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Something else to be wary about? Hijacked journals

by Joyce Templeton, December 12th 2016

You've probably heard of [predatory journals](#) that actively and sometimes aggressively seek researchers to publish their articles in their journals, well, there's something else to watch out for... [hijacked journals](#). These are journals which have been created by fraudsters to copy very closely the reputable journals that researchers want to publish their work in. The hijacked versions look like the real thing. But they're not! Along comes an unsuspecting researcher who wants to publish in a reputable journal but if they come across, or are contacted by the hijacked version, give them some money to cover fees or article processing charges...you can probably guess what happens next. Yes, that's right, nothing. The researcher has lost their money and their article is not published.

So how can you avoid being the victim of a hijacked journal? What do you do if you receive an unsolicited invitation to publish your work in what looks like a reputable journal? [Find out more](#) about your target journal. Ask colleagues about their experiences with specific journals and if they've worked with them, get a contact name if that's possible. Does the journal exist? Have a look at the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#) to see if the journal you want to publish in is open access, an essential requirement for [the next REF](#). Is it a predatory journal? Take a look at [Beall's List](#), compiled by an American librarian, Jeffrey Beall. This fairly long list of 'Potential, possible or probable predatory scholarly open access publishers' are those publishers who meet [his criteria](#) for being considered predatory publishers. There are some really good questions in this criteria list and ones you should ask yourself about if you have even a vague suspicion you've been contacted by a predatory publisher or hijacked journal.

Ask lots of questions! Speak to your colleagues and find out as much information as you can about the journal or publisher. If it looks too good to be true...