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## A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing; Open Access, and Predatory Journals

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# A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing Open Access, and Predatory Journals

R Philip Reynolds  
Scholarly Communications Librarian  
Ralph W. Steen Library  
April 10, 2018

# Open Access Defined

Open access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions.

# Green OA and ScholarWorks

- ▶ Green OA is free of charges
- ▶ ~86% of journals allow Green OA pre-prints
- ▶ Green OA enables authors to choose where they want to publish
- ▶ ScholarWorks emphasizes Green OA

# Gold OA

- ▶ Gold OA fees
- ▶ Legitimate journals
- ▶ Increasing in Impact
- ▶ PLOS <https://www.plos.org/>

# Predatory Publishers & Journals

- ▶ Not legitimate journals
- ▶ Are getting better and better at hiding
- ▶ Prey on authors who need to publish or perish
- ▶ How to spot the crooks
  - ▶ Language
  - ▶ Promises
  - ▶ Processes

# Language

- ▶ Spam requests
- ▶ The website (or email) contains spelling or grammar errors
- ▶ The homepage language overtly targets authors  
<http://www.sciencepublishinggroup.com/home/index>
- ▶ Something doesn't add up (American Journal of....)  
<http://www.sciencepublishinggroup.com/journal/index?journalid=655>
- ▶ Images are distorted/fuzzy, intended to look like something they are not, or which are unauthorized  
<http://www.sciencepublishinggroup.com/journal/index?journalid=655>

# Promises

- ▶ Rapid publication is promised
- ▶ The Article processing/publication charge is very low (e.g., < \$150 USD)
- ▶ Journals claiming to be open access either retain copyright of published research or fail to mention copyright
- ▶ The Index Copernicus Value is promoted on the website



# Processes

- ▶ Description of the manuscript handling process is lacking
- ▶ Manuscripts are requested to be submitted via non-professional and non-journal affiliated email
- ▶ There is no retraction policy
- ▶ Information on whether and how journal content will be digitally preserved is absent
- ▶ The contact email address is non-professional and non-journal affiliated (e.g., @gmail.com or @yahoo.com)

# Ask a Librarian

- ▶ Beall's list <https://beallslist.weebly.com/>
- ▶ Google search (predatory)
- ▶ Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- ▶ Can check Databases