



School of Health Professions

How Unethical Open Access Journals are Eroding Scientific Literature

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After Work Lecture

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Winterthur

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The open access movement began in the 1990s, when access to the World Wide Web became widely available and online publishing became the norm. Open access makes content freely available to everyone. The idea of open access is to allow research to be disseminated quickly and to a wide audience, to make the research process more efficient and to encourage businesses, the government, charities and the wider public to make increased use and improve their understanding of scientific information. Unfortunately, unethical publishers have taken advantage of the open access model, charging authors fees for publication and promising quick turnaround and rapid publication in their journals. A recent study revealed that these journals are deceptive in their approaches to authors, charge fees that may not be disclosed upfront, have poor or non-existent peer review processes and do not provide services such as archiving and indexing that are provided by traditional publishers. Furthermore, a qualitative review of unethical journals in nursing found that 96.3 percent of published studies were rated average or poor. These journals are making inroads in the scholarly literature and, by adopting unethical practices, are eroding our common scientific knowledge base. Leslie H. Nicoll's presentation provides an overview of the historic development and the current practices of unethical open access journals. She will discuss steps to avoid being tricked by unethical publishers. Subsequent implications for policy development at departmental and university levels will also be discussed.

Leslie H. Nicoll



Leslie H. Nicoll is the president and owner of Maine Desk LLC. She is the editor-in-chief of *CIN: Computers, Informatics, Nursing* (since 1995) and *Nurse Author & Editor* (since 2014). Dr. Nicoll has been leading writing retreats in the US and Europe since 2008. Through her business she provides novice and experienced authors with strategies to be successfully published.

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