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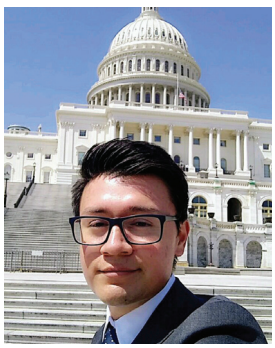

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How to Avoid Predatory Journals When Publishing Your Work

Introduction

For researchers looking to publish their work, there now exists a dizzying array of possible outlets. Over the past decade, the publication landscape has exploded from print-based, subscription journals published by respected scientific societies and legitimate publishing companies to an almost equal number of disreputable, open-access journals backed by for-profit companies (Beall, 2012, 2016b; Shen and Björk, 2015; Beninger et al., 2016; Laine and Winker, 2017). Known as predatory journals (Beall, 2012), these journals charge publication fees with promises of rapid publication but often have a sham peer review process, leading to low article quality (Beall, 2016a, b; Eriksson and Helgesson, 2017; Shamseer et al., 2017). Consequently, these journals are not accepted for indexing in major bibliographic databases, like Web of Science or PubMed. Many predatory journals purposely dupe authors—especially young investigators and academics from low-resource countries—into submitting manuscripts with deceptive advertising designed to resemble legitimate scholarly journals (Beall, 2012, 2016a).

Key Words

fake impact factor; open access; predatory journal; predatory publisher.

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By Theresa Culley

Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cincinnati, 614 Rieveschl Hall, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0006
E-mail: theresa.culley@uc.edu, Tel: 513-556-9705

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In some cases, predatory publishers even create counterfeit websites of respected journals to deceitfully obtain manuscripts—essentially "hijacking" the legitimate journals (Tin et al., 2014; Beall, 2016a; Eriksson and Helgesson, 2017; see https://predatoryjournals.com/hijacked/). Many predatory publishers state that they are located in the U.S., Canada, Australia, and the U.K., but are actually in other countries (Beall, 2012; Gasparyan et al., 2015; Shamseer et al., 2017) where many predatory journals originate. Predatory publishers have even created sham "meetings" and "conferences," in which they divide up ballrooms in a hotel in a popular tourist city to hold multiple "conferences" together on the same weekend, with limited staff and very few attendees (Hunziker, 2017). In short, these entities are scams targeting academic authors for their own financial benefit (Anderson, 2017) and to "generate profits rather than promote academic scholarship" (Stratford, 2012). Consequently, authors must carefully navigate where to submit their papers for scientific dissemination (Barroga, 2015; Eriksson and Helgesson, 2017).

This proliferation of predatory journals can be traced to a relatively recent shift in publication models (Beninger et al., 2016), but the reality is that anyone with a computer and internet connection can create a "journal." In the past, traditionally printed journals were large complex operations, financially supported by personal and library subscriptions. Although this ensured high quality of published articles, one disadvantage was that readership was potentially limited; non-subscribers could only read articles if they personally paid for the journal or had access to it through their institution. The open access model reversed this idea so that the published paper is freely available to all readers, after authors themselves pay the publication cost (typically called an "article processing charge," or APC). Although the intent of the open access model was honorable, it has now been exploited by for-profit predatory journals focused solely on increasing their own income by requiring author fees (ranging from US$100 to several thousand dollars) on as many articles as possible without any concern for quality or scientific rigor. Although not all open access journals are predatory—many are indeed legitimate—all predatory journals are open access.

The extent of predatory journals is never more apparent than through "sting operations" in which bogus manuscripts are submitted to journals to test whether they would publish a clearly flawed paper. In one classic example, a working neuroscientist and anonymous blogger submitted a nonsensical Star Wars–inspired study to nine journals in response to e-mailed invitations (Neuroskeptic, 2017). Written by the fictional Dr. Lucas McGeorge and Dr. Annette Kin, the manuscript detailed "midi-chlorians," or "microscopic life forms" said to live inside the cells of Jedi and give them their powers. If that were not enough to warrant rejection along with references to "Yoda's ataxia" and "Wookie's Disease," the manuscript also included an embedded monologue about a Dark Sith Lord. Yet, four journals accepted and published the clearly fictitious paper. Just a few days after the sting was publicized, all four journals deleted the paper (which is available by the author at: https://www.scribd.com/document/354932509/Mitochondria-Structure-Function-and-Clinical-Relevance).

In yet another case, a joke manuscript that consisted entirely of repetitions of seven words ("Get Me Off Your F------ Mailing List"; http://www.scs.stanford.edu/~dm/home/papers/remove.pdf), complete with obviously bogus figures, was accepted by the *International*

Journal of Advanced Computer Technology in 2014, but the author declined the fee of $150 (Stromberg, 2014a). At least one anonymous reviewer rated the manuscript as "excellent."

