



# Prevalence of publication in predatory journals at Emory University

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## Introduction

In 2017 the journal *Nature* published challenges to the assumption that research intensive U.S. institutions are immune to the hazards of predatory publishing.<sup>1,2</sup> Sample articles from hundreds of potentially predatory journals were analyzed: the NIH was the most frequent funder and Harvard was among the most frequent institutions.<sup>1</sup> Our study was designed to identify the publication prevalence in predatory journals at our institution.

## Methods

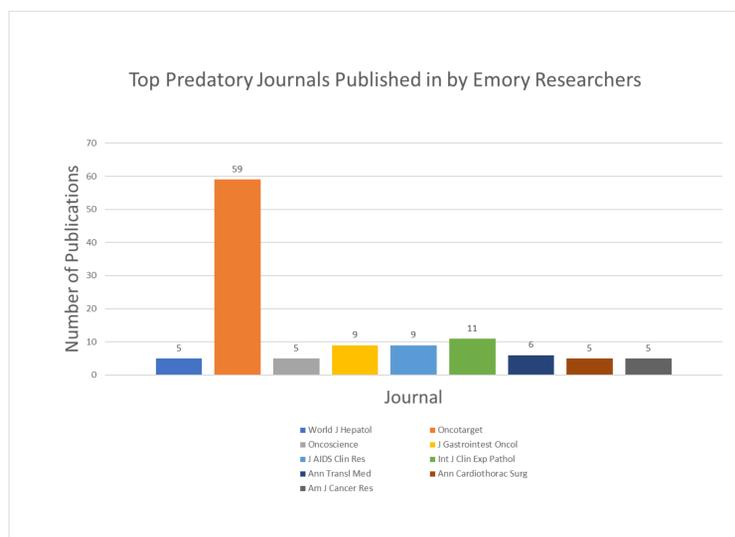
Predatory publishers were defined using an archived version of Beall's list, a now defunct website that was widely recognized as the most comprehensive black list for potential predators. The archive was retrieved on January 15, 2017 and reflects updates made 1-2 weeks prior to its end.

To identify our institution's NIH-funded publications, records were collected from PubMed Central using an institution search and limiting to 2011-2016 to reflect the five-year period covered by Beall's last update.

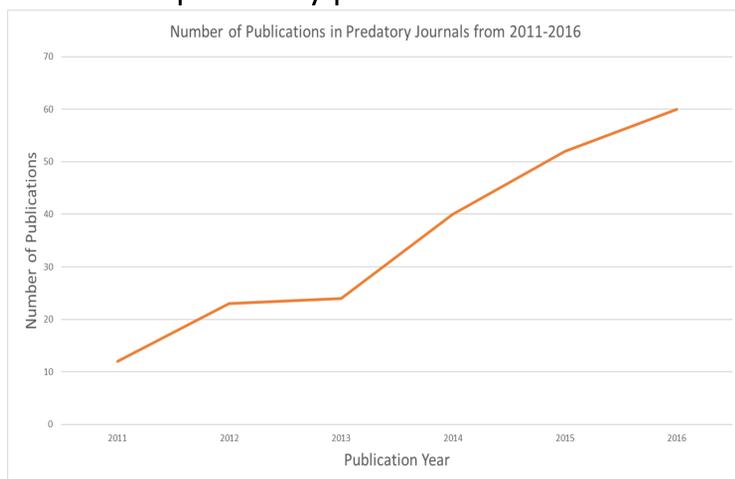
Journal and ISSN data were collected and referenced against Ulrich's Periodical Directory to determine publishers. Data were then compared against the Beall's listing of potentially predatory publishers and standalone journals.

The article publication cost from each journal was used to determine the total amount of NIH funding used to pay for publications in predatory journals.

## Results



A review of Emory's publications submitted to PubMed Central from 2011 to 2016 revealed 15090 publications. Of those 15090 articles 218 publications (1.4%) were from publishers that fell in Beall's list of predatory publishers.



The data also show a 400% increase in researchers publishing in predatory publications in 2016 compared to 2011 despite the total number of Emory's publications only increasing 26% in that time period.

A review of publication fees paid by Emory University faculty to publishers revealed that approximately \$330,515 dollars of NIH grant money was spent over the 5 year period publishing in predatory publication.

## Summary and Conclusions

- Overall the rate of publications in predatory publications was low (1.4%). However, there was a 400% increase in the number of publications in predatory journals over the five year period.
- Approximately \$330,515 dollars of NIH funds was spent on publication fees to these journals.
- The actual cost of NIH funds is more if manpower, supplies, and animals costs for the research is taken into consideration.
- Results suggest opportunity for greater education and out reach to the research community about predatory journals and publishers.

## References

- 1) Moher, D., Shamseer, L., Cobey, K. D., Lalu, M. M., Galipeau, J., Avey, M. T., . . . Ziai, H. (2017). Stop this waste of people, animals and money. *Nature*, 549(7670), 23-25. doi:10.1038/549023a
- 2) Cobey, K. (2017). Illegitimate journals scam even senior scientists. *Nature*, 549(7670), 7. doi:10.1038/549007a



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