Defying Predatory Publishing – Responsibility of Universities and Libraries?

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„Predatory publishing“ as a pressing issue in publishing consultancy
The issue at stake

UKSG 2017: talk on Predatory Publishing with numerous examples

Aspects of the problem:

- Increasingly relevant issue in German-speaking countries
- Researchers often still lack knowledge on Predatory Publishing as well as awareness of risks for their own career
- Important issue especially for young scientists with limited experience in publishing
What did we do?

- Discussions on Predatory Publishing with Vice Deans for Research who confirmed its relevance to research staff
- Extensive research on the issue; related topics like hijacked journals, predatory conferences, fake acceptance letters
- Website with key information and further links
- Checklist on how to detect predatory journals as a guide for researchers, available via our website
- Awareness Campaign (see next slide)
- Talk at the Deutscher Bibliothekartag June 2018, Berlin
- Interviews as part of the international media campaign in summer 2018 (Falterm, Deutschlandfunk)
Awareness campaign

- May/June 2018
- support of the rectorate, official statement of the vice rector
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- special logo for fake journals

Grafik: Roman Klug, Presse + Kommunikation, Universität Graz
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  article in the university newspaper
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- report on AirCampus (= web radio of the universities in Graz)
Reactions

- lots of positive feedback on the Falter interview from researchers at the University of Graz, but also from other universities throughout Austria
- increasing number of enquiries from students and (young) scientists of the University of Graz concerning Calls for Papers and suspicious journals; also enquiries from other universities
- issue taken up by other universities, especially through the international media campaign in summer 2018, as well as by other universities; growing awareness of Predatory Publishing.
- Invitations to give lectures at Austrian and German universities and conferences
„Predatory publishing“ as a manifestation of current challenges to academia and scholarly publishing
Predatory publishing – manifestation of current challenges

Predatory publishing as a(n)

reaction to deficits in scholarly publishing

instrument in undermining the credibility of science and legitimizing fake science
Reaction to deficits in scholarly publishing

The current academic system created the market for predatory publishing through

- A culture of publish or perish
- Inherent biases and discrimination in the publishing system
- Selective processes of topics to be published
- Pressure to innovate
- Third party influences

Open access provided a business model
Addressing the deficits

Rethinking academia
  Quality over quantity versus „salami tactics“
  Growing number of scholars versus limited content
  New approach to impact

Rethinking scholarly publishing
  Decision processes as to the relevance of content
  Value of regional journals
  New publishing platforms, e.g. repositories

Confronting biases in scholarly publishing
  Gender, geopgraphy, institution
Safeguarding open access

Open access is a significant evolution of the publishing system

Some academic disciplines have embraced or at least accepted open access as a valid publishing practice, others are reluctant and hesitant

Predatory publishing tarnishes open access, provides ammunition to those opposing open access

It is crucial to draw clear demarcation lines between open access and predatory publishing

It is vital to communicate and emphasise the benefits of open access
Instrument in undermining the credibility of science

“That is the problem with the predatory publishers in the end: eroding trust in science. A slowly creeping poison. Something might look like a study, but is not worth the paper where it is written on.”

Hern, Alex, Duncan, Pamela, Predatory publishers: the journals that churn out fake science, Guardian, 10.08.2018,
Exploiting predatory publishing

Pharmaceutical Industry

- Influencing the market through pricing comparisons in a study published in a predatory journal
- New England Journal of Medicine refuses to publish such studies, as the results are not reliable and constitute undue influencing of the market
- Pharmaceutical companies are the biggest financiers of OMICS

Exploiting predatory publishing

Climate Change

C02 Coalition uses predatory journals to legitimize their opposition to climate change as scientific truth

Predatory conferences were organized to give the impression of scholarly validity

„Climate Change 2017 is specifically premeditated with a unifying axiom providing pulpit to widen the imminent scientific creations. The main theme of the conference is ‘Today’s Progress and Tomorrow’s Climate Challenges’ which covers a broad array of vitally key sessions.”

Trust versus Faith

Eroded trust in science reduces scientific insight to a matter of belief

Science competes on a par with influencers, opinion leaders, ideologues as to who it is to believe, as to who is right

Science is then an opinion among many

Science and scientific institutions serve no longer as a hallmark and pillar of a democratic society
To defy

To oppose or resist with boldness and assurance
To refuse to submit to or cooperate with


Origin

Middle English (in the senses ‘renounce an allegiance’ and ‘challenge to combat’): from Old French desfier, based on Latin dis- (expressing reversal) + fidus ‘faithful’.

Acts of defiance against prevalent forces

Fostering and upholding fundamental characteristics of science are vital acts of defiance

- Independence
- Integrity
- Veracity
- Validity
- Reliability
- Permanence

Information literacy, publishing literacy
Library catalogue, tools, databases and workshops
Furthering and promoting open access and open science
Cooperation within the university and beyond
Publication Services

Your Contact for all Questions about Publishing

Kontakt:

🌐 ub.uni-graz.at/publikationsservices
✉️ ub.publikationsservices@uni-graz.at