

PREDATORY JOURNALS



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, you should:

- Gain a historical perspective of how and why predatory journals were developed
- Be familiar with resources and criteria to help identify predatory journals and avoid pitfalls

DISCLAIMER

- This module is built as a reference source to increase awareness of the various concerns with predatory journals
- Please refer to your company policies on predatory journals
- Any information provided in this module **SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPANY POLICIES**

PREDATORY JOURNALS

- The term “predatory journal” was first coined by American librarian Jeffrey Beall
- Fake or scam journals that send phishing emails offering “open access” publication in exchange for payment, without providing robust editorial or publishing services
 - Limited-to-no quality control and/or transparency about processes and fees
- Publishers of predatory journals corrupt the communication of science in exchange for financial gain
 - Quality control via peer review and publication processes cannot be trusted
 - Not indexed in standard databases (eg, PubMed)
- Allow for publication of fake or fraudulent research

NUMBER OF PREDATORY PUBLISHERS AND JOURNALS IS GROWING

- Beall's List (archive): <https://web.archive.org/web/20170111172309/https://scholarlyoa.com/individual-journals/>
 - 2011: 18 predatory publishers.
 - 2015: 693 predatory publishers
- Comprehensive surveys of predatory journals by Shen and Bjork in 2015
 - Increase from ~53,000 articles published in predatory journals in 2010 to 420,000 articles across 8,000 active predatory journals from 966 publishers in 2014
- Predatory publishing market is estimated to be ~\$75 million

Clark J. Predatory journals: everyone's problem. Feb 27, 2017. <http://ismpp-newsletter.com/2017/02/27/predatory-journals-everyones-problem/>.

Beall J. List of standalone journals [Beall's list]: <https://web.archive.org/web/20170111172309/https://scholarlyoa.com/individual-journals/>.

Shen C, Björk BC. 'Predatory' open access: a longitudinal study of article volumes and market characteristics. *BMC Med*. 2015;13:230.

AWARENESS OF PREDATORY JOURNALS

- Researchers, institutions, and medical publication professionals should be aware of the existence and practices of predatory journals
 - Difficult to distinguish predatory journals from established journals
 - Researchers may inadvertently publish in predatory journals
 - Researchers may purposely publish in predatory journals to artificially pump up their publication record
- The visibility of the predatory journal problem has been heightened, with news of legal action by the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) against the OMICS publishing group for deceptive practices, including lack of peer review and hidden publication fees

GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS OF PREDATORY JOURNALS

- A 2014 analysis by Xia and colleagues found that authors in predatory journals are more likely to be junior and based in developing countries, especially South Asia, compared with authors of articles in reputable open access journals
 - Researchers in developing countries may not have sufficient education, supervision, or mentorship to recognize a scam journal offer
 - Predatory journals actively court new researchers, offering quick and seemingly easy publication
- Predatory journals are not easily distinguished from those of the 20,000 or so genuine journals, especially when the names of the journals often look similar or mimic established journals
- Mostly based in low- and middle-income countries, such as India, Pakistan, and Nigeria
 - However, they often claim addresses in the United States or United Kingdom

Clark J. Predatory Journals: Everyone's Problem. Feb 27, 2017. <http://ismpp-newsletter.com/2017/02/27/predatory-journals-everyones-problem/>.

Xia J, et al. Who publishes in "predatory" journals? *J Assoc Inform Sci Tech*. 2015;66(7); 1406-17.

