

7-12-2019

# The Soap Opera of Predatory Publishing and Student Research

Jenessa McElfresh

*Clemson University*, [jmcelfr@clemson.edu](mailto:jmcelfr@clemson.edu)

Megan Sheffield

*Clemson University*, [msheff@clemson.edu](mailto:msheff@clemson.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/lib\\_pres](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/lib_pres)



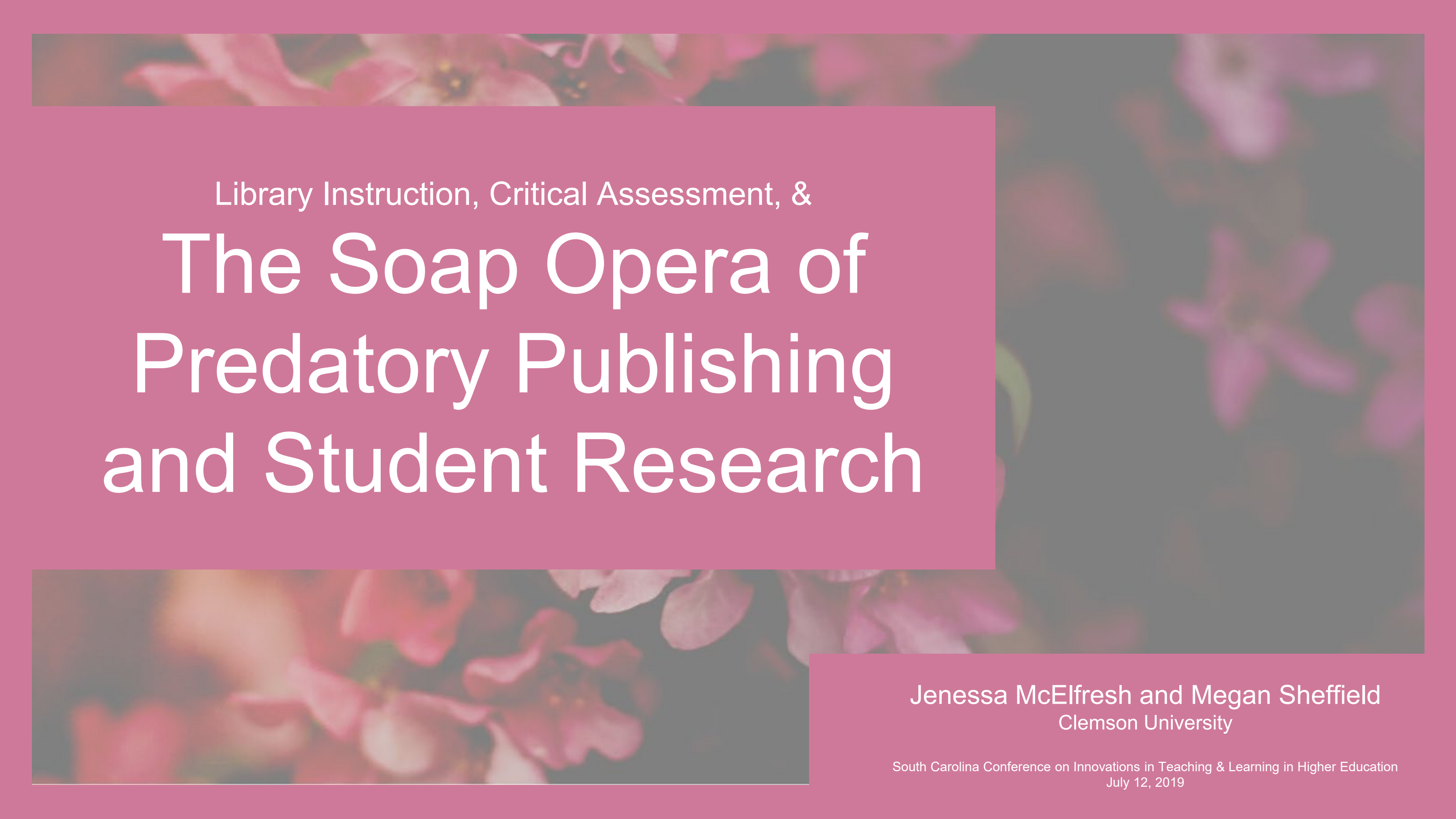
Part of the [Scholarly Publishing Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