Finally, a reporter for the *Ottawa Citizen* constructed an entirely fictional manuscript that combined the topics of soil, cancer treatment, and Mars by cutting and pasting text from valid scientific papers. He submitted the manuscript to 18 journals, and 8 of those agreed to publish the paper for a fee ranging from $1000 to $5000 (Stromberg, 2014b). Clearly, there was no peer review or editorial oversight in any of these cases.

WHY CARE?

Authors must be aware of these predatory journals for several reasons (Hunziker, 2017; Rydholm, 2017), not the least of which is their unethical nature, promotion of counterfeit science, and the "watering down" and devaluation of solid scientific research. Furthermore, some predatory journals are not transparent about their publication process (Beall, 2016a), sometimes tricking authors into paying exorbitant fees. An example is as follows: An author submits a manuscript in response to a journal's spam e-mail request, but the manuscript is immediately published (indicating no peer review) and the author is then invoiced a large amount of money —usually over $1000. If the now-suspicious author asks to withdraw the manuscript, the publisher refuses unless a "withdrawal fee" is paid. In short, the author must pay either the publication fee or the withdrawal fee because the manuscript cannot be submitted elsewhere since it is already considered published (Stratford, 2012; Hunziker, 2017). According to Beall (2016a), this is akin to holding the manuscript "hostage" until a fee is paid. In other cases, predatory journals can charge fees that are much lower (median = $100 per article) than the open access fees of higher quality legitimate journals ($2500 to $3000; Shamseer et al., 2017). In this way, predatory journals can attract more authors and publish more articles, garnering more profit for the journal at the expense of quality.

Publishing in a predatory journal can also be detrimental to a researcher's career because institutions are now recognizing their low quality. Specifically, articles in illegitimate journals are increasingly being discounted from the publication record of scientists seeking employment or promotion. For example, the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Cincinnati recently revised their promotion and tenure requirements to specifically exclude articles published in predatory journals. The concern for institutions is that unscrupulous authors may intentionally pad their dossiers by sending their manuscripts to these fake journals because of guaranteed acceptance (Beall, 2017; Kolata, 2017). This also applies to unknowing authors who may be duped into submitting an article to a predatory journal.

The ongoing proliferation of predatory journals also causes confusion among authors and readers, endangering the reputation of legitimate journals. For example, some legitimate open access journals in developing countries or journals that are newly launched may be improperly labeled as "predatory" (Regier, 2018). This can further exacerbate existing biases in scholarly publishing against non-Western and non-English studies, even though these legitimate journals may serve as important publishing outlets in critical areas of the world.

So how can researchers—especially those just

beginning their publishing career—know where to publish their work and specifically, how to avoid inadvertently submitting their manuscripts to an inferior, predatory journal?

SIGNS OF PREDATION

The first list of predatory publishers and stand-alone journals appeared in 2012 as a blog titled *Scholarly Open Access* by Jeffrey Beall, a scholarly communications librarian at the University of Colorado (Beall, 2012). Beall had become concerned about the proliferation of low-quality, for-profit, online-only journals that masqueraded as legitimate publishing outlets. He first coined the term "predatory" in reference to these publishers and journals (Beall, 2016a). The impetus for his list started in the 1990s when many academic libraries in North America, facing declining library budgets and increasing subscription prices along with the appearance of many new academic fields, were forced to become more selective in their journal subscriptions (Beall, 2017). As poor-quality, predatory journals began to increase in number, Beall created his list to share this information with other librarians who were considering how to refine their subscription lists. Known as "Beall's List," this resource became very popular, although it had a limitation in that some publishers could have a mix of predatory and seemingly legitimate journals. Unfortunately, Beall shut down his blog in 2017 following pressure from his employer, caused in part by threats of lawsuits by some of the very publishers he had identified as "predatory" (Beall, 2017). Although an archived Beall's List is still being updated today by an anonymous researcher (see Chawla, 2018), listing of predatory journals has now been taken over by Cabell's International (http://www2.cabells.com), a well-regarded publisher of a directory of journals. In early 2017, Cabell debuted a Blacklist as well as a Whitelist (Anderson, 2017; Chawla, 2018). In contrast to Beall's List, Cabell's Blacklist is not freely available but requires a subscription, with prices set institutionally.

