

THE PREDATORY PUBLISHER ALWAYS EMAILS TWICE: SPOTTING DECEPTIVE PUBLISHERS



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University of Toronto Libraries
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WHAT WE'LL COVER

The changing understanding of predatory/deceptive publishing

The differences in approach between the library and the VPRI

How the assessment criteria were developed

How to spot a deceptive publisher

How to reach users with the assessment criteria

THE CONTEXT

About deceptive/predatory
publishers

A REALLY GOOD PRIMER

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Predatory Publishing but Were Afraid to Ask.

By Monica Berger

Associate Professor, Instruction and Reference
Librarian, New York City College of Technology,
CUNY

Read it here: <https://bit.ly/2gO47AZ>

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Predatory Publishing but Were Afraid to Ask

Monica Berger*

Introduction: Librarians and Predatory Publishing

Librarians have a key role to play in educating users about predatory publishing. Predatory publishing can be described as low quality, amateurish, and often unethical academic publishing that is usually Open Access (OA). Understanding predatory publishing helps authors to make more informed decisions about where to publish. In the process of educating our users, librarians can set the ground for important conversations that encourage critical thinking about the scholarly communications process. Predatory publishing stems from broader problems including overemphasis on publication quantity, an OA models based on traditional, for-profit publishing, and resource disparities in the Global South. When users take fuller responsibility and ownership of scholarly communications, knowledge can be a public good and not a commodity. A more sustainable and just scholarly communications ecosystem can be a reality.

As effective advocates for OA, librarians need to be ready to respond to those who conflate OA and predatory publishing. It is helpful to contextualize predatory publishing as an aspect of evaluating publishers and the quality of scholarship. This helps promote the idea that due diligence is the responsibility of all scholars, whether as authors, peers, or administrators. Additionally, positioning (deliberate) predatory publishing in the broader arena of unethical and fraudulent scholarly practices helps to decouple predatory publishing from OA and boosts our ability to communicate effectively with non-librarians.

Overview

Defining predatory publishing is challenging: the word “predatory” may not do justice to a complex subject. It is helpful to re-contextualize predatory publishing as scholarly misconduct as well as understand that it is not new. Before the digital age, predatory publishing took the form of vanity monograph publishing. Other types of sketchy publishing have always existed. How and why did predatory publishing arise and how did a journalist stunt shock the scholarly publishing and information community? The results of this stunt, the “Bohannon Sting” resulted in some significant changes. Understanding the detailed characteristics and practices of predatory publishing as well as the research on publishers, authors, and editors is critical to moving towards the praxis of educating users. When predatory publishing is situated as just one aspect of evaluating the quality of scholarly publishing, some of the hysteria related to predatory publishing is mitigated, creating possibilities for generating critical thought about scholarly communications.

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DEFINING “PREDATORY”

“Predatory publishing” coined in 2010 by Jeffrey Beall

- Beall was the creator of the now defunct blacklist of journals and publishers (2017)
- Beall dominated the discourse about predatory publishing

Arose from availability of journal publishing platforms and article processing charges (APCs)

Defined by Beall and others in the scholarly community as publishers with a **deliberate intent to deceive**

- Predatory publishers exist to make money
- Predatory publishers use spam-like emails and offer rapid peer-review or guaranteed publication to attract authors



HOW HAS OUR UNDERSTANDING OF PREDATORY PUBLISHING CHANGED?

“...unfortunately, there is no objective way to measure or determine whether a publisher is predatory.”

Jeffrey Beall, from “Unethical Practices in Scholarly, Open-Access Publishing,” *Journal of Information Ethics* 22, no. 1 (2013): 11

The term ‘predatory’ is **reductionist**

Major criticisms include:

- Journal practices are not static; they change over time and may become more (or less) rigorous
- The majority of journals labeled ‘predatory’ originated from the global south, where there are disparities in resources

It is difficult to define and develop policies around ‘predatory’ journals

So it is difficult to help researchers navigate the complex environment of ‘predatory’ journals.

FOCUS ON SHIFTING PRACTICES?

“When predatory publishing is situated as just one aspect of evaluating the quality of scholarly publishing, some of the hysteria related to predatory publishing is mitigated, creating possibilities for generating critical thought about scholarly communications”

Monica Berger (2017), p 206

TWO PERSPECTIVES

The library and the VPRI on
predatory publishing

THE LIBRARY'S PERSPECTIVE

Growing number of questions related to support in publishing choices;

- “Is this a predatory publisher?”

Support was offered on a case-by-case basis using external resources;

- Think. Check. Submit. / Whitelists like DOAJ

Discussions with researchers were challenging;

- Wanted librarians to make a yes/no decision
- Wanted support resources
- Preference? “An easy to use blacklist”

We wanted to develop a tool that could be used to critically evaluate publishers and the quality of scholarship that they publish.



THE VPRI'S PERSPECTIVE

Predatory publishers were undermining public confidence in the research literature;

There was pressure from the U15 for UofT to provide leadership in this area;

Authors who cheat the system harm authors who play by the rules;

The legitimacy of UofT research could be called into question.

