



**Confronting Predatory Publishers
and Conference Organizers:
A Firsthand Account**

**Presented at the
6th Research Integrity Conference
Hong Kong
2 -5 June 2019**

by

**Donna M. Romyn, PhD, RN
Athabasca University
Athabasca, AB, Canada
dromyn@athabascau.ca**





Origin of the problem

- **Open access movement**
- **Shift from a pay-to-read to a pay-to-publish business model**
- **Important to remember that NOT all open access publishers are predatory**

- 
- **Problem is not limited to open access publications**
 - **Predatory entrepreneurs have entered the conference space**
 - **All use deception to entice participation**
 - **Similar warning signs; learning to recognize them is important**



Primary goal is PROFIT, not the advancement of nursing science.

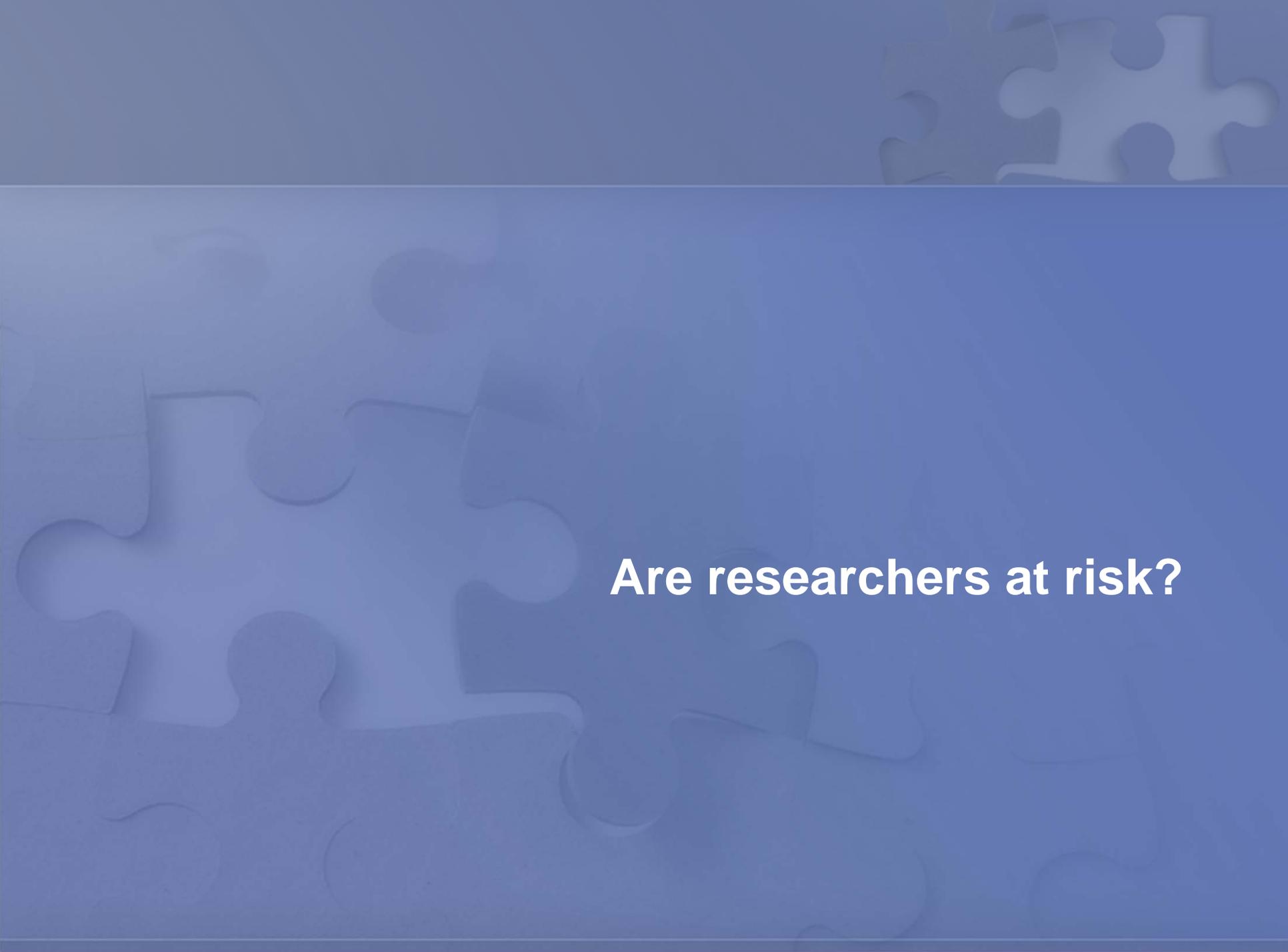
Primary goal is PROFIT, not the advancement of nursing science.