The publishing community has also been working to address the issue of predatory journals and publishers. In 2013, the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) developed *Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing*, which included 16 guidelines for member organizations on how to best promote transparency and scientific rigor (COPE, 2014). These guidelines are also helpful for authors in confirming the scientific validity of any journal. For example, they require member journals to conduct peer-review using experts in the field (not only the editorial staff), to possess a journal name that cannot be easily confused with another journal (and thus mislead authors), and full disclosure of names, affiliations, and contact information for the editorial board and staff. If any journal or publisher violates one or more of these points, it must address the issue satisfactorily or risk losing their membership in COPE, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA), and/or the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME).

In addition, several legitimate publishers and library groups started an initiative in 2015 called *ThinkCheckSubmit* (http://thinkchecksubmit.org) to educate authors about what to look for when selecting a journal in which to publish (Beall, 2016b). Another resource to identify deceptive journals or publishers was created by the Council of Science Editors (2018). However, even these resources do not prevent unethical, predatory

journals from continuing to market to and engage unsuspecting (or deceitful) authors. Based on published resources (e.g., COPE, 2014; Tin et al., 2014; Beall, 2016a,b; Beninger et al., 2016; Eriksson and Helgesson, 2017; Hunziker, 2017; Laine and Winker, 2017; Shamseer et al., 2017; Council of Science Editors, 2018), I created a combined checklist to help authors identify whether a given journal is predatory or legitimate.

COMMON RED FLAGS OF A PREDATORY JOURNAL

Authors should be wary of journals containing more than one of the following flags when considering where to submit their work for publication:

Journal Information:

- Journal name could be easily confused with a different legitimate journal
- Only a small number of articles are published per year, with articles typically of poor quality
- Focus of the journal is very broad, often encompassing more than one field of study that are usually not treated together
- Title of the journal includes "International," "World," "American," "European," "British," "Innovative," or "Advanced" [Note that this also pertains to some legitimate journals.]
- Editorial board is not clearly defined or consists of an inordinately large number of researchers (many non-experts) from different locations around the world
- Claims an unrealistic peer review-to-publication turnaround time (e.g., one week)
- Articles are sent to their editorial board for "peer review" rather than to ad-hoc experts in their field
- Asks the recipient to also send their resume to be considered for their editorial board
- Falsely claims to be indexed by databases such as Web of Science, PubMed, or SCOPUS
- Falsely claims to be a member of the Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association (OASPA) or COPE, or if an online journal, deceptively claims to be registered in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- Direct marketing e-mails often contain spelling errors, grammatical mistakes, and the use of pretentious and ostentatious words ("honored", "impressive", "eminent")
- E-mails requesting submissions are sent multiple times, spamming potential authors
- In the e-mail, authors are asked to send their manuscript as an attachment without any indication of a website for verification of the authenticity of the journal; the e-mail address may be personal (i.e., a gmail address)

Website:

- Appearance and/or content of website may mimic another journal or publisher's website
- Website contains many grammatical errors and/or images with poor resolution (having been copied from other online sites)
- Publisher has no functional telephone number or postal address, or consists of a residential address
- Full names of editors and their affiliations are not provided
- Names and contact information of editorial staff are not provided; editorial assistant

may only be known by their first name or a combination of two typical American first names

- The periodicity of publication is not clearly stated and/or is inconsistent
- Peer reviewing process is not adequately described
- Uses words such as "impact factor" or "index factor" for non-existent organizations; or mentions indices, such as Google Scholar (which does not consider the quality of any listed articles) or Index Copernicus
- Does not clearly indicate information about the ownership and/or management of a journal
- Copyright information is not readily apparent or provided on the website; publisher may in fact retain the copyright
- No clear statement about research integrity and how misconduct will be dealt with; no statement about conflicts of interest of editors, reviewers, and authors
- No clear statement of archiving or how access to journal content will be preserved in perpetuity (if the journal is no longer published), such as in CLOCKSS or PubMed Central

Finances:

- Author charges are either unclear or are not stated on the website.
- If posted, APCs are either extremely high (several thousand dollars) or extremely low (e.g., $60–$100)
- Authors are required to pay a fee (often excessive) in order for the paper to be first sent for "review"
- The advertising policy is not clearly stated
- The method of access for readers, including subscription fees or pay per view, is not provided

A TEST CASE

To better understand the challenges faced by researchers seeking a publication outlet, I collected all e-mails I received over a three-month period (October 2017 to January 2018) that invited submission of a manuscript to a journal. From these e-mails, I extracted and compared the journal names, publishers, characteristics of the e-mail (sender, contact information, grammar, etc.), and frequency of contact. I then used the checklist above, Beall's List of publishers and some stand-alone journals, and Cabell's Blacklist of journals to determine whether the journal/publisher referenced in each message was legitimate or predatory.