- **“Authors will have to either attempt to retract their research from the predatory journal and have it published in a legitimate journal or accept that their research may never be considered legitimate.”**

From: Lorraine E. Ferris and Margaret A Winker’s “Ethical issues in publishing in predatory journals” *Biochem Med (Zagreb)*. 2017 Jun 15; 27(2): 279–284.doi: 10.11613/BM.2017.030



PREDATORY PUBLISHING CAUSES WASTE

University
resources

Funding dollars

Research

Involvement of
human or animal
study
participants



THE PROCESS

How we developed the checklist

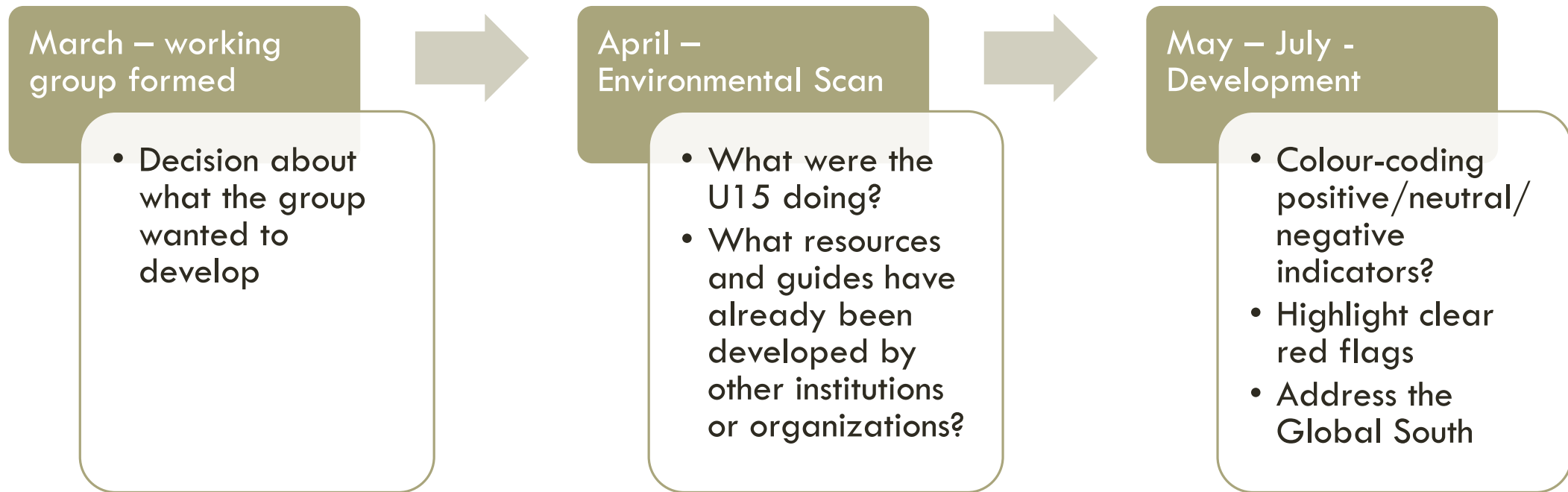
GOALS

Develop a comprehensive and authoritative resource

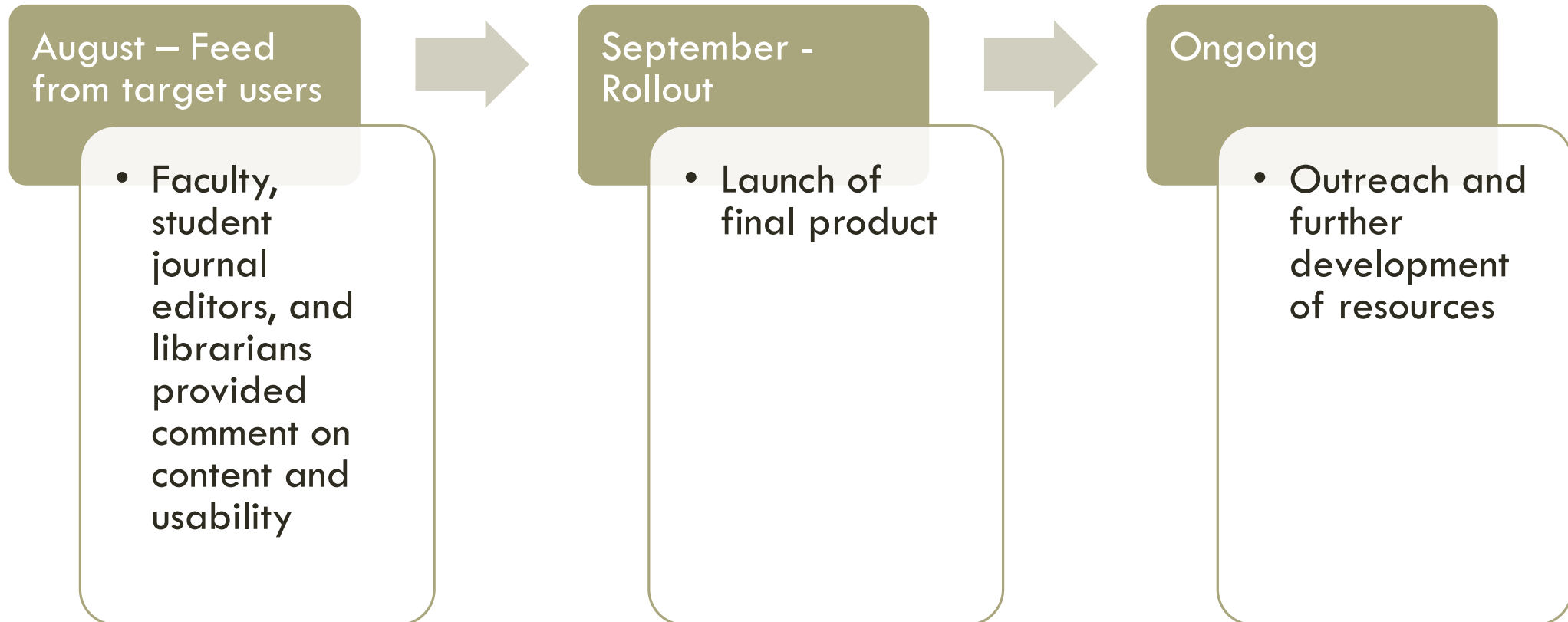
Work with a graphic designer to develop a product that is visually appealing and useable by researchers

