

Be iNFORMEd: A Checklist for Evaluating Unknown Journals and Publishers

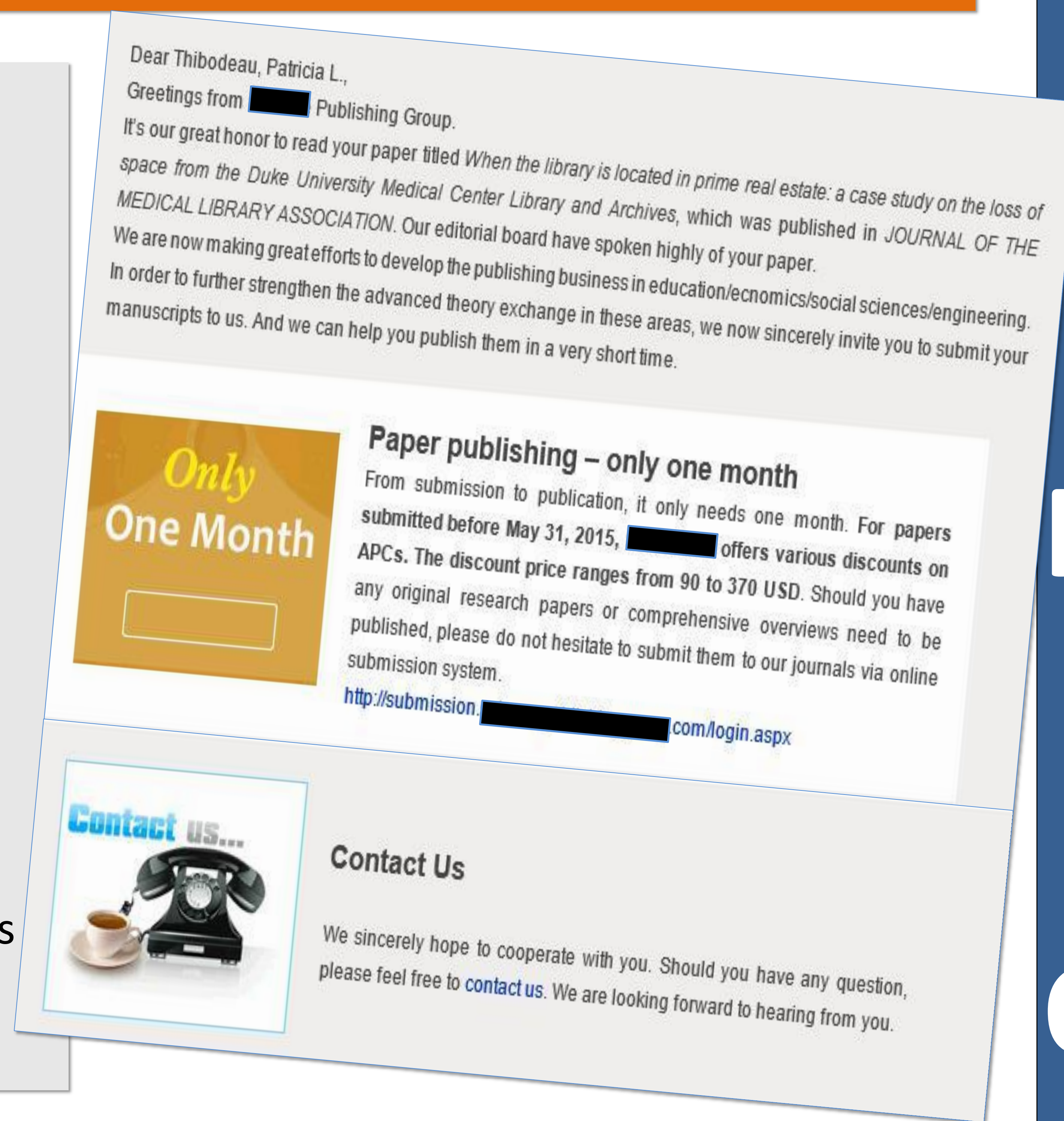


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Problem

- Faculty are being contacted by new and unknown publishers to be authors, editors, and reviewers
- Some invitations are legitimate, but others come from low quality or potentially predatory publishers
- Authors publishing outside area of expertise (e.g., MDs publishing in education journals) may not be familiar with reliable options
- Large growth in open access journals makes it difficult to keep up with which journals are reputable



Rollout

- Incorporated into library-hosted writing boot-camp for medical educators academy
- Distributed to medical students and research mentors
- Pilot tested on case-by-case basis when faculty contacted library about new journals and publishers
- Added to authors tool web-guide
- <http://guides.mclibrary.duke.edu/beinformed>

Want a copy?
guides.mclibrary.duke.edu/beinformed



Reflections

- Tool requires judgment – may not give a clear yes or no
- Tool provides more information and guidance than just looking at Beall's list
- Searching the web for publisher and journal can lead to more information (i.e., blog posts) to aid decision
- Creates opportunities to educate faculty about open access and quality issues...the wider world of scholarly communications
- Librarians become partners in the writing and publishing process

Number

For journal articles, how many articles has the journal published? How many citations are there to those articles? For books, how many other books has that publisher produced?



- Has already published high quality articles
- Articles in this journal have been cited elsewhere



- No articles or books published
- Articles and books have not been cited elsewhere

Fee

Is the fee reasonable?



- Fees fall in the industry standard \$1500 - \$5000 range



- Fees too low (e.g., \$300) or too high
- The publisher appears to be trying to raise revenue by soliciting / spamming authors

Ownership

What company owns and produces the journal or book? Can you tell who owns the company?



- Smaller imprint of a bigger publisher
- Owned by a society or recognized institution



- Information not available at all
- Address and contact information seems unlikely for a publishing company

Review

Are articles and chapters peer reviewed before acceptance? How robust is the review process?



- Peer review process described in detail and is standard for the discipline



- Information not available at all
- Fast review turnaround promised (e.g., 3 days or a week)
- No review process; all articles accepted
- No acceptance rate listed

Membership

What associations or OA alliances does the journal or publisher have?



- Associations listed, such as ICMJE, COPE, OASPA
- Indexing sites listed. Note: indexing in MEDLINE can take a couple of years for new journals
- Preservation / archiving policies listed



- Acronyms may be listed on the website, but the publisher may not be a member
- Publisher recommends standards, but does not require them

Editorial

Who is on the editorial board and staff?



- Experts in the field with institutional affiliations



- Editorial board may have expertise, but it is outside the scope of the journal
- No information listed about editors or staff
- No information listed under "about us"
- Open calls for editorial boards and reviewers