

Opportunities to publish for emerging scholars: Legitimate, predatory, and otherwise

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The proliferation of predatory open access publishing (POAP) -- that is, unscrupulous businesses that exploit scholars looking for publication opportunities, charging authors hundreds of dollars to publish what are often non-peer-reviewed, unedited manuscripts -- is insidious and growing, capitalizing on the desperation of marginalized academic workers under the pressure of the neoliberal intellectual economy. Just in this decade, University of Colorado librarian Jeffrey Beall (the most prominent cataloger of predatory publishers) has expanded his list of predatory publishers from 11 in 2011 to 477 in 2014. This workshop explores issues related to predatory publishers and the putative pressure of neoliberalism on novice scholars in various contexts, including graduate students, periphery scholars, and early-career faculty members.

The workshop has two parts:

In the first part, we provide an overview of POAP, outlining the current number of predatory open access journals and publishers, average fees for and frequency of publication, makeup of editorial boards, discrepancies in physical and virtual locations, and so on, drawing from sources including Beall's website, which provides a yearly list of "potential, possible, or probable predatory scholarly open-access publishers." We also look at the micro level of emails from publishers and stories from victims of POAP. We ask participants to share their own experience with and knowledge of POAP.

Next, we suggest and solicit practical steps we can take to learn more about and ultimately combat the exploitative nature of predatory open access publishing. This includes calls for doing more research and action (such as "sting operations," gathering data on dishonest publishers and deceitful publishing practices, etc), working to encourage institutions (libraries, universities, government bodies) to delegitimize predatory publishing, and disseminating critical awareness of POAP within our scholarly communities of practice.

The goal is for an interactive workshop in which participants' own experiences and knowledge are a vital part of the conversation. We aim to come away with new strategies that participants can use to raise awareness of the unethical practices of POAP and encourage more ethical and viable alternatives.