In all, I received 86 e-mails during the 103-day collection period, ranging from 0 to 4 e-mails per day. The e-mails originated from 68 journals from at least 30 publishers (in 11 cases, the publisher was not apparent; Table 1), and some journals sent multiple e-mails. The largest number of e-mails were received on a Tuesday (n = 19), followed by Monday (17), Thursday and Friday (16 each), Wednesday (9), Saturday (7), and Sunday (2). The most common publishers behind these e-mails were OMICS International (including SciTechnol and Insight Medical Publishing) with invitations to submit to 16 of their journals, sometimes repeated. The next most common publishers were Open Access Publishers (OAP) with invitations to 5 of their journals and Science Research Publishing with 3 journals. OMICS International and OAP are considered predatory by both Beall and

Cabell, and their e-mails were characteristic of the checklist above. In particular, OMICS International was labeled by Beall as "the worst of the worst" (see also Stratford, 2012). Eriksson and Helgesson (2017) also reported how OMICS International is particularly skilled at manipulating their reported "impact factor," and Stratford (2012) emphasized that their websites are often deceptive.

Of the 86 e-mails that I received, only 9 (10.5%) were determined to be from legitimate journals and the remaining 77 (89.5%) were from questionable sources. Of these, 57 (66.3%) e-mails originated from a predatory journal or publisher as identified by Beall and/or Cabell, and 21 (23.3%) e-mails contained many of the characteristics of predatory journals (see checklist above), but did not appear on the Beall or Cabell lists. Even if multiple requests from the same publisher were excluded, only 11.8% of e-mails could be tracked to a legitimate journal with 88.2% originating from a known or presumed predatory journal or publisher (consisting of 64.7% listed on Beall and/or Cabell and 23.5% with characteristics of predatory journals).

During my review of these emails, the most common red flags that indicated a predatory journal were as follows:

1. *Inappropriate E-mail Presentation and Tone:* Predatory journals often have an international origin and as such, may spam researchers with repeated e-mails that are replete with grammatical errors, odd word choices, effusive praise, and nonsensical sentence structure. Noteworthy examples include (boldface as in the original message):

Dear Dr. Theresa M Culley,

Good Morning…..!

I hope your morning is as bright as your smile!

Well, in order to apply ISSN we are in need of one Research Article. Is it possible for you to support us with your eminent work? In fact, we are offering best partial waiver for the first 5 articles which are received foremost.

Your trust in my efforts is the highest form of our motivation, I believe in you that your eminent manuscript brings out the best citation to our Journal.

Predict to hear your optimistic response.

Regards,

JOJ Horticulture & Arboriculture (JOJHA)

Dear Dr. Theresa M. Culley,

Greetings from SciFed Journal of Astrophysics.

We just wanted to take a minute to wish you peace and prosperity.

On behalf of ***SciFed Journal of Astrophysics****, we would like to invite you to publish your recent research work for the second issue.* ***SciFed Journal of Astrophysics Journal*** *accepts articles in the form of Research Articles/Review Articles/Case Reports/Short Communications etc.*

Please kindly share your recent research paper related to Journal of Astrophysics.

We hope you will respond to this invite with a ***yes*** *and will allow us to have one of the brilliant and most gifted minds of this century.*

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

If you have any concerns, we will be glad to assist you.

Best Regards,

George Philip
Assistant Scientific Editor
SciFed Journal of Astrophysics

Dear Dr. T M Culley,

Hope all is well at your end. Apologize for bothering in your busy schedule. We are delighted to inform you that, we are planning to release our ***Upcoming issue*** *by the* ***End of Current month*** *and require your kind support to do this in due time.*

We are planning to get ***ISSN*** *number to our journal within* ***2months*** *for which we have to publish more Research and Review articles as per the guidelines of Cope. Hence, we need your kind support, as we have gone through your profile in online and very much delighted & surprised by your eminent articles which are quite interesting and informative.*

Where, you are an eminent author to our journal, we kindly request you to contribute your manuscript to increase the scope of our journal or else you can suggest your friends/colleagues/students to submit their manuscripts towards our Journal. Kindly follow the below link for online submission https://www.medwinpublishers.com/submit-manuscript.php

If you are unable to submit article by the given timeline, kindly send us ***2 Page Editorial/Mini Review/Short communication/Opinion****. Hope it would not consume your much valuable time.*

We are positive that this Journal will offer you an enriching experience and hope to achieve great successful endeavors.

Kindly acknowledge this email receipt within ***24*** *hours.*

Await your reply.