McElfresh, Jenessa and Sheffield, Megan, "The Soap Opera of Predatory Publishing and Student Research" (2019). *Presentations*. 159.  
[https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/lib\\_pres/159](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/lib_pres/159)

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the University Libraries at TigerPrints. It has been accepted for inclusion in Presentations by an authorized administrator of TigerPrints. For more information, please contact [kokeefe@clemson.edu](mailto:kokeefe@clemson.edu).



Library Instruction, Critical Assessment, &  
**The Soap Opera of  
Predatory Publishing  
and Student Research**

Jenessa McElfresh and Megan Sheffield  
Clemson University

South Carolina Conference on Innovations in Teaching & Learning in Higher Education  
July 12, 2019

# Outline



What is Predatory Publishing?

Examples

Student Impact

Tools

Library Involvement

Q&A

# What is Predatory Publishing?

# Definition

Bowman, J. D. (2014). Predatory publishing, questionable peer review, and fraudulent conferences. *American journal of pharmaceutical education*, 78(10), 176.

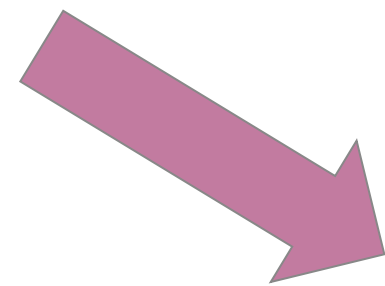
---

“Predatory publishing is the practice of publishing journals that exploit the emerging acceptance of open-access academic journals to undermine peer-review processes.”