Develop resources that can be reused and adapted by other institutions

MARCH – JULY 2018



AUGUST — PRESENT DAY





IDENTIFYING DECEPTIVE PUBLISHERS: A CHECKLIST

Deceptive publishers (also commonly referred to as “predatory journals”) are for-profit entities that purport to publish high quality academic research, but who do not follow accepted scholarly publishing best practices. Their ultimate goal is to make money, not publish quality research. A deceptive publisher may acquire the copyright to your research but never publish. A deceptive publisher may publish your work, but then disappear, resulting in there being no public record of your published article.

The aim of this checklist is to assist you in avoiding publishing your work in a low-quality deceptive publication. *Being associated with a deceptive publisher can lead to financial loss as a result of inappropriate fees, or be harmful to your reputation and that of your institution, even possibly impeding promotion and tenure.*



If any of the following statements are true, **do not submit your work**. These are tactics commonly used by deceptive publishers:

- Publication is guaranteed
- You received a spam-like unsolicited email invitation to publish work (*Note: these are different in nature than emails received from organizations or societies you belong to or have published with in the past*)
- The articles published in the journal do not match the journal's title and stated scope

Common Practices of Deceptive Publishers

While there is no single criterion that points to whether or not a publication is legitimate, the following are some of the typical practices used by deceptive publishers. An accumulation of negative indicators can point to a deceptive publisher.



PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Much of this information can be found in author guidelines or instructions. This information should be clearly presented and address quality control processes, style/formatting, copyright, and other journal policies (such as corrections and retractions).

- Publication is guaranteed
- The time of submission to publication is unexpectedly short
- The peer review process is unclear, lacking information, or not apparent
- There is minimal information about the various steps in the process from submission to publication
- The journal requires copyright transfer during the submission process
Copyright is typically transferred after the acceptance of manuscript. Most open access journals will apply a Creative Commons (CC) license to the research that allows for reuse and remixing; in many cases, the author will retain copyright. If a journal isn't using CC licenses, terms of use and reuse should be clear.
- The journal does not follow a regular publication schedule



ARTICLE PROCESSING CHARGES (APCs)

Many open access journals ask for Article Processing Charges (APCs), and this is an acceptable practice. Legitimate journals will always ask for payment after acceptance, and their fees are clear and easily available.

- APC payment is required before acceptance
APCs are generally paid post-acceptance but pre-publication. You should not be asked to pay for an APC before the peer-review process begins. These charges should be clearly listed on the publisher's website.
- It is unclear what fees will be charged
In some fields, a modest submission or membership fee is charged at the time of manuscript submission. These fees fund editorial or peer review. In other cases there are post-acceptance fees, which might include page, colour or figure charges. The amount and purpose of any additional fees should be clearly outlined on a journal's website or policies. Look for unconventional charges like “handling fees”. If you aren't sure, check with colleagues about accepted practices.



WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

- The journal's name is easily confused with another better known journal in its field
Confirm that the publication's ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) matches the title and country of publication that is listed at ISSN.org
- The publisher cannot be easily identified or contacted
Consider looking for contact information including a telephone number and mailing address and check to see that the contact information aligns with the journal's other claims (i.e. the telephone number area code matches where the journal is based, the mailing address is not a private residence). Most publishers will have a general email account you can contact; be wary of email addresses that may be non-professional or have no affiliation with the journal (i.e.: a Gmail or Yahoo email address).
- The journal website looks amateurish or unprofessional
You may find that the journal's website is poorly designed and difficult to navigate, including dead links, as well as spelling and grammatical errors. While many legitimate journals may be poorly funded and lacking professional websites, errors and broken links are indicators that warrant a closer look at the journal.



SCOPE OR SUBJECT MATTER

- The journal lacks a well-defined scope, subject area or mission
Journals generally have a clearly defined scope and focus on a fixed set of topics.
- The articles published do not match the title and stated scope and/or the journal title
For example, a nursing journal that publishes geology papers.



INDEXING, IMPACT FACTOR AND ARCHIVING

- The journal is not indexed where it claims to be nor where you would expect to find the subject content
This is verifiable information. Consider the databases that you use to find research (e.g. Scopus, Web of Science, Sociological Abstracts, or PubMed, etc.). Is the journal included in these indexes? Note that Google Scholar, SHERPA/ReMeO, ORCID and scholarly networking sites like ResearchGate are not indexes.
- Claims about impact factors are not verifiable
 - *Deceptive publishers may list fraudulent metrics such as the “Global Impact Factor” (GIF), Index Copernicus, or “Universal Impact Factor” (UIF). These are not based on recognized methodologies.*
 - *Recognized metrics include Clarivate's Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and Elsevier's CiteScore among others. The University of Toronto Libraries offers licensed resources such as Journal Citation Reports and Scopus to verify this information. Visit the [Research Impact & Researcher Identity](#) guide for more information. Not all journals are indexed in these resources and newer journals may not have journal level metrics available.*
- The journal website does not provide access to previously published volumes or has volumes that are incomplete.