**Primary goal is PROFIT,
not the advancement of science.**

Task at Hand



- **Increase awareness**
- **Provide a first-hand account of participation in a [potential/possible/probable] predatory conference**
- **Discuss implications for scientific integrity**



Are researchers at risk?

Common assumptions

- **Predatory publishers and conferences are not common and are not of concern**
- **Scholars are unlikely to be deceived by the overtures of predatory entrepreneurs**
- **Risk is greater in developing countries due to a lack of publication literacy**

Beall's List of Predatory Open Access Publishers

Publishers	
Year	Number of publishers
2011	18
2012	23
2013	225
2014	477
2015	693
2016	923

- Potential
- Possible
- Probable

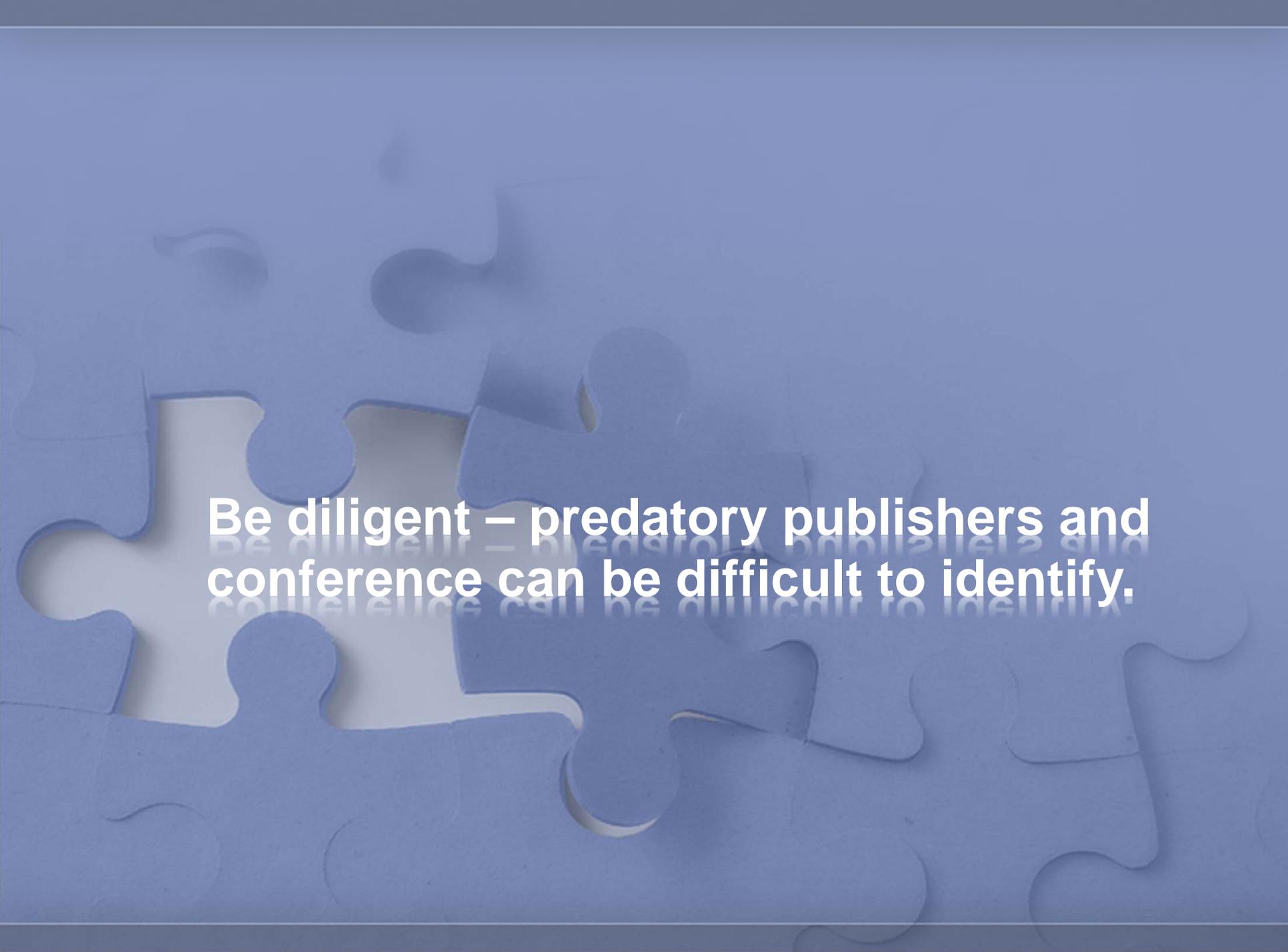
Predatory publishers ...