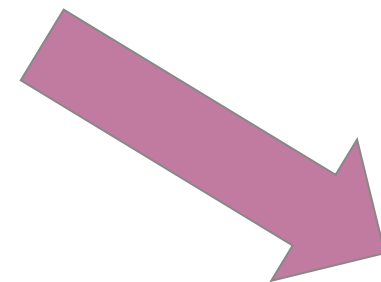
# How it works

---

Academic publishing business models: Traditional vs Open Access

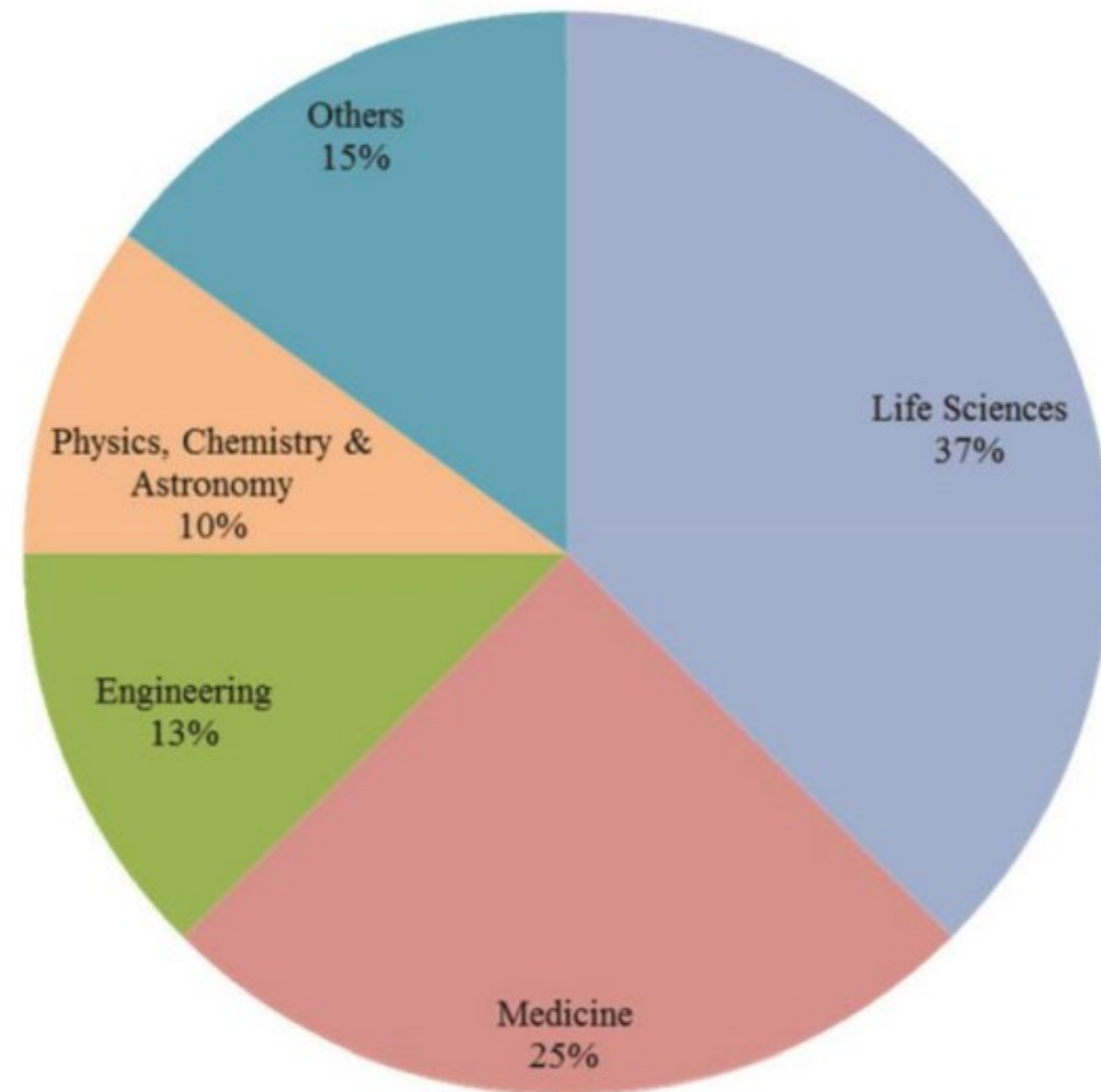


Open Access: Green vs Gold



Gold Open Access: Legitimate vs. Predatory

# What fields does it target?



**Figure 4.** Academic discipline of corresponding authors in predatory journals.

Most prevalent in biomedical fields

ALL disciplines are susceptible

Similar to vanity publishing

Frequently use vague interdisciplinary titles  
to attract multiple disciplines

Seethapathy, G. S., Kumar, J. U. S., & Hareesha, A. S. (2016). India's scientific publication in predatory journals: need for regulating quality of Indian science and education. *Current Science (00113891)*, 111(11), 1759–1764. <https://doi-org.libproxy.clemson.edu/10.18520/cs/v111/i11/1759-1764>

# How prevalent is this?

---

Beall's list (last updated January 2017) had **1,310** journals.

Cabell's blacklist currently has **10,060** journals with another 955 under review.

DOAJ only lists reputable journals, but has a public list of **460** journals that lie about being in DOAJ.