PREDATORY OR PSEUDO-JOURNALS

AN UPDATE FROM ICMJE

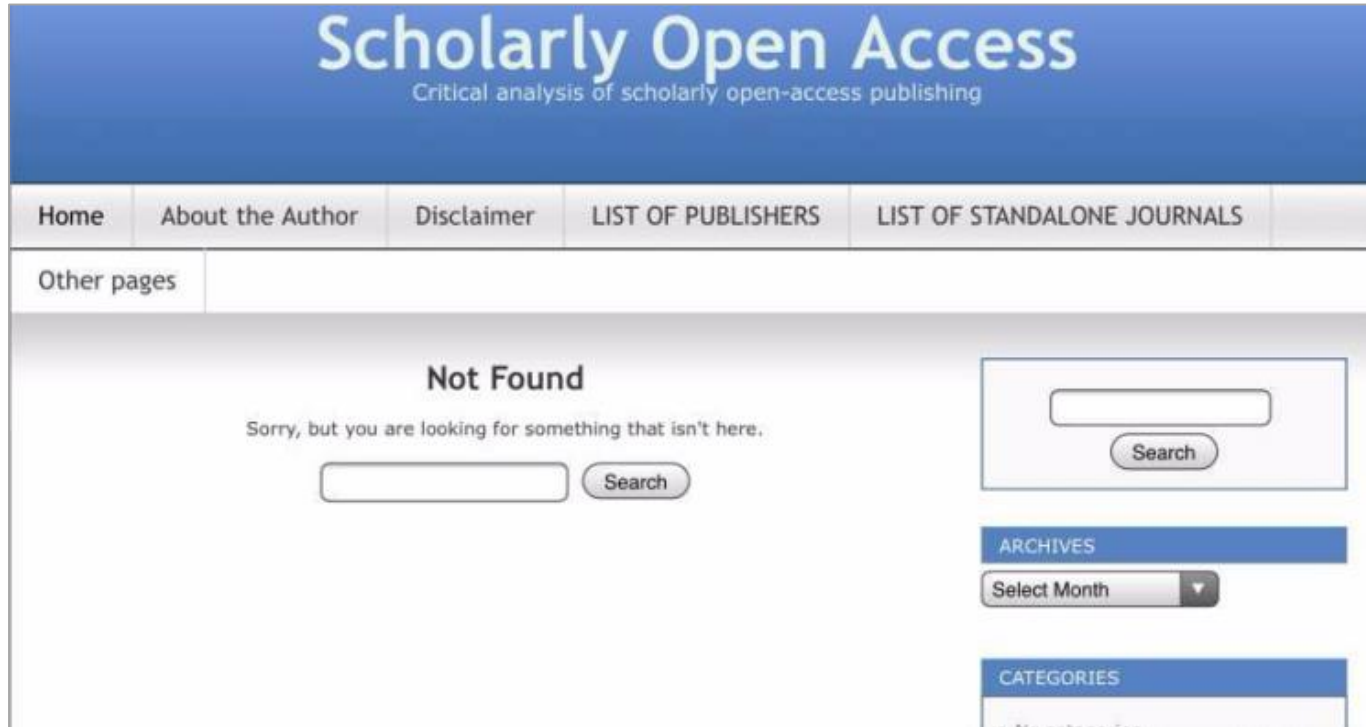
- Growing number of “predatory-” or “pseudo-journals” that advertise themselves as “scholarly medical journals”
 - Accept and publish almost all submissions and charge article processing or publication fees, often informing authors after a paper’s acceptance for publication
 - Often claim to, but do not, perform peer review
 - May purposefully use names similar to well established journals
 - May erroneously state that they are members of ICMJE
- Researchers should be aware of predatory journals and avoid submitting research to them for publication
- Authors have a responsibility to evaluate the journals to which they submit manuscripts
- Guidance from various organizations can help identify the characteristics of reputable peer-reviewed journals
 - <http://www.wame.org/identifying-predatory-or-pseudo-journals>
 - <http://www.wame.org/about/principles-of-transparency-and-best-practice>

ICMJE. Recommendations for the conduct, reporting, editing, and publication of scholarly work in medical journals. *Updated December 2017*. <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>.

Laine C, Winker MA; WAME. Identifying predatory or pseudo-journals, Feb 18, 2017. <http://www.wame.org/identifying-predatory-or-pseudo-journals>.

WAME. Principles of transparency and best practice in scholarly publishing. <http://www.wame.org/about/principles-of-transparency-and-best-practice>.

Why Jeffrey Beall shut down his blog.....



- Jeffrey Beall, Librarian at the University of Colorado Denver and publisher of the famous “Scholarly Open Access” blog
- After 5 years, Beall shut down his blog in January 2017 because of “intense pressure” from the University and “fear” of losing his job
- Opinion piece published by him in the journal *Biochemia Medica*, the official journal of the Croatian Society of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine

Based on Ravindranath P. At last, Jeffrey Beall reveals the reasons for shutting down his blog on predatory journals. <https://journosdiary.com/2017/06/13/jeffrey-beall-scholarly-open-access/>.
Opinion piece: Beall J. What I learned from predatory publishers. *Biochemia Medica*. 2017;27(2):273-9. <https://doi.org/10.11613/BM.2017.029>.

