Predatory journals...

....and other scholarly scams

Theo Andrew
Scholarly Communications Team
Library & University Collections

Pic by Klaus Stiefel https://flic.kr/p/6MN4KY
You have probably all…

...received unsolicited spam:

Asking you to submit to a journal you’ve never heard of

Inviting you to go to a conference in an exotic location

Encouraging you to join the editorial board of a journal

Offering to publish your PhD
Julie Bayley

From: Peer unreachable Journal of Computer Science and Engineering <editor.pjce@plmail.net>
Sent: 27 October 2016 05:33
To: Julie Bayley
Subject: Publish and Share: PICSE

Reference no.: PZ0001016 — yes, this feels legit now

Dear Dr. Julie E. Bayley,

On the [lecture of Open Access Week (24th October – 30th October 2016)], Peer unreachable Journal of Computer Science has come up with pulsating and systematic publishing plan. You can publish articles in nominal publication fees.

For further details and conditions please contact the Journal E-Mail address.

The authors, reviewers, editors and every individual with the spirit of writing are suggested to take advantage of this offer and publish their articles.

Submit your valuable works immediately and take part in this prime occasion.

You are hereby requested not to reply on the sender E-Mail ID.

We solicit your early response.

Please reply to this mail on following mail-IDs: mail.computerscience@peer unreachable.com or Submit Paper (for paper submission).

Revert for any further query. Please mention the above ‘Reference no.’ in your further communications.

Best regards,

Saurabh R,
Journal Managing Editor
Editorial Office
Tel: +91 40 23833479
Email: mail.computerscience@peer unreachable.com; computerscienceeng.peer unreachable@gmail.com

#202, N.V.S. Central, Hi-tech City, K.R. District, Hyderabad-500018, TS, India

Please Note: If this journal is not related to your expertise, please notify us. If you do not want to hear from us, please unsubscribe.

https://juliebayleyblog.wordpress.com/blogs/i-do-love-a-good-fake-invite
What are the signs of predatory or bogus journals?

- Hijacked journals
- Pseudo-science
- Misleading metrics
- Content/desgin
- Poor/No peer review
- Fake Editorial Board
- Legit, but low quality
- Fraud
Poor content / bad website design

- Articles covering a wide range of unconnected subject disciplines
- Low volume of papers per issue
- Bad website design:
  - 90s flashy graphics,
  - poorly resized pictures,
  - logos everywhere
  - grammatical errors
- Quality issues with actual journal content

Fraud

Hijacked journals

Pseudo-science

Misleading metrics

Legit, but low quality

Fake Editorial Board

Poor/No peer review

Content/design
Fake Impact Factor services

- General Impact Factor
- GIFA
- Global Impact Factor
- Science Impact Factor
- CiteFactor
- Academic Scientific Journals
- Cosmos
- Cosmos Impact Factor
- Arab Impact Factor

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Poor/No peer review

“If your paper has been rejected multiple times from other journals and then you see a journal that is ready to publish your work almost instantly, many people will fall for that.”

“People are tempted to go with predatory journals…Because these journals are published quite quickly – in a matter of a week or two your paper is out”

https://www.researchinformation.info/feature/critical-thinking-post-beall-vacuum
Pseudo-science


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Fake Editorial Boards


http://www.nature.com/news/predatory-journals-recruit-fake-editor-1.21662

Hijacked journals  Pseudo-science  Misleading metrics  Legit, but low quality  

Fraud  
Fake Editorial Board  
Tips & No peer review  
Content/design
Hijacked journals

Further reading:
http://www.jokulljournal.com/
http://jokulljournal.is
What harm are they doing…

...to authors?

• Taking advantage of academic pressure to publish quickly, and exploit paid open access model for their own profit,

• Everyone can see your publication record. It can harm a researcher's reputation if they publish in a journal alongside ‘junk’ articles,

• Inclusion on a fake editorial board may damage the institution and individuals reputation.

https://flic.kr/p/6ezfEy
https://flic.kr/p/9Yazcw
What harm are they doing...  ...to academia?

• Helping cases of research misconduct to rise
• Misconduct undermines public trust in the validity of peer review and scientific publication
• Pharmaceutical companies publishing results to make them look favourable without disclosing links, although....
  • The case of the Australasian Journal of Bone and Joint Medicine (published by Elsevier sponsored by Merck)
• Increasing the signal-to-noise ratio, polluting meta-analyses with junk data

https://flic.kr/p/p76XKD
What is being done about them?

Blacklists (e.g. Beall’s List)
- Uses a set of criteria to identify questionable behaviour
- Seemingly biased against open access, and non-EU and non-US publishers
- Unaccountable, and creates problems for legitimate local journals

Whitelists
- Pubmed
- Web of Science
- Scopus
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)

https://flic.kr/p/8Rhs9u
• Do you or your colleagues know the journal?
• Can you easily identify and contact the publisher?
• Is the journal clear about the type of peer review it uses?
• Are articles indexed in services that you use?
• Is it clear what fees will be charged?
• Do you recognise the editorial board?
• Is the publisher a member of a recognized industry initiative?

http://thinkchecksubmit.org
Questionable conferences

• Subject to no real outside oversight or standards
• Not organised by recognised academic societies
• Run by revenue generating companies
• Exploitative rather than educational
• Legitimacy theft

https://www.timeshighereducation.com/comment/warning-conmen-and-shameless-scholars-operate-area
Bogus conferences

• Registration fees
• Submit abstract
• Make travel arrangements
• Book hotel
• Travel to venue to discover no conference is scheduled, or only a handful of delegates!

https://flic.kr/p/9NX11Y
Summary

• Use your common sense
• Talk to your colleagues
• If in doubt consult an expert

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Library Research Support
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