Avoiding predatory publishers: How to ensure you are publishing in a reputable journal

You may have recently received an email soliciting manuscripts for publication in an unfamiliar journal. Before you submit or commit, make sure you do your due diligence to ensure you are publishing in a reputable, high-quality journal. With the rise of open access publishing and the proliferation of legitimate journal publishing venues there has been a parallel increase in the number of predatory journals. Many reputable open access publishers charge author fees, generally known as author processing charges (APCs), in order to cover the legitimate costs of publishing, peer-review, etc... As Chen and Cirasella describe in C&RL News, “Predatory journals are primarily fee-collecting operations—they exist for that purpose and only incidentally publish articles, generally without rigorous peer review, despite claims of the contrary.”

An article recently published by BioMedCentral, a legitimate high-quality open access publisher, addresses the astounding increase in the number of articles “predatory” publishers are dumping into the market. Based on their research, Shen and Bjork state, “In total these journals published an estimated 420,000 articles in 2014, after a relatively linear growth from 53,000 in 2010.”

So, how can you protect yourself and ensure you are publishing in a relevant and reputable journal? Declan Butler, in his Nature article “The dark side of publishing,” provides a useful checklist for identifying reputable publishers, which is reproduced verbatim below:

“How to perform due diligence before submitting to a journal or publisher:

- Check that the publisher provides full, verifiable contact information, including address, on the journal site. Be cautious of those that provide only web contact forms.
- Check that a journal's editorial board lists recognized experts with full affiliations. Contact some of them and ask about their experience with the journal or publisher.
- Check that the journal prominently displays its policy for author fees.
Be wary of e-mail invitations to submit to journals or to become editorial board members.

Read some of the journal's published articles and assess their quality. Contact past authors to ask about their experience.

Check that a journal's peer-review process is clearly described and try to confirm that a claimed impact factor is correct.

Find out whether the journal is a member of an industry association that vets its members, such as the Directory of Open Access Journals (www.doaj.org) or the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (www.oaspa.org). [Some questionable journals appear in directories such as DOAJ and Cabell’s; we don't advise using this as your sole criterion.]

Use common sense, as you would when shopping online: if something looks fishy, proceed with caution.”

Also included here are a number of useful links related to open access publishing. Of course, you can always contact the Harrell HSL and ask for help.

- Directory of Open Access Journals
- Beall’s List of Predatory Open Access Publishers 2015
- International Association of Scientific, Technical & Medical Publishers
- Copyright, publishing, and intellectual property rights
- Journal/Author Name Estimator (Jane) “Have you recently written a paper, but you’re not sure to which journal you should submit it? Or maybe you want to find relevant articles to cite in your paper? Or are you an editor and do you need to find reviewers for a particular paper? Jane can help!”

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2Shen, C., Bo-Christen, B., ‘Predatory’ open access: A longitudinal study of article volumes and market characteristics. BMC Medicine, 1 October 2015.
3Butler, D., The Dark side of publishing: The explosion in open-access publishing has fueled the rise of questionable operators. Nature Vol 495, 28 March 2013.

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### Open Access Publication Grants by Esther Dell

In April 2015, the Penn State Faculty Senate passed the “Resolution on Open Access to Scholarly Publications,” which encourages faculty to “consider and utilize available options for sharing [their] scholarly work with a wider audience of readers.” Please note that the University Libraries has established a pilot project with funding to support open access publishing. For eligibility and additional information for applying, please consult the [Publication and Curation Services website](#).

Contact Esther Dell (eyd1@psu.edu or x8633) if you need further clarification regarding the OA Grant program.
What We’re Doing . . .


Nancy Adams’ article, “Asking a great question: A librarian teaches critical thinking skills to first year medical students” was published in *Medical Services Reference Quarterly*, 34(4): 418-427.

Nancy Adams presented and led a discussion group at the American Library Association’s Midwinter Conference related to her research on the role of evidence-based practice in collaborations between academic librarians and education faculty.