Further reading: ["The "problem" of predatory publishing remains a relatively small one and should not be allowed to defame open access"](#)



# Common Warning Signs

## of a predatory journal

---

- Spam emails to .edu accounts, targeting early-career researchers/grad students
- Fast turnaround from submission to publication
- Insufficient (or absent) peer review
- Lack of transparency about fees
- Fake/dead editors
- Copycat names to high-profile journals
- Missing standards/identifiers such as DOI, ISSN, etc
- False/fake bibliometrics or claims of inclusion/indexing in databases
- Amateurish website
- Incorrect, incomplete, or misleading contact info

# In the News

Fake/deceased editors: 2017 *Nature* [investigation](#), 2015 *Ottawa Citizen* [article](#)

Lawsuits/mandates: [Federal Trade Commission v. OMICs Group, Inc.](#) ([press release](#))

[Calls to action, investigative journalism:](#)

- Stop this waste of people, animals and money. *Nature*, 549(7670), 23-25. [doi:10.1038/549023a](https://doi.org/10.1038/549023a)
- Publishing Industry Scams Are Evolving For The Self-Publishing Age. [Forbes](#). (2018, July 25).
- These Professors Don't Work for a Predatory Publisher. It Keeps Claiming They Do. [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#). (2018, Aug 01).
- Many academics are eager to publish in worthless journals. [New York Times](#). (2017, October 30).



Examples

## Journal Websites

International Journal of Veterinary Science:

<http://www.ijvets.com>

Journal of Agricultural Science:

<http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/jas/about>

American Journal of Engineering Research:

<http://www.ajer.org>

American Journal of History and Culture:

<https://escipub.com/american-journal-of-history-and-culture/>

International Journal of Advances in Nursing Management:

<http://ijanm.com/Home.aspx>

Diversity and Equality in Health and Care:

<http://diversityhealthcare.imedpub.com/>

## Hijacked Journals

A hijacked journal is a journal website that has been taken over or duplicated by a counterfeit website that pretends to be the legitimate journal. The counterfeiters then solicit manuscripts to the hijacked journal and keep the profits.

### *Women's Healthcare: A Practical Journal for Nurse Practitioners*

January 11, 2011:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20110111024120/http://www.womenshealthcarejournal.com/>

October 31, 2016:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20161031190254/http://www.womenshealthcarejournal.com/>

September 23, 2017 (graphic images):

<http://web.archive.org/web/20170923153756/http://www.womenshealthcarejournal.com/>

June 30, 2018:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20180630111940/http://www.womenshealthcarejournal.com/>

Today: <https://womenshealthcarejournal.com/> ,  
<https://npwomenshealthcare.com/>

## Email invites

### Christmas flair



**COJ Reviews & Research** <reviews@crimsonpublishers.us>

Megan Sheffield

Wednesday, December 12, 2018 at 5:29 AM

[Show Details](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

[Manage Add-ins...](#)

**Dear Dr. Megan Sheffield,**

Hope you are doing well.

Well, I am managing editor of "**COJ Reviews and Research**" have been working on **Christmas special Issue**. we had saw one of your articles in online & privileged to read such a great article. So, if you have done any recent research or perhaps something that, please do submit us and have a part in this issue.

It would be grateful if you could send me any of your articles to publish in our upcoming issue.

We prize your acceptance as a Christmas flair.

**Best Regards,**

**Alice Taylor**

COJ Reviews and Research (**ISSN: 2639-0590**)

Crimson Publishers LLC, 555 Madison Avenue, 5th floor New York, NY 10022, +1 (929) 600-8049, USA

[Unsubscribe](#)

## Email invites

February 19, 2019

Dear Dr. Jenessa McElfresh,

Greetings from MJN!

**Madridge Journal of Nursing (MJN)** welcomes the original research article, review papers and short papers for the issue of March 2019. Manuscripts submitted to this journal will be deemed as they have not been published and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Submit Your article: [editor.mjn@madridge.org](mailto:editor.mjn@madridge.org)

Last Date for Paper Submission: **15<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

Online Publication Date: Within four working days from the date of submission.

With Best Regards,

James Martin

Editorial Coordinator, Madridge Journal of Nursing

ISSN: 2638-1605

Madridge Publishers

Disclaimer: If you do not want to receive any email in future, then reply unsubscribe.