AFFILIATION/PUBLICATION ETHICS AND POLICIES

- The publisher is not a member of a recognized scholarly organization
Deceptive publishers may falsely represent their affiliations. It is best to verify stated affiliations via the website of the organization a journal claims to be affiliated with. The following are some recognized organizations:
 - [AJOL \(African Journals Online\)](#)
 - [COPE \(Committee on Publication Ethics\)](#)
 - [DOAJ \(Directory of Open Access Journals\)](#)
 - [ICMJE \(International Committee of Medical Journal Editors\)](#)
 - [INASP \(International Network for Availability of Scientific Publications for journals published in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Central America and Mongolia\)](#)
 - [OASPA \(Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association\)](#)
 - [WAME \(World Association of Medical Editors\)](#)



EDITORIAL BOARD

Please note it can be very difficult to verify who is on an editorial board, so it is good to cross-check to ensure the information is accurate.

- Members of the editorial board do not mention the journal on their own websites or public CVs
- There is no information about the editor or editorial board on the journal's website

DO NOT CONFUSE JOURNALS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH WITH DECEPTIVE JOURNALS

When deciding whether to publish in a journal, please remember that some of the same criteria used to disqualify deceptive publishers can also disqualify journals from the global south.¹

In low and middle income countries, journal publishers may not have access to the resources to create impressive websites, register an ISSN, or maintain their own email server. A lack of resources should not disqualify these journals from your consideration if they are publishing high-quality research. A careful review of the journal's articles and a discussion of the journal with your colleagues or supervisor will always be your best guide.



NEED FURTHER GUIDANCE OR SUPPORT?

- Talk to your supervisor and colleagues.
- For more information and resources visit <http://onresearch.library.utoronto.ca/deceptivepublishing>
- Consult your Liaison Librarian.

¹ The global south refers to “all nations classified by the World Bank as low- and middle-income that are in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. It does not include low- and middle-income nations in Eastern Europe, including the Russian Federation”. From Mitlin, D., Satterthwaite, D. (2013). *Urban Poverty in the Global South*. London: Routledge, 13.

THE CHECKLIST

How do you spot a deceptive publisher?

THE KNOCKOUT CRITERIA

If any of the following statements are true, do not submit your work. These are tactics commonly used by deceptive publishers:

- ❖ Publication is guaranteed
- ❖ You received a spam-like unsolicited email invitation to publish work (Note: these are different in nature than emails received from organizations or societies you belong to or have published with in the past)
- ❖ The articles published in the journal do not match the journal's title and stated scope



1 — PROCESS AND TIMELINE

What this means

- Very short timeline from submission to publication may indicate no peer review takes place
- No or minimal information about peer review process may indicate it does not occur
- Minimal description of the steps of submission process may indicate lack of professional editors
- Unclear if there are checks for “normal” requirements such as conflict of interests, plagiarism detection, etc.



PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Much of this information can be found in author guidelines or instructions. This information should be clearly presented and address quality control processes, style/formatting, copyright, and other journal policies (such as corrections and retractions).

- Publication is guaranteed
- The time of submission to publication is unexpectedly short
- The peer review process is unclear, lacking information, or not apparent
- There is minimal information about the various steps in the process from submission to publication
- The journal requires copyright transfer during the submission process

Copyright is typically transferred after the acceptance of manuscript. Most open access journals will apply a Creative Commons (CC) license to the research that allows for reuse and remixing; in many cases, the author will retain copyright. If a journal isn't using CC licenses, terms of use and reuse should be clear.

- The journal does not follow a regular publication schedule

How to submit your paper

Manuscript submission

Manuscript submission to all *Lancet* journals is free. Manuscripts should be submitted online via the *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health's* online submission and peer review website (known as EES) at <http://ees.elsevier.com/thelancetchildadol>

- Simply log on to EES and follow the onscreen instructions for all submissions
- If you have not used EES before, you will need to register first. In EES, the corresponding author is the person who enters the manuscript details and uploads the submission files
- Inclusion of illustrations (eg, photographs, graphs, diagrams) is a prerequisite for many publication types. Submission of original and editable artwork files is encouraged. Digital photography files should have a resolution of at least 300 dpi and be at least 107 mm wide. Before and after images should be taken with the same intensity, direction, and colour of light.

In almost all cases, if you have a finished manuscript, you should

Submissions to *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health* should include:

- 1 Covering letter
- 2 Manuscript including tables and panels
- 3 Figures
- 4 Author statement form (see next section)
- 5 Declaration of interests and source of funding statements (see next section)
- 6 In-press papers—one copy of each with acceptance letters
- 7 Protocols and CONSORT details for randomised controlled trials (see Articles)
- 8 We encourage disclosure of correspondence from other journals and reviewers, if previously submitted, and we might contact relevant editors of such journals
- 9 Research in context panel, for all primary research Articles

work in medical journals

<http://www.icmje.org>

COPE Core Practices

<https://publicationethics.org/core-practices>

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION SHOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT INFO & DETAIL

<http://www.thelancet.com/pb/assets/raw/Lancet/authors/tlchild-info-for-authors.pdf>

Peer review

The Academic Editor decides whether reviews from additional experts are needed to evaluate the manuscript. After agreeing to review a manuscript, external reviewers are typically granted 10 days to complete the assignment. We will follow up with late reviewers and keep authors informed if there are any delays.

Will authors know who is reviewing their manuscript?

