities such as using publishing to develop community goals, developing a community newsletter, and so on.

Applied ethics projects may be improved through active peer review, however, due to their varying nature, some of these projects may not warrant peer review. The editorial board will make a determination on a case-by-case basis.

Applied ethics, "making the world better" articles and projects must include an abstract of no more than 250 words, with an abstract structure that summarizes the sections in the article outlined below.

Applied ethics, "making the world better" articles and projects should generally include a conclusion and recommendations, with 3-5 items (arranged in a bulleted or numerical list) describing the implications of the project's goals and results for publishing, library, media, or scholarly communication practice. Authors should emphasize why the article and project should be of concern/interest to readers of the publishing community and how its conclusions will influence and impact best practice and the community.

Applied ethics articles and projects may vary, but should generally include the following sections (primary sections and subsections may vary by paper):

- Introduction
- Goals and scope of project
- Actions and/or Methods
- Discussion and Implications
- Results and Impact
- Conclusion / Recommendations
- Bio: Include a brief biography of each author at the end of the article, including your name, institutional/professional affiliation, and a brief description of your expertise in the relevant field.

Applied ethics articles and project submissions should generally be between 3,000-6,000 words, though exceptions will be considered.

Invited Editorials and Commentaries (Generally non-peer-reviewed)

The Editorial Board will invite editorials and commentaries from publishing, library, and scholarly communication professionals, researchers, scholars, and others to comment on their work in ethical publishing practices and in advancing the field.

If you have an idea or suggestion, or would like to be considered for an editorial or commentary, please contact Editor in Chief, Randy Townsend, at rantowns@gwu.edu.

GW Ethics in Publishing Conference presentations

The GW Ethics in Publishing Conference is presented annually and complements the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing*. Presenters are invited to submit articles based on their conference presentation or slides. Conference videos are available for the 2020 and 2021 conference.

Reviews (Non-peer-reviewed)

The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* invites you to submit reviews of books, websites, digital projects, and other web resources with a focus or considerable aspect of ethics in publishing.

Reviews should generally be between 500-1,500 words, though exceptions will be considered, especially for reviews of multiple titles or resources.

Reviews should include the following aspects in a review, as relevant to the book, website, or project:

- Citation: Include the title, author(s) or editor(s), publication date/year, publisher, pages, format, unique identifier (DOI, ISBN, or URL). When citing a website, include the URL as well as the date that the website(s) was accessed.
- Authority: Relevant background or expertise of the author(s),creator(s), or editor(s)
- Audience: Potential or expected community of interest or audience for the book, website, or resource
- Content, Quality, Usefulness, and Impact: Goals of the book or resource and whether the author(s) or editor(s) achieve their goals; whether the book or resource advances the field; qualities of accessibility and other aspects; organization; importance of the resource for

the intended audience.

- Your Bio: Include a brief biography of yourself at the end of the review, including your name, institutional/professional affiliation, and a brief description of your expertise in the relevant field.

The Editorial Board may solicit authors and items for review, but we welcome your proposals or suggestions for reviews. Please let us know if you have a book, article, or website that you would like to review. You must let us know if you have any conflicts of interest or connection to the authors, editors, or publishers of the work that you intend to review and publish.

Style Requirements

1. Title page: list all authors, affiliations, and conflicts of interest that a reasonable reader would think appropriate to know prior to reading the piece
2. Section headers: bold and centered, left-justified and underline
3. References/citations: The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* uses The Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes and references: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org. All links to reference sources, examples, etc., should be checked twice. Hyperlinks to articles or other references should also include date of last reference (i.e. Accessed December 21, 2019).
4. Manuscript: text must be double-spaced, include page numbers, include continuous line numbers
5. Masking: no identifying information in the manuscript, only on the title page

Not prescribed: tone or voice usage. This can differ based on subject or style of submission. As long as this is internally consistent to the piece, then the author is free to use what they find most appropriate.

Abstract: Each submission is limited to a 300 word abstract that should summarize the paper to include the hypothesis and outline the argument.

Figures: The *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* also requires that all published articles meet basic digital accessibility standards for visual resources. Papers accepted for publication that include images, charts, videos, or other visual assets must include alt-text (or long descriptions) for each visual asset, as well as appropriate captions. For more information on the basic principles of describing visual resources for accessibility in arts and humanities publications,

please visit Describing Visual Resources.org.

Language/Inclusivity Guidelines: Authors are encouraged to use the Inclusive Language Guide (APA) and the Conscious Style Guide.

Accessibility: GW JEP requires that all published articles meet basic digital accessibility standards for visual resources. Papers accepted for publication that include images, charts, videos, or other visual assets must include alt-text (or long descriptions) for each visual asset, as well as appropriate captions. For more information on the basic principles of describing visual resources for accessibility in arts and humanities publications, please visit Describing Visual Resources.org.

More information

See also the journal's Call for Papers and Peer Review Guidelines.

Submit your article using this Call for Papers Submission form.

Questions?

If you have any questions about the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing*, or the GW Ethics in Publishing Conference, please contact John W. Warren, Director and Associate Professor, Master of Professional Studies program, at jww@gwu.edu.

Peer Review Guidelines

GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing

The *Journal of Ethics in Publishing* welcomes articles, case studies, and conference presentations from scholars, students, and professionals on topics including, but not limited to, diversity and inclusion, accessibility, peer review, open access, sustainability, publishing metrics, equity, and other aspects and issues of ethics in publishing. Papers from underrepresented voices are especially encouraged to submit. Scholarly articles, case studies, and applied ethics ("Making the World Better" projects) are subject to peer review. Peer review will generally comprise double-masked peer review (wherein neither the author nor the reviewer know each other's identity); the journal may also experiment, with authors' permission, in alternative forms of peer review.