CURRENT LISTING OF PREDATORY PUBLISHERS

- A new listing of predatory publishers was recently launched by Cabell's International
 - Access is available for purchase
 - <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2017/07/25/cabells-new-predatory-journal-blacklist-review/>
 - Article for more info: <http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/cabells-our-journal-blacklist-d...>

Anderson R. Cabell's new predatory journal blacklist: a review. Jul 25, 2017. <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2017/07/25/cabells-new-predatory-journal-blacklist-review/>.

Prasad R. Cabell's: 'Our journal blacklist differs from Jeffrey Beall's'. Jun 17, 2017. <http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/cabells-our-journal-blacklist-differs-from-jeffrey-bealls/article19094374.ece>.

IDENTIFYING PUBLISHERS OF PREDATORY JOURNALS

- Evaluating scholarly open-access publishers should be thorough and done with caution when examining the publisher's content, practices, and websites
 - Contacting the publisher
 - Reading statements about experiences with the publisher
 - Determining if publisher engages in practices committed by predatory publishers

KNOWN PRACTICES BY PREDATORY OPEN-ACCESS PUBLISHERS

EDITOR AND STAFF

- Publisher's owner is the editor of each and every journal published by the organization
- No single individual identified for any journal
- No formal editorial/review board
- No academic information provided for the editor, editorial staff, and/or review board members
- Editor and/or review board members do not possess academic expertise to reasonably qualify them to be publication gatekeepers in the journal's field
- Two or more journals have duplicate editorial boards
- Journals have an insufficient number of board members (eg, 2-3 members), have concocted editorial boards (made-up names), name scholars on their editorial board without their knowledge or permission, or have board members who are prominent researchers but exempt them from any contributions to the journal except the use of their names and/or photographs
- Lack of geographical diversity among the editorial board members, especially those that claim to be international in scope or coverage
- Editorial board engages in gender bias

KNOWN PRACTICES BY PREDATORY OPEN-ACCESS PUBLISHERS

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Lack of transparency in publishing operations	No policies or practices for digital preservation	A large fleet of journals with a common template for each journal's home page	Insufficient or undisclosed information about author fees	Published content cannot be searched and is therefore not in academic indexes	Copy-proofs (locks) PDFs, thus making it difficult to check for plagiarism
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KNOWN PRACTICES BY PREDATORY OPEN-ACCESS PUBLISHERS

INTEGRITY

Journal name incongruent with its mission	Name of journal does not adequately reflect its geographical origin	Sends spam requests for peer reviews to unqualified scholars	Falsely claims to be indexed in legitimate abstracting and indexing services or claims to be indexed in resources that are not abstracting and indexing services	Dedicates insufficient resources to preventing and eliminating author misconduct	Asks the corresponding author for suggested reviewers and uses suggested reviewers without sufficiently vetting their qualifications or authenticity
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KNOWN PRACTICES BY PREDATORY OPEN-ACCESS PUBLISHERS

OTHER

Re-publish papers without providing appropriate credits	Use boastful language claiming to be a “leading publisher”	Operate in a Western country chiefly for the purpose of functioning as a vanity press for scholars in a developing country	Provide minimal or no copyediting or proofreading of submissions	Publish papers that are not academic	Have a "contact us" page that only includes a web form or an email address, and hides or does not reveal its location
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THINK. CHECK. SUBMIT.

- A campaign to help researchers identify trusted journals for their research
- Simple checklist to assess the credentials of a journal or publisher
- Produced with the support of a coalition from across scholarly communications in response to discussions about deceptive publishing



Are you submitting your research to a trusted journal?
Is it the right journal for your work?



Use check list to assess the journal



Only if you can answer “yes” to the questions
on check list

THINK. CHECK. SUBMIT.

FOUNDING & CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

Asian Council of Science Editors (ACSE)	Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche – Association of European Research Libraries (LIBER)
Association of Learned & Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP)	Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA)
BioMed Central	SPARC Europe
Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)	Springer Nature
Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)	International Association of STM Publishers (STM)
INASP	Ubiquity Press
ISSN International Centre	UKSG

THINK. CHECK. SUBMIT.