- Rarely uphold accepted archival policies and procedures
- And, perhaps even more importantly, fail to perform valid peer-review



**As a result, virtually ANYTHING
can be published for a PRICE,
REGARDLESS of quality.**

"I wonder what would happen if I submitted an abstract about predatory publishers to what I suspect is a predatory conference?"



Be diligent – predatory publishers and conference can be difficult to identify.

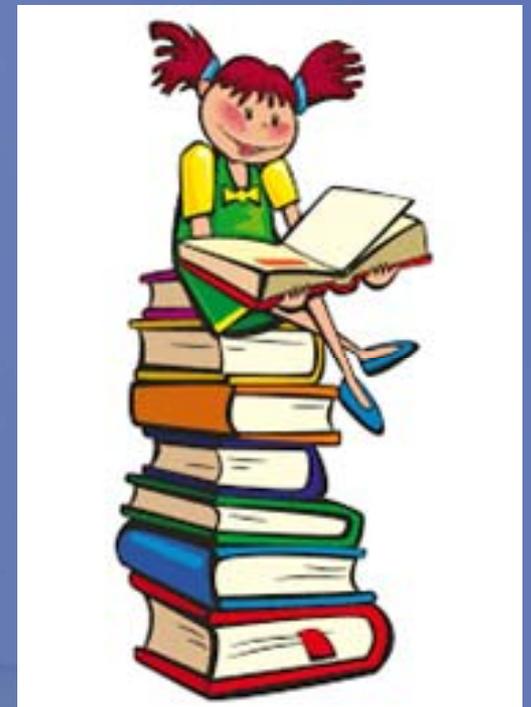
IN FAIRNESS

- **Impressive website**
- **Pictures and proceedings from previous conferences**
- **Abstracts available online**
- **ISBN assigned to abstracts**
- **Conference hosts attentive to inquiries**
- **Desirable destination; adequate venue**