## Conferences

OMICS: <https://www.omicsonline.org/>

Example:

Clinical and Medical Case Reports

<https://clinicalcasereports.conferenceseries.com/>



**Scientific Conferences**

- > 7th International Conference on Clinical an...  
November 08-09, 2018 Sydney, USA
- > Mindfulness 2018  
Madrid, Spain
- > 24th Asia-Pacific Dermatology Conference  
November 08-09, 2018 Sydney, Australia
- > 25th World Congress on Nursing & Healthc...  
November 08-09 , 2018 Sydney, Australia

[Read More](#)



## False Acceptance Letters

In April 2018, the American Society of Civil Engineers reported 7 cases of authors being duped with fake acceptance letters to their journals, all on seemingly legitimate letterheads and featuring forged editor signatures.

<https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2018/04/18/paper-acceptedunless-letter-forged/>



# Student Impact

# Why do students need to know about this?

- Students are unfamiliar with the landscape of scholarly publishing, but need to use peer-reviewed articles for assignments
- Often don't hear about predatory publishing from professors
- More likely to use Google Scholar

# Impact on their research

---

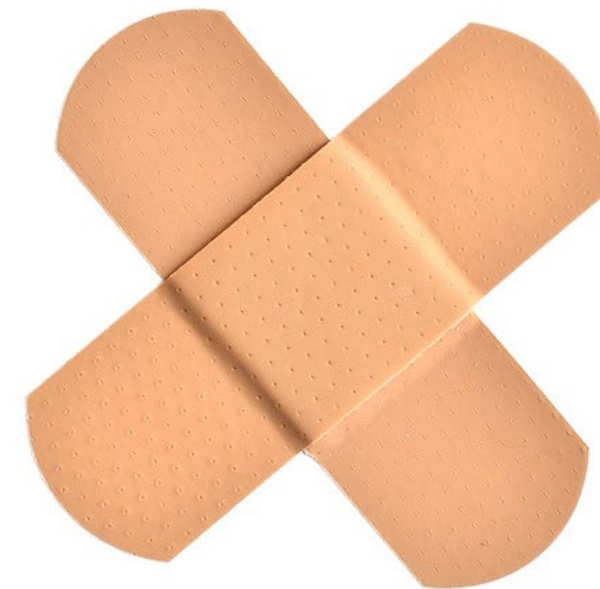
- In an in-class exercise in 2017, students in a senior-level science writing class found that about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of their sources in a “controversial veterinary science” topics paper were from predatory publishers. This was found **AFTER** a librarian taught them 2 sessions on finding and evaluating relevant sources and attended each of their class meetings.

# Impact on their future careers

## A glimpse at the nursing field

---

- In 2016, a research team identified 140 predatory journals in nursing from 75 publishers, relying on Beall's List for their methodology ([Journal of Nursing Scholarship](#))
- [PubMed](#) has repeatedly come under attack for not acting proactively to protect against predatory publishers, with many predatory articles indexed in PubMed and PMC
- A 2017 study, published in [Neuroscience](#), showed that 16% and 25% of predatory journals in neuroscience and neurology are indexed in PubMed
- Numerous [professional organizations](#) in nursing and medicine have published warnings and calls to action against predatory publishing



Tools

# Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)

Thorough vetting process to list “approved” OA journals (revamped in 2014), currently indexes >12,000 journal titles

Some journals will say they are in DOAJ, but **they are not:**

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Y\\_Sza4rPDkf-NNX9kwiErGrKeNTM75md9B63A\\_gVpaQ/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Y_Sza4rPDkf-NNX9kwiErGrKeNTM75md9B63A_gVpaQ/edit#gid=0)

DOAJ DIRECTORY OF  
OPEN ACCESS  
JOURNALS

# Cabell's Scholarly Analytics

Subscription-based directory that you may have access to through library subscriptions