Kind Regards
Lori Elizabeth
Assistant Managing Editor
Genomics & Gene Therapy International Journal (GGTIJ)
MedWin Publishers
Email: genomics@medwinpublishers.com

If you wish to not to receive our e-mails, kindly unsubscribe

2. *Promises of a Quick Review and Acceptance:* One e-mail I received from the *International Journal of Management and Economics Invention* promised notification of acceptance within 2 to 3 days of submission and online publication within 24 hours—despite the publisher's statement that "RAJ is committed to peer review integrity and practices the highest standards of ethical publishing…." Notably, the charge for U.S. authors was $100 per article, to be paid through PayPal. The website for *World Journal of Research and Review* (https://www.wjrr.org/page/faq) mentions that it only takes 3 to 4 working days for the review process and that online publication is 1 to 2 days after "registration"; payment is by credit card or PayPal.

3. *Odd Editorial Office Contacts:* Another common characteristic of predatory journals is that e-mails to authors are commonly signed by an editorial assistant with either a single name followed by an abbreviation for the last name (Murray L or Amanda T) or two common English names put together (e.g., George Phillip, John Abraham, Isaac Brian). However, my favorite senders were "Monalisa," the Assistant Managing Editor of the *Journal of Plant Sciences and Agricultural Research*, and "Scarlett Johansson," the purported journal coordinator of the new *Journal of Environmental Research* (not to be confused with Elsevier's legitimate *Environmental Research*).

4. *Large Number of Editorial Board Members:* Predatory journals typically have a very long list of editors or editorial board members, often from a scattering of different topical areas (Shamseer et al., 2017). In some cases, the "editors" may turn out to be reputable scientists who have no idea that their name and information has been purloined

(Gasparyan et al., 2015). For example, in 2016 I received an e-mail from *Biological Systems: Open Access*, published by OMICS International, requesting a review article. The e-mail caught my attention because it was very poorly written with grammatical mistakes, yet reportedly was from their Editor-in-Chief—a name that I happened to recognize as a researcher at a neighboring university. When I contacted him, the person had no idea that his information and photograph had been surreptitiously used in this manner, having been copied from his university website. Several years ago, I politely declined a request to join an editorial board of a journal, mentioning that it was completely outside my area of expertise and I was already too busy as an editor-in-chief—to which the journal asked me to reconsider, mentioning that I did not need to do anything at all. In yet another example involving a sting operation, a resume from a fictitious scientist named Anna O. Szust (based on the Polish word for "a fraud") was submitted to 360 journals to serve on their editorial board; 40 predatory journals accepted her as an editor (some offers were conditional on receiving payment) and 4 journals appointed her as editor-in-chief—with at least one mentioning that she would have "no responsibilities" (Sorokowski et al., 2017). Finally, the fictional Dr. Lucas McGeorge mentioned earlier in the Star Wars sting operation was subsequently sent an unsolicited e-mail to serve on the editorial board of a different journal (Neuroskeptic, 2017).

5. *Misleading Statements of Importance and False Impact Factors:* Predatory journals sometimes provide a fake impact factor to misrepresent their importance (Beall, 2016b; Gasparyan et al., 2015; Beninger et al., 2016; Eriksson and Helgesson, 2017; Hunziker, 2017). Impact factors are calculated each year by Clarivate Analytics (which took over the calculations from Thomson Reuters), and it can take at least two years for a journal to be selected to be included in their well-regarded Journal Citation Report (JCR). However, Thomson Reuters originally never trademarked the name "impact factor," so a number of companies (such as Index Copernicus) have emerged to supply bogus "impact factors" to predatory journals (Eriksson and Helgesson, 2017; Shamseer et al., 2017). Furthermore, predatory journals may claim inclusion in an irrelevant indexing service that does not include any measure of article quality, such as Google Scholar (Beall, 2016a). To check the authenticity of reported metrics, the group known as Stop Predatory Journals provide a list of such indexing services (https://predatoryjournals.com/metrics/). Some predatory journals also state falsely on their websites that they are registered in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), which can be easily checked (https://doaj.org). Finally, Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) are provided for materials regardless of their quality, so the fact that a journal provides DOIs for their articles should never be taken as an external recognition of the importance of that journal.

One of my favorites is the following e-mail from the predatory journal *American International Journal of Contemporary Research.* It was sent from "Emily Michael" and has even been updated to include that the journal is indexed in Cabell's. It is certainly included there—but on their Blacklist. The underlined and bold-faced portions are as in the original e-mail.

