Please note that this is an auto-generated file.

Thank you so much for joining today on “Research and Beyond”. And first of all, I would want to congratulate you on being the president elect at SSP, which we call the Society for Scholarly Publishing. Congratulations.

Speaking of consistent usage reporting and AI in publishing, moving our shift over there, you've served at the board of COUNTER, which promotes consistent usage reporting. Can we speak a little more in terms of the importance of standardization for the industry? Because as far as I have known the industry for the little experience that I have, it's come to my notice that people and researchers especially are wanting to have a standardized or a universal policy for everything. Now, I especially with AI coming into picture, every journal, every institution has a different set of rules or guidelines that they have set.

Where researchers are often confused, what should they follow? If they follow a certain thing for a particular journal, it's not accepted by the other journal or it's not universally accepted. There are certain, especially even when I speak about authorship issues. Right.

There was, I remember there was one article in Nature that was published where one of the authors was ChatGPT and that is astonishing and kind of threatening to scientific integrity as well. So how do you, what do you feel about, you know, having a standardized, you know, a standardized rule and a standardized notion around the industry when it especially comes to consistent usage and AI integration? Yeah, so I think a couple of topics, you know, in this question, I'll start with the COUNTER side. And it's been an organization, you know, very close to my heart, even before I was on the board there, and I'm currently on the executive committee.

I think, you know, in the early days, libraries really pushed publishers to become publishers and other resources to become COUNTER compliant because they had no way to really get apples to apples or, you know, comparison between resources they were spending on and whether that return on investment in those resources was a good one, you know, or not. I would think that COUNTER having been around for quite some years now, that this would be no longer a challenge. But I'm hearing from librarians as recently as the last couple of weeks that not every provider is making COUNTER usage available to them.

They also, because they're pulled in so many directions on the library staff, have fewer folks who can actually look into, you know, usage statistics. And so maybe there might be a way for publishers to provide those reports or generate, you know, some highlights from those reports so that the libraries in there with their reduced staffing and their reduced time can get the most important details out of that. With the move to OA, it's been a different situation.

You know, most of the pure play OA publishers didn't need to worry about usage statistics because they didn't have a direct relationship with a library and because the library wasn't paying for that directly. I mean, of course they're paying APCs. There wasn't necessarily a pressure for those open access publishers to become COUNTER compliant.

There's also of course, challenges because if there's no authentication required on the platform, you might not know where someone is coming from. So COUNTER has been doing some work to make sure that, you know, global access can be considered in terms of impact. So I think that that, you know, is developing nicely on campus and in publishing.

I think we're in such early days of these large language models and the generative AI and there's new developments almost every day. And I tend to counsel people don't try to take it all in because it's changing so quickly. Recognize that certain things are going to rise and certain things are going to fall.

I mean, just as a minor point, what we think of as OA is constantly changing. You know, when we came out with GPS that we used to use, you know, only in our car and now we use on our phone, you know, that was like, wow, what a great, you know, AI solution to maps. And now that we're used to it, we don't think of it as AI anymore.

There are a lot of tools that service providers have been using to sort content by the level of editing it might need or, you know, plagiarism checks and things that are automated. And thinking of something as automated rather than artificial intelligence can help us maybe think about, you know, a priority or a context, you know, to kind of put it in. There's so many new startups in the space and it's not clear, you know, since I come from the startup startup space, I keep an eye on this.

It's not always clear what their business models are going to be. So when I counsel companies who come to me at Delta Think about how to make these decisions, you know, take a look at contracts, what will happen been, you know, will you spend a lot of time investing, you know, and if this company doesn't have a business model, what, you know, will your time be lost or may that maybe that tool will be acquired by a larger company. We're seeing a lot of service providers acquiring AI tools, publishers acquiring AI tools and services.

What will happen, you know, to your integration, you know, in that circumstance? Research integrity is a big area that both the universities and the Publishers are looking at now. So we can run a lot of technical checks to look for language that could indicate that AI may be involved and maybe the papers come from a paper mill. We can look at different kinds of plagiarism checks that could indicate whether something is coming from a large language model.