Reviewers are anonymous by default. Reviewers' identities are not revealed to authors or to other reviewers unless reviewers specifically request to be identified by signing their names at the end of their comments.

Will authors know the identity of the editor reviewing their manuscript?

The Academic Editor is anonymous until they render a first decision on the manuscript. The Editor's name is included in all decision letters and published articles.

Will editors and reviewers know the names of authors during review?

The names of the authors are not anonymous to reviewers or editors during review so that they can assess potential conflicts of interest.


Can authors ask to exclude reviewers?

Authors may enter the names of potential peer reviewers they wish to exclude from consideration in the peer review of their manuscript. The editorial team will respect these requests so long as this does not interfere with the objective and thorough assessment of the submission.

How many reviewers will a manuscript have?

The majority of *PLOS ONE* submissions are evaluated by 2 external reviewers, but it is up to the Academic Editor to determine the number of reviews required.

When reviews have been received, authors may see the status "Required Reviews Complete." Please note that additional reviews may still be pending after this status is activated.

 Read the guidelines for reviewers for *PLOS ONE*. Visit the *PLOS* Reviewer Center for guidance on completing a peer review.

PEER REVIEW PROCESS SHOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT DETAIL

Example from PLOS ONE

INSTRUCTIONS TO REVIEWERS SHOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT DETAIL

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**COPYRIGHT TRANSFER SHOULD BE
REQUESTED AFTER ACCEPTANCE**

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JOURNAL SHOULD FOLLOW A REGULAR PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

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CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ Guaranteed publication always red flag
- ❑ Legitimate journals have a rapid (or fast track) peer review process for some articles (esp. in health sciences to speed up potential patient benefits)
- ❑ Under-resourced journals may not have full descriptions of publication & peer review processes
- ❑ Peer-review process opaque - cannot tell if occurring or to what degree of rigour
- ❑ Early career researchers may not know “normal” submissions steps
- ❑ Copyright agreements may not be stated on website - may be received after manuscript submission (but before acceptance)
- ❑ Authors lack of understanding of copyright

2 — ARTICLE PROCESSING CHARGES

What this means

- All fees and charges should be clear
- Fees should not be paid prior to receiving acceptance.



ARTICLE PROCESSING CHARGES (APCs)

Many open access journals ask for Article Processing Charges (APCs), and this is an acceptable practice. Legitimate journals will always ask for payment after acceptance, and their fees are clear and easily available.

- APC payment is required before acceptance
APCs are generally paid post-acceptance but pre-publication. You should not be asked to pay for an APC before the peer-review process begins. These charges should be clearly listed on the publisher's website.
- It is unclear what fees will be charged
In some fields, a modest submission or membership fee is charged at the time of manuscript submission. These fees fund editorial or peer review. In other cases there are post-acceptance fees, which might include page, colour or figure charges. The amount and purpose of any additional fees should be clearly outlined on a journal's website or policies. Look for unconventional charges like "handling fees". If you aren't sure, check with colleagues about accepted practices.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ No standard or expected APC fee. In legitimate journals these vary widely so there is no way to counsel researchers about what is “normal”
- ❑ Deceptive journals often have low APCs
- ❑ Some legitimate journals charge reading fees, which are due pre-acceptance.
- ❑ Balance between typical and exceptional examples

3 — WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

What this means

- Journal website should be free from grammatical & spelling errors and broken links
- Images and logos should be clear and high resolution
- A common practice is for deceptive journals to masquerade as other well-known journals.
- Content should be directed at reader (not author)



WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

- The journal's name is easily confused with another better known journal in its field
Confirm that the publication's ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) matches the title and country of publication that is listed at [ISSN.org](https://www.issn.org)
- The publisher cannot be easily identified or contacted
Consider looking for contact information including a telephone number and mailing address and check to see that the contact information aligns with the journal's other claims (i.e. the telephone number area code matches where the journal is based, the mailing address is not a private residence). Most publishers will have a general email account you can contact; be wary of email addresses that may be non-professional or have no affiliation with the journal (i.e.: a Gmail or Yahoo email address).
- The journal website looks amateurish or unprofessional
You may find that the journal's website is poorly designed and difficult to navigate, including dead links, as well as spelling and grammatical errors. While many legitimate journals may be poorly funded and lacking professional websites, errors and broken links are indicators that warrant a closer look at the journal.

**THE JOURNAL WEBSITE LOOKS
AMATEURISH OR UNPROFESSIONAL**

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CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ Journals from the Global South do not have the resources to maintain slick websites.
- ❑ Editors for whom English is a second language will make spelling and grammatical errors.
- ❑ Journals will use generic (@gmail or @yahoo emails)
- ❑ **Should these things disqualify them? Low resourced or deceptive?**

4 —

AFFILIATION/PUBLICATION ETHICS AND POLICIES

What this means

- A journal that is “whitelisted” for example on the DOAJ
- Journal should have a retraction policy
- Many journals list various organizations on websites (may not all be accurate)
- Verify journal on scholarly org website



AFFILIATION/PUBLICATION ETHICS AND POLICIES

- The publisher is not a member of a recognized scholarly organization
Deceptive publishers may falsely represent their affiliations. It is best to verify stated affiliations via the website of the organization a journal claims to be affiliated with. The following are some recognized organizations:
 - *AJOL (African Journals Online)* [↗](#)
 - *COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics)* [↗](#)
 - *DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals)* [↗](#)
 - *ICMJE (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)* [↗](#)
 - *INASP (International Network for Availability of Scientific Publications for journals published in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Central America and Mongolia)* [↗](#)
 - *OASPA (Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association)* [↗](#)
 - *WAME (World Association of Medical Editors)* [↗](#)

“SMORGASBORD” OF ORGANIZATIONS LISTED

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CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ The VPRI argued that their researchers were unlikely to take the time to verify claims about affiliations with publishing associations.
- ❑ Practices can change after a publisher is whitelisted or after they are accepted into an association.

