

# Fake Journals and Conferences

What to Know about the Faux

Slides: [bit.ly/gradlibfakers](https://bit.ly/gradlibfakers)

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# Fake Journals and Conferences

You Already Know More Than You Realize!

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Let's play "I spy..."



# I Spy Something Fishy...

Release of New Issue: RRHOAJ

 DELETE  REPLY  REPLY ALL  FORWARD 



Research and Reviews on Healthcare: Open Access Journal <reviews@lupinepublishers.org>

Mark as unread

Tue 9/25/2018 6:53 AM

To: Cirasella, Jill;

[Bing Maps](#)

[Action Items](#)

**Dear Professor,**

Good Morning!

We are in shortfall of one article for successful release of ongoing Issue i.e., Volume 2 Issue 4 of our **Research and Reviews on Healthcare: Open Access Journal (RRHOAJ)**.

Please submit us your transcript for this issue before **10<sup>th</sup> October**, If this is a short notice in your busy schedule please do send 2 page article, we hope 2 page article isn't time taken for eminent like you.

We are confident that you will always be there to support us as in the role of Eminent Editor of our Journal.

Await your response.

Regards,

**Deborah Daniel**

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# Without Even Opening the Email...



Liv Mariah "worded up" Yarrow  
@profyarrow



Seems legit



**Beasty Fusion**

6:12 AM >

Your Article Add Value to our Journal – IJMSR

8:11 AM · Sep 24, 2019 · [Twitter Web App](#)

# "PREDATORY" JOURNALS

**PSEUDO-JOURNALS**

**SHAM JOURNALS**

**FAKE JOURNALS**



# **Whatever We Call Them, What Are They?**

They are shady publishing operations that solicit manuscripts for inclusion in journal-like objects.

# Whaddya Mean, “Journal-Like”?

They consist of real articles collected into issues/volumes.  
They claim to vet manuscripts with peer review, but they don't actually employ (rigorous) peer review.

# Aren't Some Real Journals Not Peer Reviewed?

At some journals, editors alone decide on acceptance.  
Some journals experiment with review methods.

All good journals are honest and transparent  
about their refereeing policies and practices.

# Why So Much Focus on Review?

Journals serve multiple purposes.

One of the most important is conferring prestige:  
issuing a “stamp of approval” to manuscripts  
that meet their quality standards.

Journals that lie about peer review also misrepresent  
their role in, and value to, the scholarly ecosystem.

**Why Do They Exist?**

**Profit.**

# Don't Lots of Publishers Make Profits?

Yes, and some publishers make huge profits.

However, all reputable publishers also endeavor to disseminate quality research and advance knowledge — either because they're committed to those things or because they know they're necessary for long-term profitability.

| Profit     | Company         | Industry                    |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 10%        | BMW             | automobiles                 |
| 23%        | Rio Tinto       | mining                      |
| 25%        | Google          | search                      |
| 29%        | Apple           | premium computing           |
| <b>35%</b> | <b>Springer</b> | <b>scholarly publishing</b> |
| <b>37%</b> | <b>Elsevier</b> | <b>scholarly publishing</b> |

# How Do Fake Journals Make Money?

By charging publication fees that exceed the cost of producing their “journal-like” creations.

# That's Crazy! Who Would Pay?

Fees actually aren't red flags in and of themselves.

Many journals, including many high-quality journals, charge author-side fees.

Some open access journals have article processing charges (APCs).

Some subscription-based journals charge page fees, illustration fees, etc.\*

\*Ideally, fees are not paid from researchers' pockets: Some institutions pay fees for their employees. Grants can be used to pay fees. Some journals waive fees for authors who cannot afford them.



# Are APCs Tantamount to Vanity Publishing?

At reputable and honest journals,  
APCs have no bearing whatsoever  
on whether an article is accepted.

At fake journals, APCs = acceptance.



# Why Would Anyone Publish There?

Some authors know what's up and publish there anyway (due to rejections from other journals, job pressures to publish quickly and/or voluminously, etc.).

Some authors are duped into publishing there.

# **Don't Be Fooled!**

With a little due diligence and thoughtful evaluation,  
you can suss out fake and questionable journals.

# Heard about Lists?

Heard about B\*\*ll's List?

Highly problematic: it reflected his biases and conflated lower-quality and amateurish with predatory.

Any attempt to create a comprehensive list of fake journals would be similarly problematic.

**Forget lists!**

# Evaluate!

It's not just fake journals you want to avoid.

You want to avoid publishing in journals that don't meet your quality standards, that you wouldn't be proud to publish in and list on your CV.

You owe it to yourself and your career to evaluate any journal you're thinking of publishing in.  
(Also evaluate the journals you read!)

# No Lists? But I Like Lists!

There are other lists that can help:

- 1) lists of vetted journals
- 2) lists of journal traits to consider

# “Pre-Approved” OA Journals

## Directory of Open Access Journals

[doaj.org](https://doaj.org)



Browse or search 14,000+ open access journals that have been vetted for transparency and quality control.

Most do not charge APCs.



# “Pre-Approved” OA Publishers

**Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association**

[oaspa.org](https://oaspa.org)



Members are vetted and must adhere to a code of conduct.

# “Pre-Approved” OA Publishers

## Committee on Publication Ethics

[publicationethics.org](https://publicationethics.org)



Members are vetted and must adhere to a code of conduct.

# Things to Look Out For & Consider

Open Access Journal Quality Indicators

[bit.ly/OAindicators](https://bit.ly/OAindicators)

Think. Check. Submit.

