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

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Repository Citation

Reynolds, R Philip, "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing; Open Access, and Predatory Journals" (2018). *Library Faculty and Staff Presentations*. 20.

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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