Call for Papers
American International Journal of Contemporary Research
ISSN 2162-139X (Print), ISSN 2162-142X (Online)
DOI: 10.30845/aijcr

American International Journal of Contemporary Research (AIJCR) *is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed multidisciplinary journal published by Center for Promoting Ideas (CPI), USA. The main objective of AIJCR is to provide an intellectual platform for the research community. AIJCR aims to promote contemporary research in business, humanities, social science, science and technology and become the leading journal in the world.*

The journal publishes research papers in three broad specific fields as follows:

Business and Economics
Management, marketing, finance, economics, banking, accounting, human resources management, international business, hotel and tourism, entrepreneurship development, business ethics, development studies and so on.

Humanities and Social Science
Anthropology, communication studies, corporate governance, criminology, cross-cultural studies, demography, education, ethics, geography, history, industrial relations, information science, international relations, law, linguistics, library science, media studies, methodology, philosophy, political science, population Studies, psychology, public administration, sociology, social welfare, linguistics, literature, paralegal, performing arts (music, theatre & dance), religious studies, visual arts, women studies.

Science and Technology
Astronomy and astrophysics, Chemistry, Earth and atmospheric sciences, Physics, Biology in general, Agriculture, Biophysics and biochemistry, Botany, Environmental Science, Forestry, Genetics, Horticulture, Husbandry, Neuroscience, Zoology, Computer science, Engineering, Robotics and Automation, Materials science, Mathematics, Mechanics, Statistics, Health Care & Public Health, Nutrition and Food Science, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and so on.

The journal is published both in print and online versions.
AIJCR publishes original papers, review papers, conceptual framework, analytical and simulation models, case studies, empirical research, technical notes, and book reviews.

AIJCR is indexed with and included in Cabell's, EBSCO, Ulrich's , IndexCopernicus International, and Gale. Moreover the journal is under the indexing process with ISI, ERIC, ProQuest, Scopus, DOAJ and Econlit.

DOI® number
Each paper published in American International Journal of Contemporary Research is assigned a DOI® number. The DOI of this journal is 10.30845/aijcr.

AIJCR is inviting papers for Vol. 8 No. 2 which is scheduled to be published on June 30, 2018. *Last date of submission: June 20, 2018. However, an early submission will get preference in case of review and publication process.*

Send your manuscript to the editor at editor@aijcrnet.com

For more information, visit the official website of the journal www.aijcrnet.com

With thanks,
Dr. Andrew Lessard

The Chief Editor
American International Journal of Contemporary Research
Contact: editor@aijcrnet.com

6. *Invitations to Submit to Irrelevant Journals:* Although most journals e-mailing to solicit a manuscript were usually of some relevance to my own research as a botanist, there was also a subset of highly irrelevant journals. These included the *SciFed Journal of Astrophysics* (which sent three identical requests and another this May, asking why they have not heard back from me), *Advances in Automobile Engineering*, and *Journal of Stem Cells and Regenerative Therapy*, to name a few. Some of these journals also sent insistent, follow-up e-mail solicitations, often directly referring to one of my own unrelated publications by title.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

The appearance of new predatory journals will undoubtedly continue as long as researchers remain ambivalent, ignorant, or accepting of this publishing trend. As one of their main targets, junior scientists such as graduate students writing their first paper need to be especially wary of predatory journals. Given that I, as a full professor with over 18 years of publishing articles, received so many requests from predatory journals, it would be interesting to determine if it might differ for graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and junior tenure track faculty members in the United States. Authors in countries with limited financial resources may also be attracted to these journals because the cost is often much lower than legitimate journals. For example, a review of articles published in predatory journals from 2010–2014 revealed that 75% of the authors were from Africa or Asia (Shen and Björk, 2015). However, it is important to remember that legitimate, open access journals from these regions of the world can also be improperly labeled as "predatory," so lists such as those above should be used with caution with non-Western and non-English journals (Regier, 2018).

As emphasized here, authors should avoid submitting their manuscripts to these illegitimate journals, but there are also other implications of the proliferation of predatory journals. First, when authors are searching for relevant citations to include in their own manuscripts, they now must decide which articles are valid to cite and which to ignore (Beall, 2016a); it is not enough to always simply trust in the reputation of the journal itself. In addition, fake literature will continue to infiltrate academia as students and others unknowingly reference illegitimate articles found on the internet. Third, the onus now falls upon academic search committees to carefully vet the curriculum vitae of their job applicants to avoid applicants who pad their publication record with articles in low-quality, predatory journals (Kolata, 2017). Finally, the scientific community still needs to consider the role of paid editing services for non-English speaking authors (Gasparyan et al., 2015). In the end, authors, reviewers, and editors must remain vigilant about the predatory journals and publishers. This is the only way that we can thwart persons and companies who wish to devalue science for their own personal profit.

