Demarcating Legitimate and Predatory Academic Publishing

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Open Access Overview

• Lowered costs, barriers to entry in scholarly publishing.
  • Lots of new entrants, innovations in the market!

• **Important incentive change**: In an Article Processing Charge (APC)-based business model, publishers are remunerated for total articles published.
  • Selectivity becomes a costly luxury!

• These new incentives have influenced the emergence of numerous ‘predatory’ OA publishers and journals.
Quick Overview of Predatory Publishing

• “Publishers that unprofessionally exploit the author-pays model of open-access publishing for their own profit.” (Beall, 2012)
  • Does this mean that *professionally* exploiting the author-pays model is academically acceptable?
• “Taking large fees without providing robust editorial or publishing services.” (Clark & Smith, 2015)
• Varying motivations of authors, publishers. (Demir, 2018; Frandsen, 2019)
Australian dog serves on the editorial boards of seven medical journals

By Ryan Cross | May 24, 2017, 2:30 PM

Ollie might be the world’s smartest dog—or the most deceptive. Residing in Perth, Australia, and publishing under the pseudonym Dr. Olivia Doll, the Staffordshire terrier (not pictured above) serves on seven medical journal editorial boards, Perth Now reports. Her research interests
AUSTIN PSYCHIATRY

About Journal

Austin Psychiatry is an open access, peer reviewed, scholarly journal dedicated to publish articles covering all areas of Psychiatry.

The journal aims to promote research communications and provide a forum for doctors, researchers, physicians and healthcare professionals to find most recent advances in all areas of Psychiatry.
Get me off Your Fucking Mailing List

David Mazières and Eddie Kohler
New York University
University of California, Los Angeles
http://www.mailavenger.org/

Abstract

Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list. Get me off your fucking mailing list.

1 Introduction

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Moderately Illegitimate Publishers

World Journal of Social Science

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Several editors resigned from the various editorial boards. The number of manuscript submissions declined, including several withdrawals. At the end of the year, Academic Journals was forced to downsize. Almost half of all members of the team was affected. (Regier, 2018)

Academic Journals submitted an appeal to Beall. He admitted it may have been harsh to add them to his list, but refused to remove them.

“Several editors resigned from the various editorial boards. The number of manuscript submissions declined, including several withdrawals. At the end of the year, Academic Journals was forced to downsize. Almost half of all members of the team was affected.”

Blacklisting can be a self-fulfilling prophecy.
Grey/Borderline Publishers

HIGH IMPACT

The world’s top journals

- Most cited in Neurosciences, Microbiology, Plant Sciences and Psychology
- In the top Impact Factor percentiles across 23 academic categories
- In the top CiteScore percentiles across 54 academic categories
- Indexed in Web of Science (SCIE), Scopus, PubMed and more

See analysis
Grey Journals and Publishers

• Some mix of “black” and “white”: there are many shades of grey!
• Lots of ways to have ambiguous legitimacy in academic publishing!
  • Lacking legitimacy is not the same thing as contentious legitimacy.
  • Newness/unfamiliarity.
  • Previous histories of controversy.
  • Partial indexing in academic databases (e.g., Scopus, Web of Science).
  • Limited minor violations.
• Straddling legitimate and illegitimate categories can be a profitable strategy, and a path to upward mobility. (Alexy & George, 2013)
Stigma of Third-Party Raters

BEALL’S LIST OF PREDAATORY JOURNALS AND PUBLISHERS

Potential predatory scholarly open-access journals

Instructions: simply enter the journal’s name or its URL in the search box above. If the journal has a publisher that was assessed to be predatory, then it is included on the Publishers list.

Original list

This is an archived version of the Beall’s list – a list of potential predatory journals created by a librarian Jeffrey Beall. We will only update links and add notes to this list. A list of new predatory journals is available below the original one.

