

Review of Prof. Monica Berger's Works in the Works talk on February 27th, 2025.

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Entitled *Predatory Publishing: The Canary in the Coalmine of Scholarly Production*, Prof. Berger's talk explored how predatory publishing is fundamentally a problem of scholarly assessment and a lens into the politics of knowledge creation, arguing that reform is needed.

Prof. Berger began her presentation by highlighting the larger historical, political, cultural, and economic context where predatory publishing originated, developed, and thrived. She called our attention to the fact that predatory publishing is an international phenomenon, and it took different patterns. On the one hand, it is important that we stay critical of the process and outcome of predatory publishing. On the other, we also need to understand what gave rise to it.

Based on the detailed and critical examination of Prof. Berger's recent publication, the growing influence of neoliberalism, commercialization of the publishing industry, and the demand for tenure track faculty members to demonstrate strong publication records are all parts of the main factors contributing to the existence of predatory publishing, and its popularity at a certain level and scope.

Prof. Berger also noticed that many predatory publishers were headquartered in the Global South, which often represented countries that were low-income and non-English speaking. But this interesting phenomenon also speaks to the unequal economic, cultural, and political divide between the South and North, which represents countries that are high income, and predominantly speaks English. In some ways, such divide and unequal distribution of cultural and economic capital uncover a much deeper issue in the modern-day academia; we normalized using western, English speaking, and Eurocentric lens and standards to judge, assess, and define scholarly contributions. Our over-emphasis, obsession, and to some degree, "fetishization" of *impact factors* and *rankings* need to be put into question, and it is time to redirect our attention to the actual reputation, quality, and review policies of the publishers.

Prof. Berger's presentation truly broadened our horizon and enriched our existing knowledge on academic publishing, its impact, forms, and various problems that we need to address as educators and scholars. Overall, predatory publishing is not just an academic issue. It deserves a much larger, in-depth, and longer conversation that hopefully will one day bring *justice* and *equality* to the publishing world.