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Table 1. *Journals that sent 68 e-mails to the author inviting journal submissions over a 103-day period. Shown for each journal is the publisher, sender of the e-mail invitation (Sender), and the following characteristics for each e-mail: fitting much of the criteria in the checklist above (Classic example), containing multiple grammar and spelling mistakes (Mistakes), containing one or more statements of effusive praise (Effusive praise), the sender listed as a single name or a combination of common American or British names (Simple sender name), whether the e-mail is from a journal from an unrelated field (Non-relevant field), and the number of times an e-mail was received (N). Journals are arranged by publisher in alphabetical order and grouped according to whether they are considered predatory by Beall, Cabell, both Beall and Cabell, or are not listed by either but contain characteristics of predatory entities, and legitimate journals.*

Classic example	Mistakes	Effusive praise	Simple sender name	Non-relevant field	N	Journal Name	Publisher	Sender
Listed by Beall Only								
				X	1	Journal of Biomass to Biofuel	Avestia Publishing, International ASET Inc.	Prof. Seyed Gh. Etemad (CEO)
				X	1	Journal of Biomedical Engineering and Biosciences	Avestia Publishing, International ASET Inc.	Prof. Seyed Gh. Etemad (CEO)
X	X	X	X	X	1	International Archives of Clinical Pharmacology	ClinMed	Christopher A (Editorial office)
	X		X		1	Journal of Molecular Biology and Techniques	Elyns Publishing Group	Spandana. M (Assistant Managing Editor)
	X	X	X	X	1	Current Opinion in Gynecology and Obstetrics	Gratis Open Access Publisher	Henry Nicholas (Editorial Office)
		X	X	X	1	Journal of Pharmaceutics and Therapeutics	Gratis Open Access Publisher	Henry Nicholas (Editorial Office)
X	X			X	1	Journal of Alternative Complementary & Integrative Medicine	Herald Scholarly Open Access	Emma Lynch
	X		X		1	British Journal of Research	Insight Medical Publishing (OMICS)	Professor Yokoyama Kenji (Editor)
X	X	X	X		1	Journal of Environmental Research	Insight Medical Publishing (OMICS)	Scarlett Johansson (Journal Coordinator)
X					1	Journal of Plant Sciences and Agricultural Research	Insight Medical Publishing (OMICS)	Monalisa (Assistant Managing Editor)
X	X	X!	X	X	2	Genomics & Gene Therapy International Journal	MedWin Publishers	Lori Elizabeth (Assistant Managing Editor)
					1	Journal of Advances in Plant Biology	Open Access Pub (OAP)	John Abraham (Editorial Office)
					1	Journal of Alternative Medicine and Mind Body Practices	Open Access Pub (OAP)	John Abraham (Editorial Office)
				X	2	Journal of Fertility Biomarkers	Open Access Pub (OAP)	John Abraham (Editorial Office)
			X	X	2	Journal of Preventive Medicine and Care	Open Access Pub (OAP)	John Abraham (Editorial Office)
			X	X	1	The Journal	Open Access Pub (OAP)	John Abraham (Editorial Office)
X	X	X!	X	X	3	SciFed Journal of Astrophysics	Scientific Federation	George Philip (Assistant Scientific Editor)
	X	X			1	Journal of Soil Science and Plant Health	SciTechnol (OMICS)	Komal Gupta (Journal Coordinator)
				X	1	Internal Medicine Review	Unknown	A. Lesnevskyi, M.D. (Senior Editor)
X	X		X	X	1	Unknown Name	Sift Desk Group	Davis (Asst.Editorial Manager)