Transparent criteria for each list and frequent updates

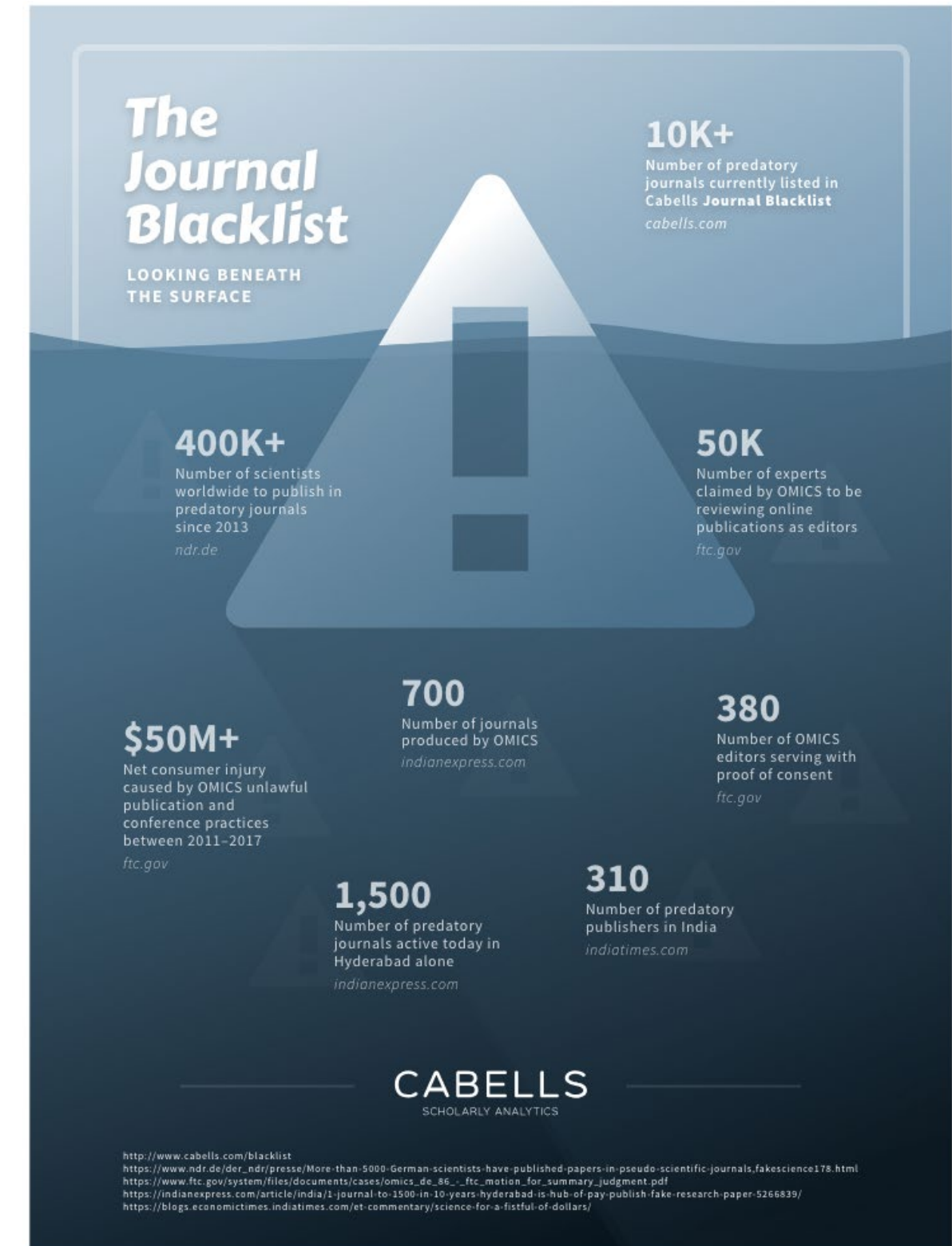
**CABELLS**  
SCHOLARLY ANALYTICS

KNOW BETTER JOURNALS

**The Journal Whitelist**

KNOW THE THREATS

**The Journal Blacklist**





# Think. Check. Submit.

## A framework for evaluating predatory journals

Think. Check. Submit. is an initiative launched by a coalition of publishers and industry organizations, and has been endorsed by a number of professional organizations as a trustworthy journal evaluation tool.