5 – SCOPE OR SUBJECT MATTER

What this means

- With the exception of a few major journals – for example Nature, or PLOS, journals have a narrow and well-defined scope.



SCOPE OR SUBJECT MATTER

- The journal lacks a well-defined scope, subject area or mission
Journals generally have a clearly defined scope and focus on a fixed set of topics.
- The articles published do not match the title and stated scope and/or the journal title
For example, a nursing journal that publishes geology papers.

“Applied Research Journal (ISSN: 2423-4796) is an international and open-access journal that providing a platform for publishing innovative and research articles. As an open access journal, articles in Applied Research Journal will always be freely available online and readily accessible. This means that your work will be recognized and can be searched in Google Scholar. The journal is dedicated towards dissemination of knowledge **related to the advancement in scientific research**. The prestigious interdisciplinary editorial board reflects the diversity of subjects covered in this journal. Applied Research Journal is a multidisciplinary seeks to promote and disseminate the knowledge by publishing original research findings, review articles and short communications in the **broad fields of scientific and applied research science**. The Journal welcomes the submission of manuscripts that meet the general criteria of significance and scientific excellence. Papers will be published approximately after acceptance. All articles published in ARJ will be peer-reviewed.”

Scope statement from Applied Research Journal

“Molecular Physics is a well-established international journal publishing original high quality papers in chemical physics and physical chemistry. The journal **covers all experimental and theoretical aspects of molecular science, from electronic structure, molecular dynamics, spectroscopy and reaction kinetics to condensed matter, surface science, and statistical mechanics of simple and complex fluids.**

Contributions include full papers, preliminary communications, research notes and invited topical review articles.

Routine work, for example, application of electronic structure calculations should yield new and interesting physical insights.”

Scope statement from *Molecular Physics*

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ There are major exceptions to this rule, in the form of some of the most prestigious journals in STEM; Science, Nature, PLOS;
- ❑ University of Toronto researchers publish in PLOS more than in any other journal, and we didn't want to imply that it is predatory because it has a broad scope;
- ❑ Ultimately, we decided not to address the exceptions to this rule directly.

6 – EDITORIAL BOARD

What this means

- 1) The editorial board is populated with fake researchers. Either the names are made up or the researchers have no connection or expertise to the journal's scope or subject matter;
- 2) The editorial board is populated with prominent researchers in the field who have no affiliation with the journal and have no idea they are listed on the journal website.



EDITORIAL BOARD

Please note it can be very difficult to verify who is on an editorial board, so it is good to cross-check to ensure the information is accurate.

- Members of the editorial board do not mention the journal on their own websites or public CVs
- There is no information about the editor or editorial board on the journal's website

EDITORIAL BOARD “STING OPERATIONS”

<https://www.nature.com/news/predatory-journals-recruit-fake-editor-1.21662>

Predatory journals recruit fake editor

Piotr Sorokowski, Emanuel Kulczycki, Agnieszka Sorokowska & Katarzyna Pisanski

22 March 2017

An investigation finds that dozens of academic titles offered 'Dr Fraud' — a sham, unqualified scientist — a place on their editorial board. Katarzyna Pisanski and colleagues report.



PDF



Rights & Permissions

Subject terms: [Publishing](#) · [Ethics](#)



Illustration by Richard Wilkinson

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ This is a major criteria among groups like the DOAJ – the DOAJ will contact those who are listed as part of the editorial board to make sure that they are indeed affiliated with the journal.
- ❑ There are really two considerations here:
 - ❑ Have you heard of editorial board members? (i.e. is the journal prestigious)
 - ❑ Are listed editorial board members really affiliated with the journal? (i.e. is the journal trustworthy)
- ❑ There was some thought among group members that early career researchers might not be familiar with big names in their fields AND that researchers wouldn't want to go to the effort of contacting editorial board members.

7 — INDEXING, IMPACT FACTOR AND ARCHIVING

What this means

- 1) No reference to fraudulent metrics;
- 2) Any claims about indexing or impact are to be checked using the relevant resources.



INDEXING, IMPACT FACTOR AND ARCHIVING

- The journal is not indexed where it claims to be nor where you would expect to find the subject content
This is verifiable information. Consider the databases that you use to find research (e.g. Scopus, Web of Science, Sociological Abstracts, or PubMed, etc.). Is the journal included in these indexes? Note that Google Scholar, SHERPA/RoMEO, ORCID and scholarly networking sites like ResearchGate are not indexes.
- Claims about impact factors are not verifiable
 - *Deceptive publishers may list fraudulent metrics such as the “Global Impact Factor” (GIF), Index Copernicus, or “Universal Impact Factor” (UIF). These are not based on recognized methodologies.*
 - *Recognized metrics include Clarivate’s Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and Elsevier’s CiteScore among others. The University of Toronto Libraries offers licensed resources such as Journal Citation Reports and Scopus to verify this information. Visit the [Research Impact & Researcher Identity](#) guide for more information. Not all journals are indexed in these resources and newer journals may not have journal level metrics available.*
- The journal website does not provide access to previously published volumes or has volumes that that are incomplete.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

□ The inclusion of this area involved a lot of back and forth with the research office. The library team felt that checking indices (and the veracity of claims about indices) was an effective way to weed out predatory journals. The research office felt this was asking too much of the researchers, and that the criteria on the checklist should be more black and white. Namely – that researchers were not going to be willing to complete this step.

