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# VANITY GALLERIES, PAY DRIVERS AND PREDATORY JOURNALS: PROFITTING ON DISCREDIT

GALERÍAS DE VANIDAD, "PAY DRIVERS" Y REVISTAS DEPREDADORAS: EL LUCRO DEL DESPRESTIGIO

David Fabian Ramirez Moreno<sup>1a</sup>

## Mr. Editor

Predatory magazines and publishing houses are those who are not following criteria nor peer review for the selection of the published articles. They also lie about their impact factors and indexing, establishing a profit scam rather than being an entity of scientific diffusion, making use of old models like the galleries of vanity in the world of art and the "Pay Drivers" in motor racing for their comparison and characterization.

What do an art gallery, a racing driver and a predatory pseudoscientific publishing house or magazine have in common? And what could be the effects of applying these models in the scientific community? Art galleries usually have rigorous procedures to select the artists who will exhibit. After all, their earnings depend on how much attraction the artist can have and how many of their works will be sold at the end of each exhibition, so many artists end up being rejected in the process<sup>(1)</sup>.

What would happen if the business model was reversed as in the case of vanity galleries? In this new model, it is the artist who pays for their works to be exhibited. Consequently, the gallerist is not concerned if the works are of quality, have aesthetic value or whether they will be sold or not. The gallerist has already got his profit and the "artist" has already got an exhibition in an art gallery<sup>(1)</sup>. In the market of vanity and ego, the "artist" is unlikely to recover his investment or gain fame and prestige. Even worse, if it is known that he has presented an exhibition in a vanity gallery, his image will be affected before his fellow artists.

Motor racing is undeniably an opulent sport, where expensive engineering feats are pushed to the max by its experienced drivers. In the major categories of this sport, it is expected that the pilots are the most talented and qualified people possible for this task and usually it is so. There are numerous tracks and competitions where these pilots compete since they were children, developing these skills. However, talent is not the only thing that can lead to driving these cars. Teams sometimes allow wealthy, even inexperienced, drivers to drive in their teams in exchange for copious amounts of money. This is how the concept of "Pay Driver" arises, proving to be the opportunity for some to fulfill their dream of touching the top of an expensive hobby. This causes large categories of motor racing to look less professional and to become a danger to their lives and those of other drivers<sup>(2)</sup>.

Far from the scientific and biomedical world, these models of self-promotion are a danger that lurks these days. Calls to predatory publishing houses and magazines look for boosting the ego and the quest for prestige of many researchers: from offers of rapid publication and accompaniment in a non-existent editorial process and peer review to change the called article processing charge (APC), which are justified in their great majority as an amount for the maintenance of digital magazines in order to remain accessible and free of charge to their readers. These rates vary depending on the type of item and range from 100 to over 900 US dollars<sup>(2)</sup>.

These predators seek to catch their prey using pretentious emails, sent to correspondence addresses

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the authors have published in previous articles in legitimate journals. These correspondences offer the rapid publication of any type of article with the excuse that you are an expert and your previous publications support you. In addition, they include false impact factors not to mention APC, nor how you will lose the copyright of your research work. (Figure 1)<sup>(3)</sup>.

However, predatory behavior is not only given by the publishing houses or journal towards the authors. Some dishonest authors look for this type of journals on purpose to publish works and articles that are not of sufficient quality to be published if they were subjected to a strict editorial process. This is the other face of the vanity market and it has a high risk because it is not only the prestige of the author, who as the "artist", is at risk of being discovered in his deceit; but also puts all the biomedical science community at risk. Since the research publication is irrelevant, potentially biased or false, it affects the credibility of the scientific community, and undermines the trust of the general public in scientific literature<sup>(4)</sup>, similar

to the "Pay Driver", which not only puts himself at risk, but also those who compete alongside him and have earned that privilege on merit.

The model in which the author pays, is not necessarily an unequivocal sign that he is facing a predatory publishing house or journal. Some legitimate journals request for some payment from researchers during the editorial process in order to compensate for the expensive publishing space available to some scientific journals, allowing not so novel but quality articles to be published<sup>(5)</sup>. This has a positive effect as it increases the number of ideas from which novel articles could emerge<sup>(4)</sup>.

Finally, it is important to study the reasons why they do publications in biomedical research: if it is done for selfish reasons such as academic or job self-promotion, or for altruistic reasons with the aim of disclosing knowledge and quality information that can help others<sup>(6)</sup>. Perhaps, by finding this answer we can avoid falling into and/or promoting the vanity market.

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Hope you are doing well during this pandemic situation.

We are in need of articles for successful release of **Volume 3 Issue 5** by **25<sup>th</sup> October**? Is it possible for you to support us with your 2 page opinion/case report or mini review, we hope 2 page article isn't time taken for eminent people like you.

We hope you won't disappoint us.

Acknowledge this email within 24hrs.

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Good Morning!!

Our Open Access Journal of Biomedical Science (OAJBS) is Successfully released New Issue of Volume 3 Issue 2.

Now we are soliciting you to submit any type of an article. This is a great opportunity to express, discuss and publish your views on current trend topics and challenges. Our goal is to publish the high cited articles in recent development fields.

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Estamos interesados en todos los textos que forman parte de su investigación, aunque estaríamos más interesados en el que posee un estudio más amplio. Para realizar esta evaluación, la **editorial** tiene como norma básica un mínimo de 42 páginas.

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Ante cualquier consulta, no dude en contactarme  
Saludos cordiales,

**Figure 1.** Examples of correspondence used by predatory magazines and publishers are ambiguous requests of any type of article or work in which the author is responsible for the editorial process. The first two correspondences on the left are from predatory magazines with TPAs of about 900 dollars per article. The third correspondence on the left is from a publishing house that publishes books without any editing or selection process. All were correspondence received by the author of this letter.



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