New evidence-based point-of-care resource:

**Essential Evidence™** by Nancy Adams with Jay Zimmermann, MD

In partnership with Penn State University Libraries, the Harrell Health Science Library recently purchased a subscription to *Essential Evidence™*. Each one of the clinical topics for over 800 conditions and diseases begins with a concise “overall bottom line.” Each subsequent section in the topic, such as prognosis, treatment, and screening, also has its own “bottom line,” making for quick reading in a clinical setting. All recommendations are graded according to the strength of evidence supporting each. Any expert opinion is labeled as such.

One unique feature of *Essential Evidence™* is the provision of daily Patient Oriented Evidence that Matters (POEMs), which are rigorous synopses (not just the abstract) of new articles relevant to direct primary care, succinctly summarized to answer relevant clinical questions. Each daily POEM has been evaluated for validity and is assigned a Level of Evidence. For example, the latest POEMs at the time of this writing included: “No survival advantage to percutaneous coronary intervention over optimal medical therapy after 12 years (COURAGE)” and “No difference between oxycodone/acetaminophen and hydrocodone/acetaminophen for acute extremity pain.” You can elect to have these daily POEMs sent to you as alerts. *Essential Evidence™* also provides high-quality clinical calculators that are easy to find and use.

*Essential Evidence™* is part of the StatRef! platform. There are several ways to access *Essential Evidence™*. Two of the quickest are:

- From our [Point of Care Tools Guide](#), which is listed on the front page of the library website.
- Select it from our Databases list, which appears on the drop-down blue bar under “Resources” on our website.

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New evidence-based point-of-care resource: **Essential Evidence™** continued from Page 3...

You can use **Essential Evidence™** on or off campus. Simply proceed to the library website (http://med.psu.edu/library) on or off campus; when off campus you will be prompted for your Penn State Access ID. **Essential Evidence™** will work best when you are NOT using the Hershey remote access portal.

You can also download the StatRef! mobile app for anytime, anywhere access [by following these instructions](#).

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**New anatomy resource: IMAIOS’ e-Anatomy** by Ben Hoover

e-Anatomy by IMAIOS is an online interactive atlas of anatomy which is now available to Penn Hershey users. This anatomy resource uses drawn images, 3D renderings and radiological studies to explore human anatomy. Users can create customized study slides and save or print them.

You can access e-Anatomy on the library [databases page](#). Access on the secured network does not require authentication. Access off campus or off the secure network does require you to authenticate with a Penn State Hershey ePass logon.

e-Anatomy is sponsored by the Department of Human Structure.

**Features of e-Anatomy:**

- Over 40 anatomical modules.
- Uses diagrams, and CT/MRI images to view human anatomy.
- Create customized study slides.
Access to **Red Book Online with new content** by Esther Dell

Harrell Health Sciences Library purchased a direct subscription to *Red Book Online* available from the American Academy of Pediatrics site. This platform will provide immediate access to new editions as well as news and updates to guidelines that will inform clinical practice. The AAP Visual Library is also available on this platform and should be a valuable additional resource. A link to this new resource can be found on the library website.

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**Library liaison survey: Evaluating our services** by Amy Knehans

In May 2015 the library distributed a survey to evaluate and bring awareness to the library’s liaison program. The program was established to initiate an ongoing dialog between the Harrell Health Sciences Library (HHSL) and the academic and clinical communities it serves. The primary goals of the program are to build relationships with other Penn State Hershey faculty and staff by gathering and sharing information with other departments, institutes and centers. The program helps to market and promote the library’s resources and services.

The HHSL liaison survey had 167 responses, 67% of those who responded did not know we had a liaison program. We do! Librarians can help find information for patient care, teaching, internal reports, and support hospital administration. We provide grant support, assist with the publication process and poster presentations, and perform literature searches, help with systematic reviews and much more. More information about the library services can be found by clicking on “services” at the top of the library home page and clicking on Department Liaisons.