We can look at is the author a real person or are there certain activities like author swapping and things like that that are happening that could indicate an issue. But of course, the bad actors have access to tools as well. So at the, at the end of the day, we're going to always need humans to stay, to stay in the link in the, in the, in the loop.

We do work at Delta Think with publishers who are trying to come up with policies. And you said it, you know, researchers struggle with the fact that policies are different in so many cases. And you.

And really, there's no one size fits all policy. It's going to depend on the subject area, you know, that you're working in. What are the, you know, certain jobs, you know, that, that authors are doing, you know, AI in the medical context, you know, doing, you know, looking for images for, you know, treatment plans or something would be quite different from, you know, AI, you know, in other contexts.

I think the important thing is that we have transparency and understanding and how AI is being used. Is it just, is it used mainly for improving the flow of language? Is it used partly, you know, in research and how that is happening? We want to make sure that any of the tool use that might have inherent bias, you know, is disclosed so that that can be looked at. This is going to generate, you know, a whole different future, you know, set of standards around these things.

But I, I do think, and this may be a little bit controversial, that in certain contexts in the future there may be AI that gets credited for authorship. Right now you cannot copyright or trademark an AI generated item. So, you know, there's a lot of discussion around that.

But in the same way that new discoveries might be made, I do think that there could potentially come a context in the future where AI is not a lead author, but is given some sort of a credit for a role or part of discovery. I won't be surprised if that happens. Yes, absolutely.

I agree with you, Heather, on that part because we do not know the buzz around AI is not going to d any sooner. And I think it's just going to increase the resonance. The effect is just going to increase and, you know, kind of spread across the world.

And especially when you talk about research integrity in lines of Using AI image data, image manipulation and data manipulation is also one of the main concerns when researchers use AI as part of their, just to support probably their findings or the way that they write a research paper, probably. But then that is also one of the major threats that we need to consider. And for that reason it is also necessary that we ensure that human expertise, as you mentioned, humans, you cannot oversee the fact that humans are supposed to put in their expertise and make sure that they ensure the way that research is reported, the research is published and then finally disseminated to readers.

Because in the end every research is going to have a certain societal impact and that societal impact should not be in a negative side for sure. And the way we report things, the way we publish them, that is how it is going to make a lot of, it is going to create a lot of waves in the industry at the moment. Because as you clearly mentioned, LLMs is at a very initial stage at the moment and we still have a lot to go there.

And in that sense, the businesses or the AI developers, the companies that develop AI need to be a little more transparent in terms of how they use data, in terms of how they are processing certain data, if they are receiving it from any of the sources. If I am trusting an AI tool with my data, which probably is not published anywhere, I need to be sure of how that data is going to be secure. The privacy rules and all of these things probably need to be very clearly stated by the AI developers as well.

Right, Absolutely. You know, and, and again, as you say, it's, it's, it's really early days for this. And you know, I see, you know, a number of companies thinking about, you know, using LL, creating LLMs based on their own peer reviewed, you know, data that's, or content.

I think that's very exciting. I think more and more subject areas requiring data deposit for reproducibility, for replicability, you know, that that's going to be really critical. You know, I think that I don't see humans, you know, being, being, you know, put put in danger here.

I don't think that AI peer reviewers are going to replace human reviewers, but I do think that there could be some things that are done with articles and data before the peer reviewer gets them so that they have some, some guidance and then they can use their, their subject area expertise, you know, in the best way. They're not trying to, you know, copy edit the article or something like that. And you know, I think that the, the, just as we talked about the roles in libraries changing the roles in publishers and service providers, you know, are going to change and I think become less boring, you know, less rote.

I am not a person who loves a good spreadsheet. There are some people that's the best part of their day to get up and look at a spreadsheet, so more power to them. But some of the things that took a long time to do that will, you know, be accomplished more quickly, will open up for more, you know, creative and focused, you know, endeavors and lead to careers that, you know, we, we haven't even seen yet.

So that's going to be exciting to watch as well. Yes, definitely. And like you rightly said that we don't see humans being replaced by AI anytime soon or especially in the scholarly publishing dynamic, let's put it like, let's be realistic here.