Peer review is a fundamental element of scholarly communication that provides valuable guidance to authors in the development and improvement of their submissions and protects journal integrity. Peer reviews should focus on adhering to the following values: equity, openness, collegiality, respect, quality, and community. Your comments will be anonymous (unless indicated in advance). Final determination will be made by the Editor-in-Chief after considering peer review from multiple reviewers.

PEER REVIEW GUIDELINES:

Before you review: When you receive a request to review, you should first assess the time commitment, your applicable expertise, and if you have any conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest can be financial, such as if you benefit from a product, service, or company that is mentioned in the submission. Other conflicts include personal or close professional relationships with the author(s), which could impact your review of the manuscript, either positively

or negatively. If you are unsure if something constitutes a conflict, you should contact the editor or include this information in your review.

Please provide 4-5 sentences in each section below, as applicable. You may write more to address each guiding question. Avoid yes/no answers. Although the review may be critical, please note that personal attacks will not be tolerated. Describe opportunities to improve the submission.

You do not necessarily need to address every question, as some may not be applicable; please note if a section/question does not seem to be applicable, or if it does not fall into your area of expertise. In the final section, please provide your recommendation to the editor. In addition, note if any subject matter within the article is outside your field of knowledge, or if there is anything, such as conflicting or competing interests, that may prevent you from providing a fair, unbiased review. Note that this submitted content is confidential and only shared for the purposes of peer review.

What are the overall strengths of this manuscript? Please give the most positive comments about the manuscript here. Consider some or all of the following:

- Is the topic interesting, timely, or relevant to issues of ethics in publishing?
- Is the article well-written or well-organized?
- Are the author's arguments clear, logical, and concise?
- Are the findings intriguing, surprising or new?
- Does the content address diversity, inclusivity, and equity issues, problems, or solutions?

Introduction, Argument and/or Literature Review: Consider some or all of the following:

- Is the premise or purpose of the submission clear?
- Is relevant literature reviewed in depth and synthesized across themes, methods, or findings, rather than by author? (Literature review may or may not be appropriate to all articles.)
- Are the authors' assumptions clarified and addressed?
- Do you understand how this submission contributes to the field?
- Is the writing well-organized and error free? (Note: grammar and spelling errors should not result in rejection.)
- Does the author clearly articulate a research problem and associated research questions?

Methodology (May not be relevant in all submissions.) Consider some or all of the following (as appropriate):

- Are the methods rigorous, thoughtful, or comprehensive?
- Does the author use appropriate methods to answer their research question; do they have a clear understanding of that method and has the method, itself, been described?
- Do you know who or what was studied, when the study took place, and how research was conducted? Has the study taken into account diversity and inclusivity as part of the design?
- Does the author describe the theoretical framework or parameters for this study clearly?
- When relevant, would you have enough information to replicate the study in another context?
- Did the author fully address limitations of the study design, such as participant sample used?

Findings/Results/Conclusion: Consider some or all of the following:

- Do the findings fit within the methods and literature review previously discussed?
- Is there a conclusion and is the conclusion logical and appropriate to what has come before in the body of the article?
- Is there sufficient evidence presented in the text for the conclusion, or for each finding?
- Are outliers, variance, weaknesses or contradictions in the results presented and discussed?
- Are the conclusions drawn in the paper original?

Discussion/Implications/Recommendations: Consider some or all of the following:

- Does the manuscript provide a clear summary of the purpose, method, and findings of the study at the end?
- Does the author make convincing connections between findings in this study and the field?
- Are connections between the findings/results and the theoretical framework/associated literature clear and logical?
- Are implications for this topic and future research or practice discussed?
- Do recommendations clearly stem from the findings/results?

Overall: Consider some or all of the following:

- Does the article contribute to the scholarly field; for example, is it original, valid, or add a contribution to ethical issues in publishing?
- Is the writing organized, precise, error-free, and without over-generalization or exaggeration?
- Are claims by the author supported with evidence?
- Is there a consistent use of style (Chicago, APA, MLA, etc.) throughout?
- Is there a clear line of reasoning/argumentation?
- Does the article adhere to, follow, or further the mission of the journal?

Recommendations for publication (select one):

1. Accept, no revisions needed: Paper is well written and a significant contribution to the literature. No improvement needed.
2. Accept, with minor revisions: Well written, well-organized with some minor edits including formatting, grammar, or style suggestions required.
3. Revise, minor revisions requested: Well written, well-organized with some minor edits to arguments, research, or analysis. Additional including formatting, grammar, or style suggestions required.
4. Revise, major revisions requested: Paper is promising, but requires multiple major revisions, such as more research, depth, or analysis. Several sections require rewriting in order to improve clarity, flow, or arguments. Revised manuscript may undergo peer review again.
5. Revise & resubmit for review: Significant changes will need to be made in order to meet publication standards. Some major revisions needed with multiple minor revisions required. Revised manuscript's content will change and should go through peer review process again.
6. Reject for publication: Manuscript seems unable to conform to acceptable standards even after revision, or is inappropriate for the journal.
7. Out of Scope: Paper does not meet the scope or focus of journal.

Optional section:

Please use the area below for any comments to the editor that will not be provided to the author.