- Academic Exchange Quarterly
- Academic Research Reviews
- Academy of Contemporary Research Journal (AOCR)
- ACME Intelects
- Acta de Gerencia Ciencia (CAGENIA)
- Acta Advances in Agricultural Sciences (AAAS)
- Acta Kinesiologica
- Acta Medica International
- Acta Scientiae et Intellectus
- Acta Veilt
- The Advance Journals of Engineering Mathematics and Computer Sciences (AJEMCS)
- Advance Research Journal of Multidisciplinary Discoveries
- The Advanced Science Journal

Original description

This is a list of questionable, scholarly open-access standalone journals. For journals published by a publisher, please look for the publisher on the list of publishers, here. This list is only for single, standalone journals. We recommend that scholars read the available reviews, assessments and descriptions provided here, and then decide for themselves whether they want to submit articles, serve as editors or on editorial boards. In a few cases, non-open access journals whose practices match those of predatory journals have been added to the list. The criteria for determining predatory journals are here.
Reactivity from Blacklisted Publishers

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Why Beall’s List Died — and What It Left Unresolved About Open Access

By Paul Basken  |  SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

A librarian abruptly shuttered a blacklist of journals he deemed untrustworthy. But while Jeffrey Beall’s project has ended, debates over its merit and impact live on.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Journal Title</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Date Reviewed</th>
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<td>ABC Journals</td>
<td>ABC Journal of Advanced Research</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Open access</td>
<td>June 22, 2016</td>
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<td>ABC Journals</td>
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<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Open access</td>
<td>June 22, 2016</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Varying Degrees of Predation (N=11,450)
Varying Degrees of Predation

This figure looks right-censored. Cabell’s probably does not blacklist publishers with a few minor violations.

Cabell’s produces a *de facto* greylist of at least 50,000 journals not on its whitelist or blacklist. (Linacre, 2019)
Different combinations of violations!

There are many types of ‘predation’ in academic publishing, but evaluation is often binary or black-and-white.
Legitimacy is not a binary black-and-white concept!

Institutions can be low status but high legitimacy.

Status vs. Legitimacy in OA Publishing
Institutional status changes incentives.

High rejection rates entail actual and opportunity costs for lower-status journals.

High rejection rates imbue higher-status journals with pricing power. Scientific and economic incentives align!
High-status predation?

• “Publishers may choose to optimize price based on Impact Factor and/or a strong brand...Would an OA-advocate funder pay $10,000 or even $25,000 to have the results of their multi-million dollar project published in Nature or Science? They might.” (deltathink, 2018)

• “In the end, the price is set by what the market wants to pay for it.”
  - Wim van der Stelt, Executive Vice President, Springer. (van Noorden, 2013)

*The social acceptability of profit-seeking behavior contextually varies!* (Thaler, 1983; Kahneman et al., 1986; Zelizer, 1995)
With growing concerns about “predatory” publishing, what role do trustworthy publishers play in ensuring trust and integrity? Find out in an interview with Dr. Philippe Terheggen, Managing Director of STM Journals at @ElsevierConnect

“Predatory” vs trustworthy journals: What do they mean for…
An Elsevier leader answers questions about the practices of predatory journals and the role of trustworthy publishers
elsevier.com
Next Einstein Forum launches Scientific African, an open access multi-disciplinary journal to boost the global reach of research from Africa

Altruistic corporate social responsibility or a move to establish a foothold in a potentially upwardly mobile market?

Kigali, Rwanda, March 26, 2018 – A unique partnership between the Next Einstein Forum (NEF), an initiative of the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS), and Elsevier, the information analytics business specializing in science and health, will see the creation of a new pan-African, peer reviewed, open access publishing journal, dedicated to boosting the global reach and impact of research by Africans.

Scientific African will generate increased visibility for African researchers and provide a platform to share their research with the global community. Despite the digital revolution, African researchers continue to suffer from a lack of global exposure. They will now benefit from Elsevier’s existing journal infrastructure and expertise to publish their research across a wide range of scientific disciplines. Scientific African is

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Discussion

• Low-status organizations being punished relatively harshly for borderline or illegitimate behavior. Halo effects for high-status organizations?

• What is a legitimate acceptance rate? If “soundness-only” peer review journals (e.g., PLOS ONE, Scientific Reports) have acceptance rates of 40-60%, are higher acceptance rates problematic?
Concluding Thoughts

• Appraisals of ‘predation’ and legitimacy in scientific publishing are based on a mix of academic and economic legitimacy.
• Legitimacy is not necessarily a binary concept.
• Predation in OA publishing should be understood as on a continuum.
  • Where to draw the line between legitimate and illegitimate?
  • Defining legitimacy in science and OA publishing will be fiercely contested on economic and academic grounds by both publishers and academics.
Thank you! 😊

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