It provides a 3-step framework to make the process of choosing the right journal for your work simpler while avoiding publishing scams.

<https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>



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



Use our [check list](#) to assess the journal



Only if you can answer 'yes' to the questions on our [check list](#)

# Think. Check. Attend.

## A framework for evaluating predatory conferences

---

A sister initiative to Think. Check. Submit., Think. Check. Attend. is a 3-step initiative that guides researchers and scholars when deciding whether to attend a conference or submit an abstract and present their research.

<https://thinkcheckattend.org/>



# What about Beall's List?

---

In 2008, University of Colorado librarian Jeffrey Beall began a list of predatory open access publishers. At the time, his “Scholarly Open Access” blog was the only source documenting these publishers, and in 2010 Beall coined the term “predatory publishing.”

After years of [defamation lawsuits](#), [complaints](#) to the University, and [personal attacks](#) against him by publishers, Beall took down his list in January 2017.

[Beall's List Archive](#)

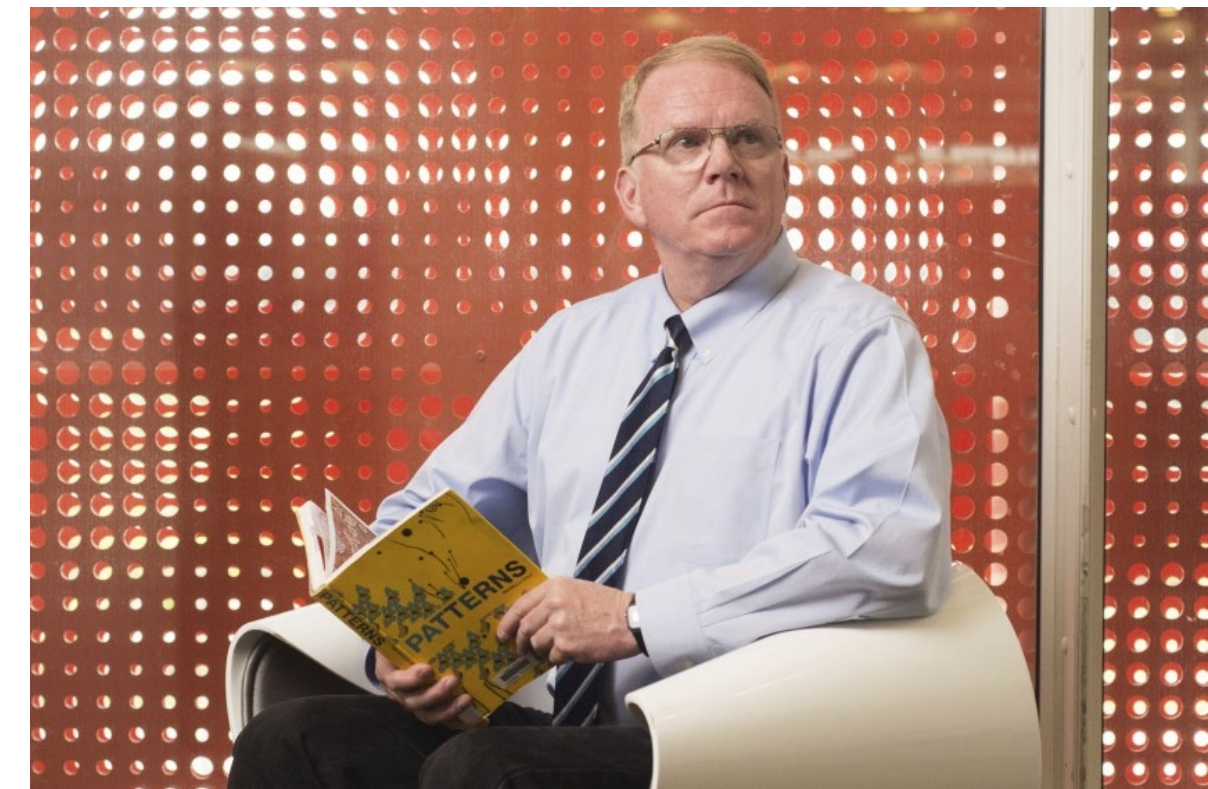


Image: [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) (2017)