Thank you to everyone who participated. We received lots of feedback and comments! Here’s some of our favorites:

- I have received tremendous help in lit reviews for QI projects.
- We have a great resource that is used by faculty and residents within the dept of surgery.
- I was able to borrow books, renew books, and utilize books and supplemental material for purposes of studying for my certifications and recertification.
- Librarians are always responsive to my specific needs.
- Outcomes were an improved "comfort" level with doing literature search.
- Tremendous amount of support and literature to support council activities.

*Continued on Page 6 . . .*
Library liaison survey: Evaluating our services continued from Page 5...

- Literature search - saves me time and trouble accessing various databases to ensure complete lit search for publication and research purposes.

- I worked with my library liaison on the NIH NCBI bibliography. She spent one-on-one time with me and helped me to make sense of an otherwise very confusing website. I appreciated her time and her help. It really helped me out to be able to do my job more efficiently. Thank you!

- I also direct researchers to the liaison service to help them do searches for alternatives for their IACUC protocols. What an incredibly valuable service!!

**Tools for maintaining scholarly output** by Robyn Reed

We are happy to introduce a new resource to assist researchers and administrators with options for maintaining author bibliographies. This guide provides an overview and instructions in using different tools to capture and share publication histories. In describing resources such as ORCID and Google Scholar to maintain a list of publications, the guide provides information on topics such as measuring impact of the publications and the importance of establishing author identifiers to distinguish researchers from each other. Visit the guide and let us know if you have questions or suggestions! [http://harrell.library.psu.edu/bibliography](http://harrell.library.psu.edu/bibliography)

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**The Harrell Health Sciences Library’s Upcoming Workshops**

Harrell Health Sciences Library announces two **FREE** upcoming workshops specifically for **Admin Professionals** taught by library faculty.

[Register Now for Admin Pro Library Orientation](#)  [Register Now for Endnote for Admin Pros](#)
Keep tabs on renovation—

We are committed to keeping faculty, students, and staff informed during renovation.

Throughout the renovation there will be several ways to stay up to date with the construction schedule, alternative study spaces and FAQ’s...

1. Check out our blog! Look for the Inspired Renovation button on the library’s homepage. This will be updated daily throughout the renovation. It also includes the floorplans, construction schedule and FAQ’s.

2. Check out our whiteboards! There will be a whiteboard inside the entrance of the library and on the second floor in the 24 hour study room that will be updated daily.

3. Check out our Facebook! If you’re glued to your Facebook, then be sure to join our renovation Facebook group to stay up to date! Search “Harrell Library” in Facebook groups to find us, and request to be a member. It is open only to students, staff, and faculty of Penn State Hershey.

Alternative study spaces have been reserved and will be advertised on the Harrell HSL Renovation Blog on a weekly basis. These rooms will most likely be a lecture hall and several PBL rooms.
Welcome our newest library faculty and staff:

We are pleased to announce the hiring of Ryan Klinger, M.Ed., M.A., as our Library Educational Technology, Design, and Support Specialist. Ryan will develop programs to help Penn State Hershey faculty, students, and staff learn to use our new One Button Studio and Technology Sandbox, which will feature a visualization wall and 3D printing and scanning. He will provide training in educational technology and help you conceptualize and plan how to incorporate technology into teaching and learning. Ryan has a wide-ranging background in education: he was previously an instructional designer for Penn State’s World Campus and also a curriculum developer in Harvard’s Education Innovation Laboratory while he was a graduate student there earning his Master of Education. He has several years of teaching experience at the high school level. We are so glad you’re here, Ryan!

Visit us on the Web: med.psu.edu/library
Feedback is welcome! Email the editor: mcirelli@hmc.psu.edu

We welcome Lori Snyder, MLS, our new Collection Development & Digital Resources Management Librarian (Faculty). She has a master’s degree in library science from Clarion University (PA) and previously worked at Jerry Falwell Library at Liberty University, where she was the scholarly communication coordinator for the library and managed the archives and the library’s digital repository for theses and dissertations. Lori’s main responsibility at Harrell HSL is ensuring that our electronic resources are maintained for easy access to users of our website and that our library collection provides the information resources that clinicians, researchers, and students need for their work. She will also be the liaison to the departments of comparative medicine, humanities, and psychiatry.