And so that's when the whole concept of hybrid intelligence comes into picture where you are going like humans and AI is going to walk hand in when it comes to delivering certain outputs in the science communications domain, let's say. So when we speak about creating content or writing papers and having to publish and while maintaining the integrity and the sanctity of scientific queries. How do you think, can we strike a healthy balance this domain? Yeah, I think one, the, the keyword in that sentence is really healthy balance and we could actually question whether we have a healthy balance now when it comes to research assessment.

For example, you know, the, the push and push and push to publish more and more papers and specific journals and you know, across, you know, different, different professions, you know, has created some of the technology issues that we have now on research integrity with paper mills and the like, which of course existed before we had, you know, automated, you know, paper mills. You know, I think a better look at that, you know, on the research assessment end could, you know, let some steam off, let some of the pressure off, you know, in areas where you have doctors, for example, and maybe they're not in a research specialty, but in order to get a promotion, you know, they're required to have some, some, some papers published. And so that creates a potential for them, you know, to want to, you know, take a, an AI shortcut.

The other side of that coin could be that there, you know, researchers want to do research like that's their thing. At the end of the day, they don't want necessarily to publish. Some of them might, but generally they want to do their research.

And it might be that writing up the results from some experiments could readily, you know, be done by AI and that that would become, you know, generally accepted. Oh, the methods section gets written and then checked or something like that. So I think that we could use it for some, you know, positive and good, you know, requirements, you know, across, across those fields.

Yeah, again, I think a lot of stuff that we're thinking about now, we just don't know yet, you know, what's going to be happening. I think that, you know, AI in the, in the early research elements in terms of discovery is going to do a great job in finding authors what they need. You know, I am very excited to hearing about plain language summaries that are being created and you know, I would live for a day when I could like, say, show me all of the plain language summaries across all the publishers, you know, and having an AI, you know, research assistant that would be able to know the diff.

Know, know the difference between me searching for Apple Computer versus the Apple the fruit or Apple the record label, you know, and, and the, the benefits that are going to come, you know, in the research and discovery stage, you know, that will lead to greater, you know, productivity, you know, down the line. I think one of the areas we're really focused on right now is this good growth of retractions. And you know, I do work in, you know, some, you know, initiatives around this as part of my role at Delta Think I work with the International STM association on an initiative called get ftr.

And one of the things that's being added, you know, as we speak is in addition to letting researchers know that they have access to content because it's open or free or because their institution has a subscription, we're going to start pulling in Crossref information and retraction watch information to show them right at the level before they've even clicked through to the content that this has an update or this has a retraction and those kinds of retraction notices can be, are going to be provided, you know, across, across the web because no one wants a researcher to unknowingly use something that's, that's been retracted or where there was even, you know, an indication of concern on the part of the publisher. So I think protecting, using that type of, you know, AI matching around author title or you know, matching through a DOI is going to help filter out some of that misconduct at an ear the earliest possible stage so that it doesn't, you know, go on to sort of contaminate the scientific record. Absolutely.

Heather and I absolutely, completely agree. And I think in 2023 there were around 10,000 plus retractions or overall. And that's very concerning.

And for us, for people who are science communicators, it becomes absolutely necessary to ensure that research misconduct is not being spread to a large extent. Moving on to your experience as an advisor to many organizations over the past years. How do you see a successful collaboration between different stakeholders in this ecosystem while they are wanting to maintain research integrity as well as ensuring that the right dissemination of scientific findings happens? Yeah, I think open communication, you know, is, is a good foundation making sure that all sides and all stakeholder concerns, you know, are heard.

So it's like we're kind of taking, you know, you know, DEIA in a smaller, like a committee context or a group context or a work context and then like expanding it, you know, to incorporate the whole ecosystem, which of course adds, you know, complexity. We find, you know, at Delta Think that an iterative approach is best. Sort of checking in frequently, you know, slightly adjusting goals, making sure everyone's on the, on the same page, you know, is the best way, you know, to kind of move forward.