# Library Involvement

# The role of libraries

## pushing back against predatory publishers

---

The [Federal Trade Commission](#) recommends that you check with your librarian if you have questions about a potential predatory journal (in addition to evaluating the journal and reporting it to the FTC).

That makes sense, as these publishers are not the biggest fans of libraries...



**What does your librarian have to say?** Check with your university librarian to see if he or she has ever heard of the journal or the publisher. Your librarian also may be able to tell you if the journal is included in relevant indexing services.



# Librarians against scientists?

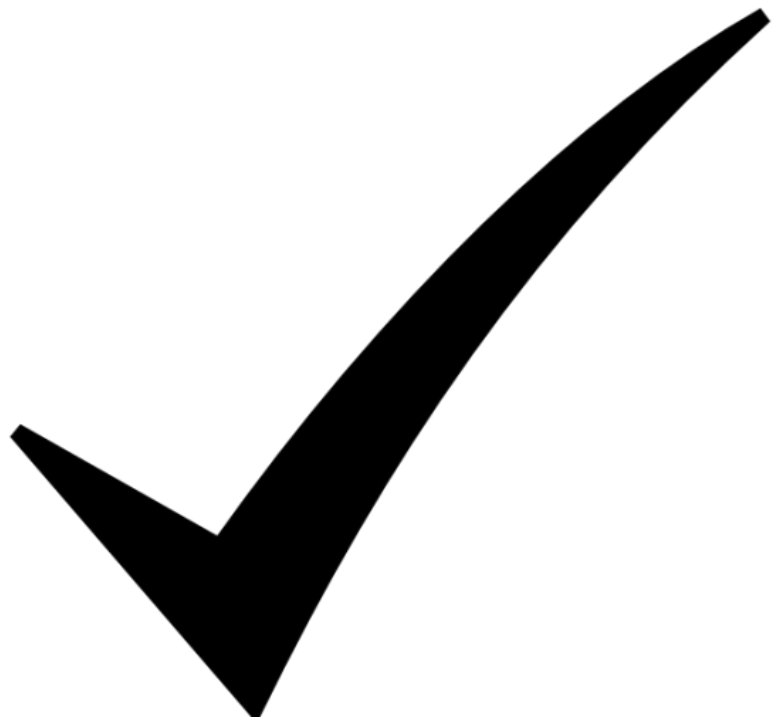
---

“For thousands of years libraries served science and scientists. Indexes were created to disseminate information, not to suppress it. For the first time in history, in response to rapid technological progress, librarians are suppressing science and refusing to serve science.”

Mikhail V. Blagosklonny, [Oncotarget](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29464014) (2018)  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29464014>



## We recommend:



- 1. Invite** your university librarians to talk to your colleagues, grad students, and undergraduate students about predatory publishing, whether they are publishing or completing class assignments
- 2. Involve** evaluation for predatory publishing as part of the article selection process for student research through regular library instruction or as part of class assignments
- 3. Stay informed** and talk about it! This “soap opera” continues to evolve, yet many instructors are quietly deleting duplicitous emails instead of bringing the issue to student attention



Q&A



# Contact Us

Jenessa McElfresh

Health Sciences Librarian - Clemson University

[jmcelfr@clemson.edu](mailto:jmcelfr@clemson.edu)

Megan Sheffield

Data Services Librarian - Clemson University

[msheff@clemson.edu](mailto:msheff@clemson.edu)