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What is a Predatory Publisher

With little or no actual services or scholarly review being performed the sole purpose of these publishers is to make money through fraudulently charging authors fees, often disguised as processing or open access fees.

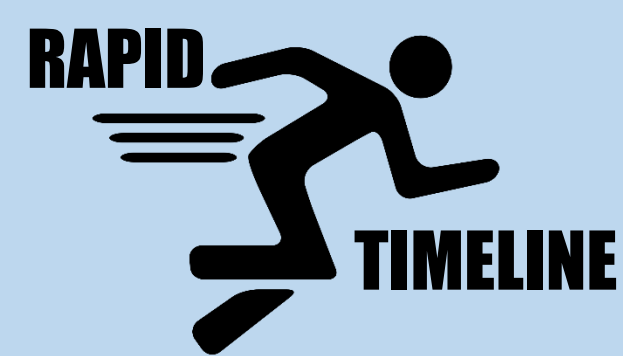
However, most publishers that charge fees are not predatory therefore this can not be the sole characteristic of a predatory publisher.

Characteristics of a Predatory Publisher

LITTLE OR NO Charge processing fees for little or no publication services, meaning:

- Limited or no editing of content
- Does not follow peer-review process or fraudulently mimics peer-review

Publishes on a rapid timeline: too few days/weeks between acceptance, editorial review, and publication.



FALSE CLAIMS Makes false claims about their publishing practices.

Has no intention of archiving content in perpetuity.



Red Flags

These red flags can help you know what to watch out for!



- Copycat titles that resemble well known and reputable journals
- Includes out of scope articles
- Heavy solicitation for submissions and editorial board membership
- Editorial board members don't exist or didn't volunteer
- Poor grammar & punctuation in articles, websites and emails
- Recent start dates combined with a large number of journals covering an impractical range of topics
- Unreasonably fast "peer review" process
- Lacking adequate contact information, some examples:
 - Only one person listed on website,
 - Use of P.O. box or,
 - Address belongs to another business/person
- The website lacks information that would illustrate why the publisher is qualified to be producing content.
- Questionable quality for journals already published
- Irregular publication schedules
- Inconsistent number of articles per issue

Protect Yourself

1 Use a Whitelist! Whitelists have vetted journals using publication quality and standards. The Association of Vision Science Librarians (AVSL) has created the **Whitelist for Vision Science Journals** covering optometry, ophthalmology, and vision science. See: AVSL Whitelist for Vision Science Journals, at avsl.org/resources/whitelist



2 **! THINK** **✓ CHECK** **➔ SUBMIT** Think. Check. Submit. is a checklist to help determine the right journal for your research. It helps you know what types of questions to ask regarding a journal's quality. Many are similar to the red flags that we have identified here. This tool draws from:

- Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)
- Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association, and
- The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- And additional internationally recognized vetted lists of journals.

Think. Check. Submit logo used with permission.

Predatory vs. Low Quality

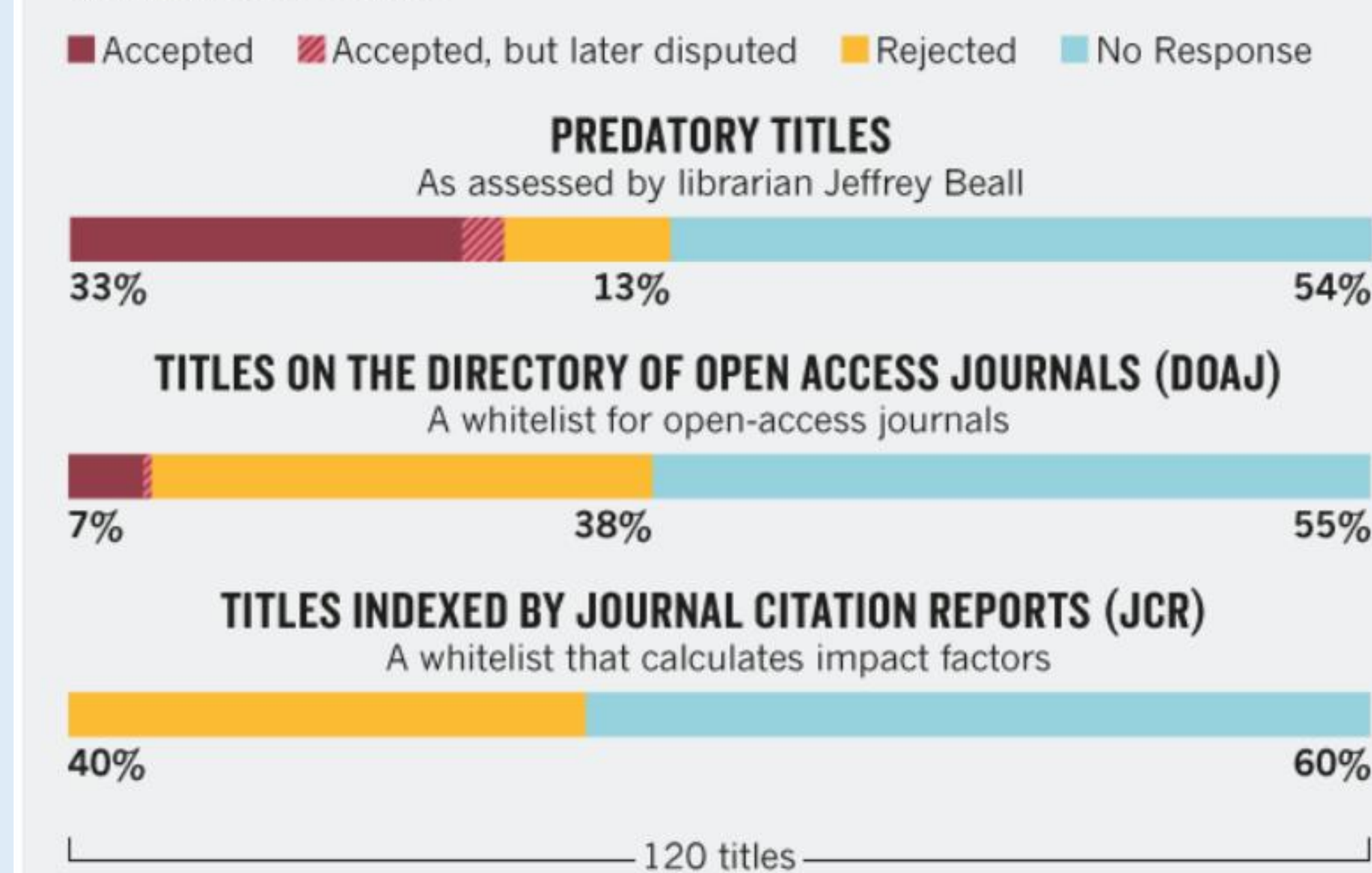
Often individuals with good intentions start journals but do **NOT TAKING ADVANTAGE** not follow industry standards. These journals are not attempting to take advantage of authors, like predatory journals, but do have poor quality control.

Perpetuating "Bad Science"

Publishing content that has not been vetted is bad for the author and bad for the institution. Future access becomes an issue if the journal has loose archiving practices. This can cause the author to lose control over their work and at worst it can be lost forever if the journal ceases to exist.

WHO EMBRACED THE FAKE?

Journals deemed predatory were much more likely to accept a fake, subpar candidate as an editor.



Sorokowski, P., et al. (2017). Predatory Journals Recruit Fake Editor. *Nature*, 543: 481-483. Source: Original analysis by P.S. et al.