Peer Review in Computing Research

A Zen Koan

If a researcher obtains a result, but does not publish it, does it have any impact?

Fact: Publishing is the core of the research business! How we publish, review and assess our work is one of the most crucial aspects of computing research.

Observations

- Refereed journal publication has been the dominant mode of result dissemination in most scientific fields.

- Conferences have played a similar, and in some cases even a supplanting, role in computing research.

- Recently, a sense that the conference publication system is not functioning well.

- The Web has greatly decreased the costs and speed of dissemination.

Questions

- How have our publication practices influenced our field?

- What are advantages and disadvantages of our publication practices?

- How should we navigate through the various choices?

- Does the Web offer new publication models?

- How should our research community find the answers to these question? What role should CRA play?

Panel

- Lance Fortnow: Northwestern U., SIGACT Chair, "Time for Computer Science to Grow Up"

- Jeff Mogul: HP Fellow, organized "Workshop on Organizing Workshops, Conferences, and Symposia for Computer Systems" in 2008

- Jeanette Wing: CMU, ex-CISE AD, critic of "deadline-driven research"

- Rich Baraniuk: Rice University, founder of Connexions (cnx.org, open educational resource)