TRANSLATED INTO MULTIPLE LANGUAGES

Arabic	Japanese
Catalan	Italian
Chinese	Lithuanian
Czech	Portuguese
French	Spanish
Greek	Ukrainian
Indonesian	

SUMMARY OF CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL PREDATORY JOURNALS

1. Scope of interest includes non-biomedical subjects alongside biomedical topics
2. Spelling and grammar errors
3. Images are distorted/fuzzy, intended to look like something they are not, or are unauthorized
4. Language targets authors
5. Promotion of the Index Copernicus Value
6. No description of the manuscript handling process
7. Manuscripts are requested to be submitted via email
8. Promises rapid publication
9. Absence of a retractions policy
10. No information on whether and how journal content will be digitally preserved
11. Very low article processing/publication charge (eg, <\$150 USD)
12. Those claiming to be open access either retain copyright of published research or fail to mention copyright
13. Non-professional/non-journal email address provided as contact (eg, @gmail.com or @yahoo.com)

ACCOUNTABILITY AND COUNTERING PREDATORY JOURNALS

- Everyone should be accountable for their journal choices and provide evidence that the journal is appropriate
- Institutions and funders should be accountable to the highest standards of quality and integrity for the research they support
- Medical publication professionals who support authors and institutions have the opportunity to counter the predatory journal problem

PREDATORY CONFERENCES

- In-person equivalent to predatory journals
- How to recognize a predatory conference
 1. You may receive an adulatory email to deliver a keynote lecture at their “prestigious” international conference, perhaps in a field in which you have never published or worked
 2. You may be required to pay to attend the conference even as a speaker, and you may be offered the opportunity to chair a session, which will frequently increase your cost²
 3. Conference website may contain spelling and grammar mistakes or stilted English, and use a free email address^{1,3}
- Other features of predatory conferences include^{3,4}
 1. Falsely claiming to be a non-profit
 2. Falsely claiming involvement of people on advisory boards or organizing committees and/or universities or other organizations as partners or sponsors
 3. Lack of transparency by using fake names to hide the identity of organizers or their country of origin
 4. Inadequate peer review with rapid acceptance of submissions
 5. Higher fees than typical in the field, with presenters paying more than attendees
 6. Organizer simultaneously holds multiple conferences at the same time and place, with the same conference held multiple times a year in different locations
 7. Conference papers appear in known or suspected predatory journals.
- Recent list of some confirmed predatory conferences and organizers³

From Baum E. Beware the imposter: predatory conferences lure the unsuspecting. Sep 28, 2017. <http://ismpp-newsletter.com/2017/09/28/beware-the-imposter-predatory-conferences-lure-the-unsuspecting/>.

1. McCrostie J. Predatory conferences stalk Japan's groves of academia. 2016. <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2016/05/11/issues/predatory-conferences-stalk-japans-groves-academia/#.WYn8fYTys2w>.

2. Pai M. Predatory conferences undermine science and scam academics. 2016. <https://naturemicrobiologycommunity.nature.com/users/20892-madhukar-pai/posts/12706-predatory-conferences-undermine-science-and-scam-academics>.

3. Cress PE. Are predatory conferences the dark side of the open access movement? *Aesthet Surg J*. 2017;37(6):734-8.

4. McCrostie J. Proposed criteria for identifying predatory conferences. 2016. <https://scholarlyoa.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/proposed-criteria-for-identifying-predatory-conferences.pdf>.

KEY RESOURCES

- Anderson R. Cabell's new predatory journal blacklist: a review. Jul 25, 2017. <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2017/07/25/cabells-new-predatory-journal-blacklist-review/>.
- Baum E. Beware the imposter: predatory conferences lure the unsuspecting. Sep 28, 2017. <http://ismpp-newsletter.com/2017/09/28/beware-the-imposter-predatory-conferences-lure-the-unsuspecting/>.
- Beall J. Criteria for determining predatory open-access publishers. Jan 1, 2015. <https://web.archive.org/web/20170105195017/https://scholarlyoa.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/criteria-2015.pdf>.
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