X			X	X	1	International Multidisciplinary Research Journal	TathQeef Scientific Publishing	IJEAS Team
Listed by Cabell Only								
X					1	International Journal of Research in Environmental Science	ARC	Naresh B (Editorial Assistant)
X	X	X	X		1	Journal of Investigative Genomics	MedCrave Group	Isaac Brian
Listed by Both Beall and Cabell								
				X	1	Journal of Geography and Earth Sciences	American Research Institute for Policy Development	Executive Editor
				X	4	International Journal of Applied Science and Technology	Center for Promoting Ideas (CPI)	Dr. Jorge J. Santiago-Aviles (Chief Editor)
	X			X	1	International Journal of Humanities and Social Science	Center for Promoting Ideas (CPI)	Dr. J. Sabrina Mims-Cox (The Chief Editor)
					3	American International Journal of Biology	American Research Institute for Policy Development	Geneva McNicholl, on behalf of Editor-in-Chief
					1	International Journal Environmental & Agricultural Science	Bio Accent	Evylene
			X	X	1	International Journal of Education and Human Developments	Center for Global Research Development	Dr. Clayton Kennedy
X	X			X	1	Journal of Earth and Environmental Sciences	Gavin Publishers	Cathy Williams (Editorial Coordinator)
X	X	X			1	Forestry Research and Engineering: International Journal	MedCrave Group	Regina Lawsol
					1	Net Journal of Agricultural Science	Net Journals	Prof. Kadriye Caglayan (Editor)
					1	Advances in Crop Science and Technology	OMICS	Glory Har (Editorial Coordinator)
X	X	X	X	X	1	Journal of Bioanalysis & Biomedicine	OMICS	Kristen Nicole (Journal Coordinator)
X	X		X	X	1	Journal of Ecology and Toxicology	OMICS	Alena S. (Journal coordinator)
	X	X	X		2	Journal of Phylogenetics & Evolutionary Biology	OMICS	Managing Editor
X	X				1	Research & Reviews: Journal of Botanical Sciences	OMICS	Stella Maris (Journal Coordinator)
				X	1	Advances in Automobile Engineering	OMICS	Anna Watson (Journal Coordinator)
		x			1	Journal of Research and Development	OMICS	Jenny Brown (Managing Editor)
	X	X	X		2	Journal of Biodiversity Management & Forestry	SciTechnol (OMICS)	Shiba Kalyan (Journal Coordinator)
X	X	X	X		1	Journal of Plant Physiology & Pathology	SciTechnol (OMICS)	Associate Managing Editor
	X		X		1	VEGETOS: An International Journal of Plant Research	SciTechnol (OMICS)	Ananda T (Journal Coordinator)
	X			X	1	Journal of Biochemistry and Biotechnology	Series Communications	Annabel Wilson (Editorial Assistant)
X		X		X	1	SDRP Earth Sciences & Environmental Studies	Sift Desk Group	Dr. Renato Alencar

				X	1	Journal of Stem Cells and Regenerative Therapy	ZygoScient Research Insights, Inc.	Emily Watson (Editorial Assistant)
Presumed Predatory								
			X	X	1	6th Annual International Conference on Chemistry, Chemical Engineering & Chemical Process	Global Science and Technology Forum	Moreganaraj (Programme Manager)
X	X	X	X		1	Journal of Plant Science and Phytopathology	Heighten Science Publications Corporation	Murray L
X	X	X	X	X	1	Journal of Pollution	OMICS	Chandu N (Managing Editor)
	X				2	Journal of Plant Genetics and Breeding: Open Access	OMICS	John Brown (Journal Coordinator)
	X		X		2	American Journal of Bioscience and Bioengineering	Science PC	Editorial Office
X	X				1	Natural Science	Scientific Research Publishing	Ms. LIU Mengzhu (Managing Editor)
X!				X	1	International Journal of Pharmacovigilance	Symbiosis	Victor Daniel
	X			X	1	Journal of Pharmaceutical Chemistry & Chemical Science	Unknown	Kristin Hanley (Journal Coordinator)
	X	X		X	2	Journal of Marine Biology and Aquatic Research	Unknown	Jennifer Brown (Associate Managing Editor)
X!	X		X	X	1	Journal of Aquatic Sciences and Oceanography	Unknown	Reuben Mark (Associate Managing Editor)
X	X		X	X	1	World Journal of Research and Review	Unknown	WJRR Journal Team
X	X				1	Agricultural Research & Technology: Open Access Journal	Unknown	Sophia Mathis
X				X	1	International Journal of Environmental Monitoring and Analysis	Unknown	Editorial Office
			X	X	1	Letters in Health and Biological Sciences	Unknown	Katherine (Editorial Assistant)
X	X		X	X	2	Transylvanian Review	Unknown	
X			X	X	1	International Journal of Management and Economics Invention	Unknown	Journal Manager
Legitimate Journals								
					1	AIMS Genetics	AIMS Press	Dr. Cheng Bi (Managing Editor)
				X	2	Current Pharmacogenomics & Personalized Medicine	Bentham Science	Prof. Adrián Llerena (Editor-in-Chief)
					1	Frontiers in Biology	Higher Education Press and Springer	Hongjun Song Ph.D. (Editor-in-Chief) and Xueli Zhang (Managing Editor)
					1	Forests	MDPI	
					1	Advances in Bioscience and Biotechnology	Scientific Research Publishing	Ms. Jiaojiao Yao (Alice) (Editorial Assistant)
					1	American Journal of Plant Sciences	Scientific Research Publishing	Ms. DENG Jing (Joy) (Editorial Assistant)
					1	Life: The Excitement of Biology	Self-published	Jorge A. Santiago-Blay, PhD