[thinkchecksubmit.org](https://thinkchecksubmit.org)



# Some Red Flags

- Email solicitations, especially flattering ones
- Fake “reminder” or “follow-up” emails
- Editors with Gmail/Yahoo email addresses
- Claims of super-fast peer review
- Lack of transparency about fees
- Inconsistencies (e.g., about geographic location, editorial board membership)

This list is adapted with permission from: Berger, Monica. “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Predatory Publishing but Were Afraid to Ask.” [https://academicworks.cuny.edu/ny\\_pubs/141/](https://academicworks.cuny.edu/ny_pubs/141/)

# More Red Flags

- Copycat titles
- Missing/faked ISSN
- False claims about impact factor
- Boasts about metrics that don't exist
- False claims about inclusion in library databases
- Boasts about inclusion in Google Scholar, etc.

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# Other Things to Consider

Depending on a variety of factors, these may or may not be red flags:

- Extremely broad scope
- Newness or incompleteness
- Article quantity
- Appearance of website
- Quality of writing on website (especially if journal claims to be from US, UK, Canada, etc.)

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**Think critically.**

Also go with your gut.

# Fake Conferences Too?

In short: ditto.

Think. Check. Attend.  
[thinkcheckattend.org](http://thinkcheckattend.org)





# **Fake Book Publishers Too?**

Scam book publishers often target recent graduates, offering to publish their thesis or dissertation.

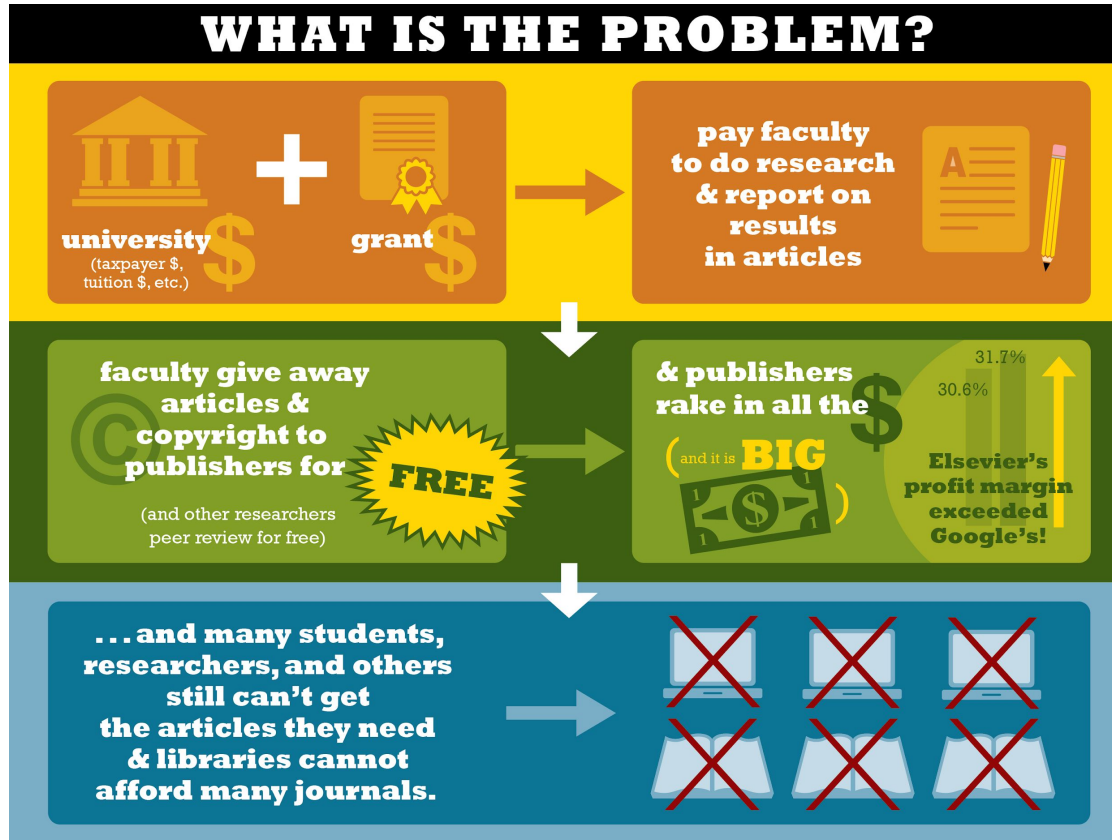
Beware of publishers you haven't heard of.

Beware of publishers that don't have an extensive review and revision process.

Publishing with a book mill will hurt your chances of later publishing with a reputable press.

**Speaking of predation...**

# Consider This:



# Recall This:

| Profit     | Company         | Industry                    |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 10%        | BMW             | automobiles                 |
| 23%        | Rio Tinto       | mining                      |
| 25%        | Google          | search                      |
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<http://wp.me/pH4jF-km> CC-BY Alex Holcombe



**Who are the real predators?**

# One Last Thing...

## Get to know your librarian!

Slides: [bit.ly/gradlibfakers](https://bit.ly/gradlibfakers)

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<http://www.scs.stanford.edu/~dm/home/papers/remove.pdf>

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Let's play "I spy..."





# Links to Handouts

“When Is a ‘Journal’ Not Really a Journal”: <http://bit.ly/gradlibfakers-handout>

“I Spy a Fake Journal...”: <http://bit.ly/gradlibfakers-spy>

“I Sold My Undergraduate Thesis to a Print Content Farm” by Joseph Stromberg: <https://slate.com/technology/2014/03/lap-lambert-academic-publishing-my-trip-to-a-print-content-farm.html>

“Dubious conferences put the ‘pose’ in ‘symposium’” by Adam Ruben: <https://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2016/11/dubious-conferences-put-pose-symposium>