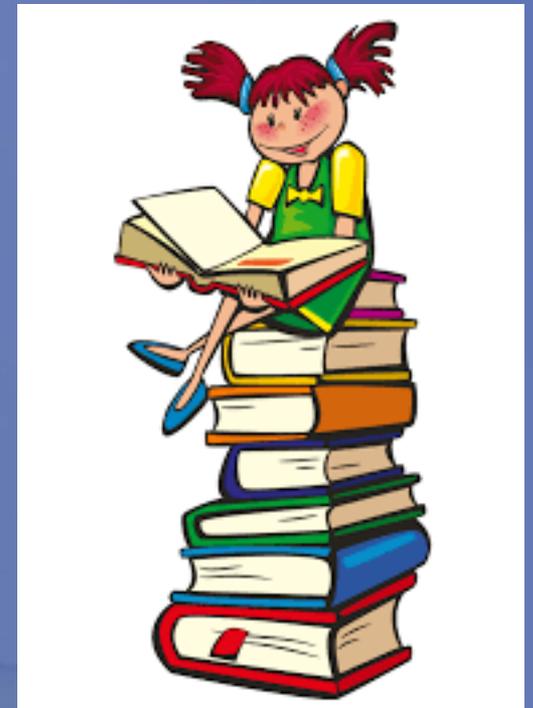
BEWARE OF

- **Ambiguous focus**
- **Vague acceptance criteria**
- **Lack of contact information**
- **Unknown editor/editorial board**
- **Requirement to transfer copyright upon submission**
- **Similarity of identity to that of a legitimate journal or conference**



TRICKS OF THE TRADE

- **Promise of rapid review and publication**
- **Flattery**
- **Deception**
- **Hidden fees and obligations**
- **Hijacking reputations**



Original title: At risk of being lured by a predatory publisher? Not me!

Revised title: Safeguarding evidence-informed nursing practice from predatory publishers

No request to change abstract or content of presentation

So, why do scholars publish in predatory journals?