DO NOT CONFUSE JOURNALS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH WITH DECEPTIVE JOURNALS

When deciding whether to publish in a journal, please remember that some of the same criteria used to disqualify deceptive publishers can also disqualify journals from the global south.¹

In low- and middle-income countries, journal publishers may not have access to the resources to create impressive websites, register an ISSN, or maintain their own email server. A lack of resources should not disqualify these journals from your consideration if they are publishing high-quality research. A careful review of the journal's articles and a discussion of the journal with your colleagues or supervisor will always be your best guide.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ A major criticism of Beall's list was the over-representation of journals from the global south;
- ❑ Some of the key indicators of a deceptive publisher (a generic email account, a childish website, occasional typos) can also just be symbols of a publisher in the global south that does not have the resources for professional web design or copy-editing.
- ❑ There was a great deal of tension for how to represent the risks without excluding all journals from these parts of the world.

THE OUTREACH

How do you get the word out to your target audience?

OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Development of website and resources:

- Central location for content
- Checklist / Posters for download and sharing

Digital signage posted in libraries across campus

- This is harder than we thought!
- Coming soon! (*hopefully*): digital signage at department level

Integration of checklist in existing library instruction and support

- Scholarly Publishing Graduate Pro-Skills class
- Support related to thesis and dissertation publishing process, **etc.**
- Student Journal Forum / publishing support



Deceptive Publishing

Deceptive publishers (also commonly referred to as “predatory journals”) are for-profit entities that purport to publish high quality academic research, but who do not follow accepted scholarly publishing best practices. Their ultimate goal is to make money, not publish quality research. Being associated with a deceptive publisher can lead to financial loss as a result of inappropriate fees, or be harmful to your reputation and that of your institution, even possibly impeding promotion and tenure.

While there is no single criterion that points to whether or not a publication is legitimate, consult the following checklist to identify some of the typical practices used by deceptive publishers.

Download checklists in both English and French:

[Identifying Deceptive Publishers Checklist](#)

[Liste de vérification pour reconnaître les revues trompeuses](#)



Guaranteed publication of your thesis?

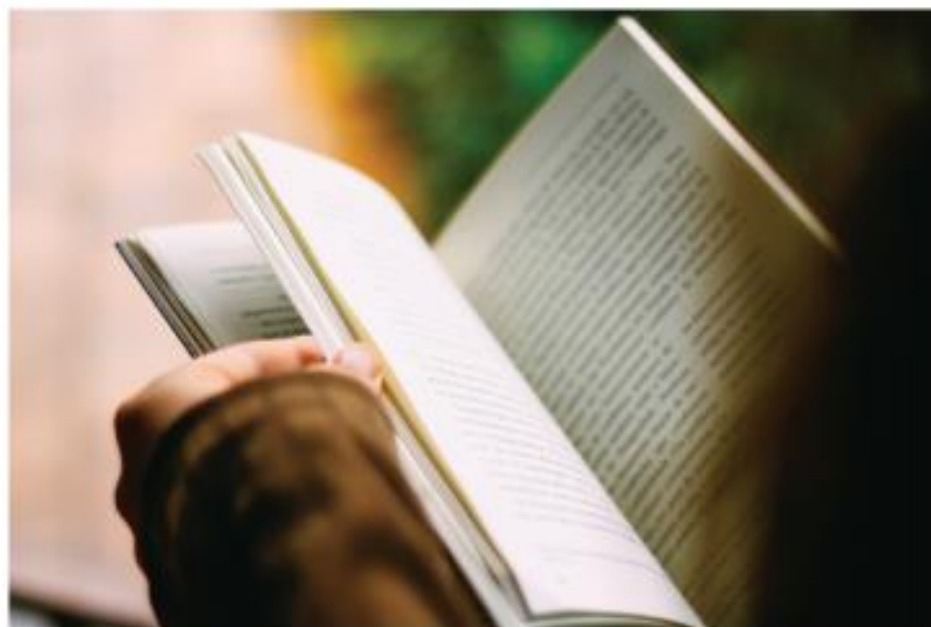
Where you publish matters.

Visit uoft.me/deceptivepublishing for more information on how to avoid publishing your work in a low-quality deceptive publication.



Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation
University of Toronto Libraries

Guaranteed publication of your research?



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Visit uoft.me/deceptivepublishing for more information.



Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation
University of Toronto Libraries

OUTREACH STRATEGIES: GUERRILLA MARKETING

Mock deceptive publisher advertisement
developed and posted in high-traffic student
areas on campus

“More info” and website points to Deceptive
Publishing resources

Next steps: analytics

Is there a way we can find out how many
users are coming in from the web
address provided on the ad?



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FACULTY OUTREACH: VPRI TAKES THE LEAD

Approach: Trickle-down effect

Checklist widely distributed across the University of Toronto campus through a memo issued by Associate Vice-President, Research Oversight and Compliance

Memo included in major communication channels, including ***The Bulletin Brief***

- Curated publication of selected content for staff and faculty on the three U of T campuses, delivered three times a week across the university

The Research Advisory Board (RAB): Topic of discussion and copies distributed

- Includes Vice-Principals, Research, Vice/Associate-Deans, Research and Vice-Presidents from across the disciplines on all three campuses and the affiliated hospitals



Checklist for Identifying Deceptive Publishers

From: Lori Ferris, Associate Vice-President, Research Oversight and Compliance

Date: September 20, 2018

Re: Checklist for Identifying Deceptive Publishers

Deceptive publishers, also known as “predatory journals”, are for-profit entities that purport to publish high quality academic research, but do not follow scholarly publishing best practices. Sending your manuscript to one of these low-quality publications can cost you money and prevent your research from being widely disseminated.

