Predatory Journals- A Brief Bibliography

The following is a brief bibliography of issues regarding Predatory Journals. Articles published in peer-reviewed venues regarding this nascent issue were limited. The discussion is rounded out with trade and popular news outlets; as well as internet posts.

Most notable person working in this area: Jeffrey Beall- Watchdog

- Heralded by some
- Some think he is too “trigger happy” when blowing the whistle on journals or believes he is too critical of non-western publishers.

http://scholarlyoa.com/

- Blog of Jeffrey Beale: Predatory Publishing Watchdog, Associate Professor- Scholarly Communications Librarian, University of Colorado

http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/

- List of potentially predatory publishers


- Criteria for selecting Open Access Journals to publish in

Defining the Problem


- Beall attempts to establish criteria for what determines a predatory OA Journal based on reviewing their websites and the products they offer.
- Beall examines nine OA publishes based on the following criteria: Pricing Information/Pricing Options (many times authors are unaware of the fee and can face unethical hurdles to withdrawing their submissions), Content they offer (some publishers have journals listed without a single article published and/or no review boards, User Interface/Searchability of their products online, and Contract Options
- Beall determines based on the aforementioned criteria the nine publishers he reviewed are in fact, predatory and have no interest in publishing quality scientific work.


- Two more publishers are reviewed based on the criteria mentioned in the above citation.


- Contains a section for determining predatory OA
- Some “redflags”:
  - “A publisher initiates dozens of new OA titles at once
“Published” titles don’t appear to have any, or many, papers
- The publisher sends e-mail to large numbers of researchers asking them to submit papers or to join editorial boards
- The publisher conceals the names of editors or editorial board members
- The business address for the publisher is not verifiable
- There’s little evidence of peer review (pp. 30–31)

Beall, J. J. (2012). Predatory publishers are corrupting open access. *Nature*, *489*(7415), 179. doi:10.1038/489179a

- Using a similar format to the previous reviews, Beall extends his analysis to emerging “Mega-Journals” that model themselves off of successful open access initiatives such as PLoS One.
- This new model is advantageous to predatory publishers because their broad scope enables them to solicit submissions from a larger body of authors.
  - I examined these five journals against IU’s holdings and we only have one of them—The World Journal of Science and Technology. It was, interestingly enough after you see Van Noorden (2014), indexed in the DOAJ.

- Further analyses into the issue of ethics in open access publishing
- Identifies three broad categories of unethical issues observed in OA: Deception, Negligence/Non-Adherence to Standards, and Lack of Transparency. (pp. 15-18)

- A lot of the same information in here
- Addresses implications for Collection Development, noted that a lot of these journals are indexed in big vendor databases. Suggests Librarians gain “scholarly publishing literacy”. (p. 126)

Criticisms of Beall’s position and opposing viewpoints

- Critical of Beall’s ‘binary’ position to the issue (i.e. good or bad publisher)
- Beall’s criteria are either impossible to quantify or can be applied to good publishers (n.p.)

- Reactions and implications regarding the lawsuit filed by Edwin Mellen Press against the librarian Dale Askey.
- Suggests the academic model of promotion and tenure and the pressures on academics to publish in vast quantities creates an economic demand for predatory publishing (i.e. predatory publishing is a symptom of a bigger issue in the academy).

How Bad is the Problem? Predatory ‘Sting’ Operations


- Bohannon submits a “mundane” and poorly constructed research article to several OA publishers (n=304) he discovered from both the Directory of Open Access Journals and Beale’s predatory OA list.
- Just about half of the journals accepted the paper, including 45% from the DOAJ and 85% from Beale’s list.
  - Notable finding: 15% of the Journals from Beall’s list rightfully rejected the paper, suggesting that Beall’s methods for identifying predatory OA journals is by no means perfect.
- Indicative of little to no peer-review standards and questionable ethical practices (i.e. asking for money up front)


- Tom Spears took Bohannon’s work a step further. He thoroughly plagiarized and created a scientific article that was copied and pasted half from a Geology paper and half from a Hematology paper.
- He submitted it to 18 OA publishers
- Eight of the journals accepted the paper.
- Two rejected but would allow resubmission if he ‘tweaked’ some of the wording.


- An Australian report on Tom Spears’ expose of 18 OA published who received a ‘bogus’ submission from Spears.

What is Being Done?


- Accused of embellishing NIH trademarks.
- OMICS took them off their site.
- Article also mentions the conference experience of Ken Witwer. He attended with the hope of meeting an advertised researcher he was not in attendance.
  - Note- there were no more recent mentions of this issue that I could find.


- The article reports that Coventry University principal lecturer in graphic design Simon Bell has succeeded in having his name erased from the list of the editorial board of the "International Journal of Education and Research," a suspected predatory journal supposed to operate in Australia.
  - This is similar to Dr. Sawitzke’s fight to do the same thing.


- A reaction to a recent study published in a web-based journal found here: [http://citesandinsights.info/civ14i7.pdf](http://citesandinsights.info/civ14i7.pdf)
- DOAJ was shocked to discover the number of disreputable titles (around 900) that were found to exist on the Beall List.
- Since May 2014, all entries in DOAJ are forced to reapply with stronger criteria.
- It is suggested that up to 10% will not pass reapplication.

An Issue with Litigation


- Cost of litigation is an issue
- International Borders make this challenging to determine what laws are being broken

Outreach and Instruction

Workshops
[http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/605/951821/Predatory_Journals_Liaison_Fall_2013.pdf](http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/605/951821/Predatory_Journals_Liaison_Fall_2013.pdf)
Addressing Faculty Concerns


- Here is the website: http://gvsu.edu/library/sc/open-access-journal-quality-indicators-2.htm

Libguides/Webpages

https://www.gvsu.edu/library/sc/open-access-journal-quality-indicators-2.htm
http://richmond.v1.libguides.com/content.php?pid=543597
http://libguides.govst.edu/content.php?pid=331122
http://guides.emich.edu/content.php?pid=531037
http://libguides.caltech.edu/content.php?pid=80242
http://libguides.indianatech.edu/content.php?pid=54497&sid=4564917

The Predators Fight Back


- OMICS, a notable target of Jeffrey Beall’s criticism is threatening defamation charges against Beall.
- They want $1 billion in damages.
- Full text of OMICS’ letter is available here: http://www.infodocket.com/2013/05/15/publisher-threatens-librarian-jeffery-beall-with-1-billion-dollar-lawsuit/


- Annotation is in earlier section

New Predators Born


- Reputable journal for 17 years began having financial issues
- Were bought out for a good price by an unknown publisher and has since been demonstrating ‘predatory behaviors’

Predatory Conferences

http://scholarlyoa.com/2013/01/25/omics-predatory-meetings/

- A report of OMICS’ venture into predatory conferences

• Scholars were tricked into attending a conference because a legitimate conference, “Entomology 2013” was being held at the same time as an illegitimate conference “Entomology-2013” (notice the hyphen).

http://scholarlyoa.com/2013/09/12/conference-attendee-to-omics-i-want-out/#more-2225

• The case of Dr. James Sawitzke and his attendance of one of OMICS’ conferences

**Impact Factor Forgery**

- There are several websites, many indicated in the blog posts below, that sell impact factor and other metrics to publishers. Makes one need to be extra cautious when evaluating the potential impact of the journal one plans to publish in.