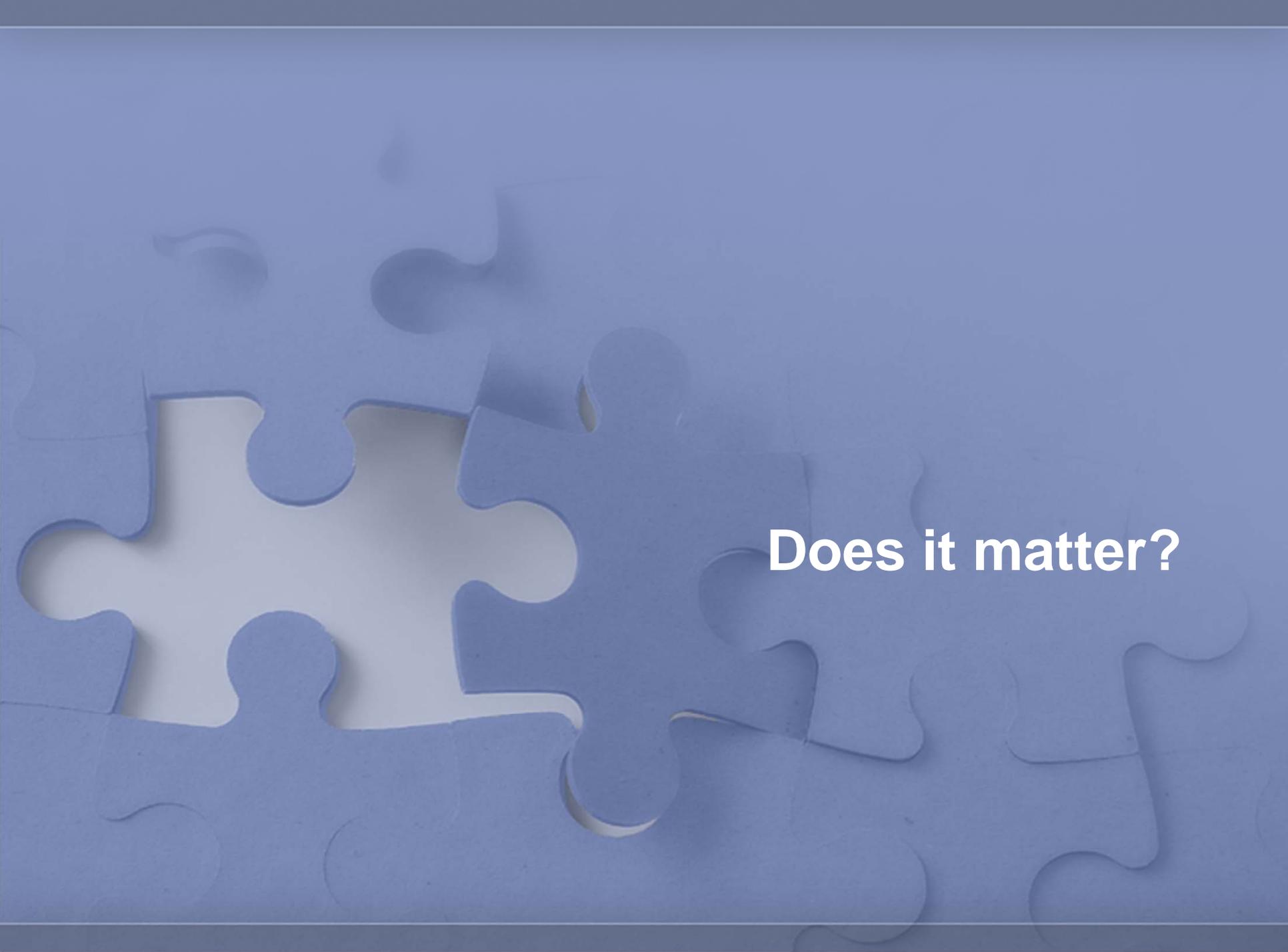
Naivety

Fear of failure or a hostile review

Desire to get published quickly

Academic performance expectations

Ill conceived decisions about quantity and quality of publications

The image features a solid blue background with a large, irregularly shaped puzzle piece missing from the left side. This missing piece reveals a white surface beneath. The puzzle pieces are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with some pieces visible on the right side of the frame. The lighting is soft, creating subtle shadows and highlights on the edges of the puzzle pieces.

Does it matter?

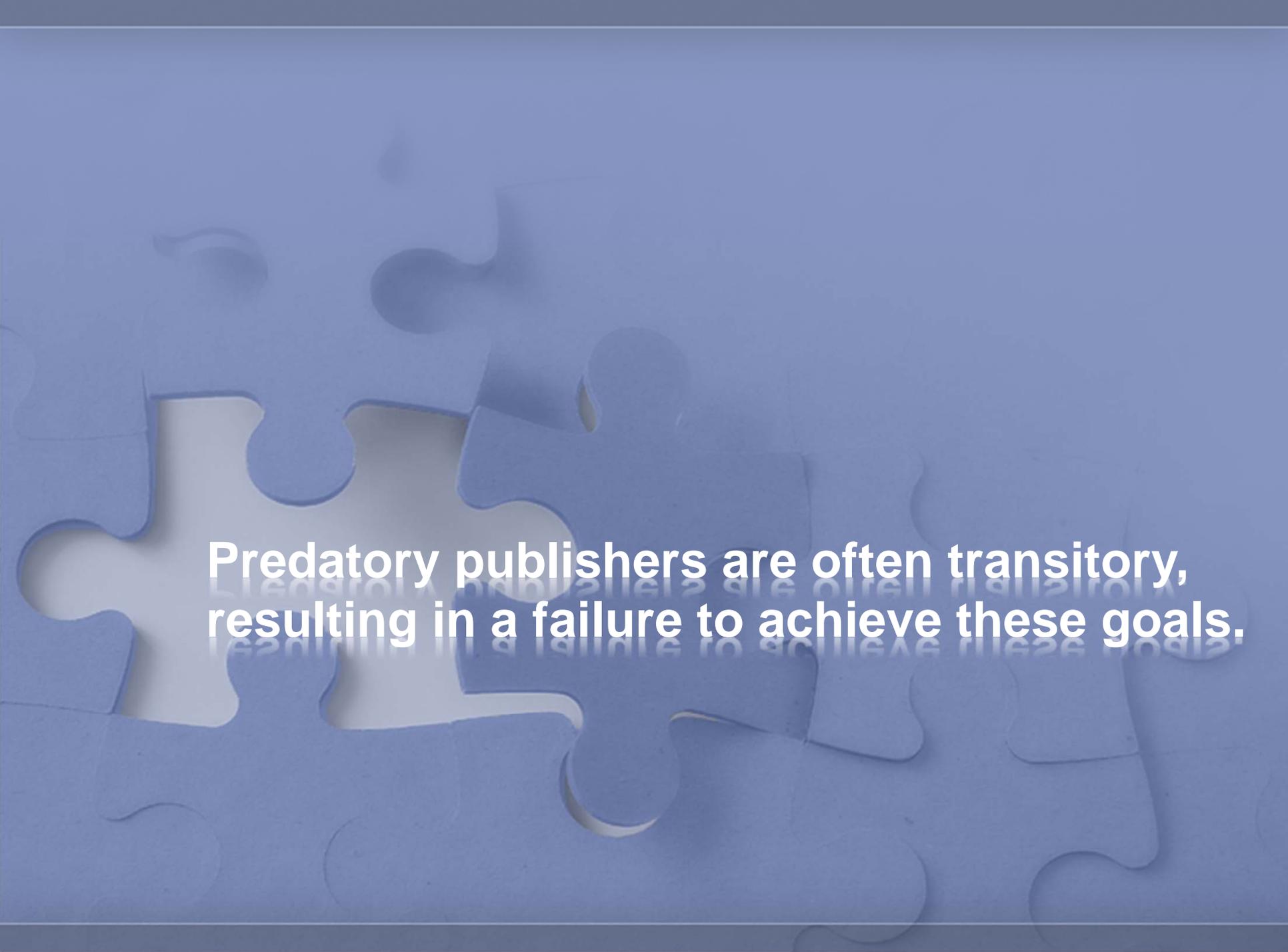
To advance science ...