Generating, you know, the best efforts from everyone that that is involved. Prioritizing, you know, and communicating. We do a lot of workshops for companies who may be looking for additional revenue streams or looking for additional business models.

Now that content, you know, might not be the only way forward for them and you know, bringing in the stakeholders early on so they don't feel like that it's a, just a top down dictate to them. But getting, you know, and generating and getting their ideas, incorporating those, you know, as you move forward, you know, really is the best way to go as far as that. And I think it's, you know, it works on a company level, whether you're talking about different divisions, it works in an ecosystem level, you know, with many stakeholders.

You know, organizations like SSP are great because they bring together publishers and vendors, maybe less, fewer librarians. You know, on this SSP front, I think where we struggle as an industry is we don't have as much access to researchers as we would like to have and as we could. So I'd love to find a way, you know, to make that happen because, you know, at the end of the day, a lot of the things that are created and published and provided tools and functionality and features are for the researchers.

And while librarians are great to try to communicate back to us what they need, it's not as good, you know, as direct communication, obviously. Yes, absolutely. And what one advice would you want to give to all the stakeholders of the scholarly communication field when it comes to, you know, adapting to these changing times of digital era.

Just one advice if you would want to give them. I, you know, be optimistic, you know, do not dismay. You can't always see the outcome of the change when you're in it, but it is moving, you know, a pace.

I mean, think about the early print to digital, you know, revolution. There weren't very many standards in place. There was a woman who worked at our company who had to send out 30 different versions of every book that we published because every ebook platform used a different standard.

You know, smart people came along, you know, EPUB was developed, good metadata standards, you know, were developed. Organizations like CrossRef, you know, provided linking great discovery tools, author identifiers, organizational identifiers, all of those things were coming. But I couldn't have faulted her for thinking, you know, oh my gosh, it's bad and it's only going to get worse.

So know that smart minds are out there and they're going to be working on these, these tough problems and you know, I'm confident we're going to come through stronger on the other side. Absolutely. Very rightly said so.

And a very strong note or a message that I get out of this entire conversation is that you need to be optimistic of the change, embrace the change as it comes to you, and while you're doing all of these things, ensure that you are doing everything in ethical practices in the right possible way that you can. And finally, the last question that I would want to ask you today is what legacy do you hope to leave behind in the scholarly publishing industry through your work with SSP and other organizations as well? Yeah, I think we're, none of us are getting rich in scholarly publishing. We don't do it for the money.

We do it because we believe in the, the positive outcomes, as you say, of what we're doing. We strive to meet ethical standards that the bar gets higher, you know, all of the time, so the work is never done. You know, we're working on, you know, inclusivity and, and, and diversity of perspective and that work, you know, will never be done.

But look around you at the people that you're working with in your team, in your department, in your company, in the companies that you work with, through the libraries you communicate to onto authors. It's like, you know, greater growing circles. Meet as many people as you can because you will learn more about what's going on and what amazing people go into the field.

Mentor others and ask for mentors yourself. We tend to be an organization, an industry that's very generous with their time. And I learn as much from my mentees as I could ever hope to impart to them.

Volunteer through committees or boards because you will get an insider perspective, which makes the meetings that much more interesting and the outputs of those organizations, you know, that much more fulfilling. And so keep, keep your focus on the people they will get you through. We do.

We are an industry that does tend to have a lot of turnover. Companies grow and shift. I myself have lost my position at companies three times.

It's never fun. It hurts every time. But I now make sure that I help others who are in that situation.

And the more people that you know, the more people you will have to help you be resilient, regardless of the direction that your career path takes. Thank you so much. That was very insightful and one of the most inspiring conversations I've ever had.

Thank you so much for your time. Heather, again, what you mentioned toward the end is you need to be positive, you need to be optimistic with whatever comes your way. And yes, we are definitely not getting rich, but we are getting rich in terms of the literature that we produce as part of scholarly communications, which is making scientific inquiry more robust as the times change.

So that's what we can aim for and hope that our ethical standards are at par as times grow and the number of retractions are reduced, especially that happen due to misconduct. Well, thank you for, for having me here today. I've really enjoyed the conversation.