The University of Toronto Libraries and the Division of the Vice-President, Research & Innovation have [collaborated on a new website and checklist](#) to assist in identifying some of the typical practices used by deceptive publishers so you can avoid submitting manuscripts to these journals.



Important for: 2018 to 2019, Academic Administrators, Chairs + Graduate Chairs + Academic Directors, Deans, Faculty + Librarians, Principals + Vice-Principals.

ADOPTION

Queen's University

Partnership with the Secretariat for the Responsible Conduct of Research to develop French translation

- Translation provided by the CIHR Translation Unit
- UTL Graphic Designer developed version to look consistent with original
- Where can you download?

English:

<http://www.rcr.ethics.gc.ca/eng/resources-ressources/tools/tools-outils/>

French:

<http://www.rcr.ethics.gc.ca/fra/resources-ressources/tools/tools-outils/>



LISTE DE VÉRIFICATION POUR RECONNAÎTRE LES REVUES TROMPEUSES

Une revue trompeuse (communément appelée « revue prédatrice ») est une entité à but lucratif qui prétend publier des travaux de recherche universitaire de qualité élevée, mais qui ne suit pas les pratiques exemplaires reconnues en matière d'édition savante. Elle cherche à faire de l'argent et non à publier des travaux de recherche de qualité. Une revue trompeuse pourrait acquérir les droits d'auteur pour votre recherche sans jamais la publier. Une revue trompeuse pourrait publier votre travail, mais disparaître ensuite, éliminant ainsi toute trace publique de votre article publié.

Cette liste de vérification vous aidera à éviter de publier vos travaux dans une revue trompeuse de faible qualité. Le fait d'être associé à une revue trompeuse pourrait entraîner des pertes financières en raison de frais inappropriés, mais aussi nuire à votre réputation et à celle de votre établissement, voire entraver une promotion et la permanence.



Si l'un des énoncés suivants s'applique, **ne soumettez pas votre article**. Il s'agit de tactiques fréquemment utilisées par des revues trompeuses :

- La publication est garantie.
- Vous avez reçu une invitation non sollicitée par courriel, ou un courriel, à publier vos travaux. (Remarque : Ces courriels sont différents de ceux reçus d'organisations ou de sociétés dont vous êtes membre ou qui auraient déjà publié vos travaux.)
- Les articles publiés dans la revue ne correspondent pas au titre ou à la portée de la revue.

Pratiques courantes de revues trompeuses

Bien qu'il n'y ait pas de critère unique qui indique si une publication est légitime ou non, voici quelques-unes des pratiques typiques de revues trompeuses. Plusieurs indicateurs défavorables pourraient signaler que la revue est trompeuse.

PROCESSUS ET ÉCHÉANCIER

Une grande partie de cette information se trouve dans les lignes directrices ou les instructions à l'intention des auteurs. Cette information devrait être clairement présentée et porter sur les processus de contrôle de la qualité, le style ou formatage, les droits d'auteur et les autres politiques de revue (comme les corrections et les rétractations).

- La publication est garantie.
- Le délai entre la soumission de l'article et la publication est étonnamment court.
- Le processus d'évaluation par les pairs est obscur, l'information à ce propos est rare, ou cette étape est difficile à déceler.
- Il y a peu d'information sur les diverses étapes du processus, de la soumission à la publication.
- La revue exige un transfert du droit d'auteur lors du processus de soumission.
Le droit d'auteur est généralement transféré une fois le manuscrit accepté. La plupart des revues à libre accès appliquent une licence Creative Commons (CC) à la recherche qui permet la réutilisation et le partage dans de nombreux cas, l'auteur conserve les droits d'auteur. Si une revue n'utilise pas de licences CC, les conditions d'utilisation et de réimpression doivent être claires.
- La revue ne suit pas un horaire régulier de publication.

FRAIS DE TRAITEMENT DES ARTICLES (FTA)

De nombreuses revues à libre accès exigent des frais de traitement des articles (FTA), ce qui est une pratique acceptable. Les revues légitimes exigent toujours un paiement après acceptation, et leurs tarifs sont clairement établis et facilement accessibles.

- Le paiement des FTA est exigé avant l'acceptation.
Les FTA sont habituellement payés après l'acceptation de l'article, mais avant sa prépublication. Vous ne devriez pas avoir à payer les FTA avant le processus d'évaluation par les pairs. Ces frais devraient être clairement indiqués sur le site Web de la revue.
- On ne sait pas exactement quels frais seront exigés.
Dans certains domaines, une cotisation modeste est exigée au moment de la soumission du manuscrit. Ces frais servent à financer la révision éditoriale ou l'évaluation par les pairs. Dans d'autres cas, des frais s'appliquent après l'acceptation, notamment des coûts par page ou pour la couleur et les figures. Le montant et l'objet des frais supplémentaires doivent être clairement précisés sur le site Web ou dans les politiques de la revue. Recherchez les frais inhabituels comme des « frais de maintenance ». En cas de doute, renseignez-vous auprès de collègues sur les pratiques acceptées.

QUESTIONS?

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