... scholars' work must be

- **discoverable,**
- **citable,**
- **archived for future use, and**
- **must build on ethical, replicable, peer-reviewed work (Pierson, 2014).**

Scholarly Publishing

- Credits authors' ideas
- Verifies publication date
- Establishes validity of claims
- Creates awareness of claims
- Preserves the record
- Rewards scholars based on metrics



**Predatory publishers are often transitory,
resulting in a failure to achieve these goals.**

- **Misappropriation of scarce resources**
- **Proliferation of ‘junk science’**
- **Loss of disciplinary knowledge**
- **Failure to meet tenure and/or promotion requirements**

**POSSIBLE
CONSEQUENCES**

PROTECT YOURSELF

- **Ignore e-mail solicitations**
- **Be vigilant in 'loaning' your name/reputation**
- **Learn to navigate 'white lists'**
- **Check websites carefully**
- **Verify index claims**
- **Read the fine print**

PROTECT YOUR WORK

- Choose publication venues carefully
- Seek the right to publish the full text in a repository
- Archive your work so others can retrieve it
- If you are not sure how to do so, seek help!

PROTECT OTHERS

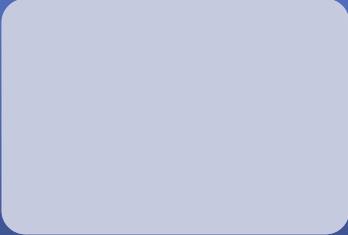
- **Foster scholarly publication literacy and integrity**
- **Address performance expectations and standards**
- **Discuss concerns regarding quantity and quality openly**
- **Set an example**
- **Be vigilant in evaluating evidence**

Diligence is needed to guard against the lures of predatory entrepreneurs.

To do so requires sound scholarly publication literacy and integrity.

Careful evaluation is also needed of the *sources* of evidence that inform research and practice.

Rethinking assumptions ...



Predatory publishers and conferences are of concern



Scholars are being deceived by predatory entrepreneurs



Risks extend beyond developing countries and can be reduced via enhanced publication literacy



Questions?

References

Beall, J. (2015). Predatory journals and the breakdown of research cultures. *Information Development, 31*(5), 473-476.

Bartholomew, R. E. (2014). Science for sale: The rise of predatory journals. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, 107*, 384-385.

Fitzpatrick, J. J. (2015a). Predatory journals: When outcome is valued over quality. *Applied Nursing Research, 28*, 1.

Thorne, S. (2014). Getting something published? Or joining a conversation. *Nursing Inquiry, 21*(2), 91.