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## Why does Retraction Watch continue to offer support to Jeffrey Beall, and legitimize his post-mortem “predatory” lists?

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**Abstract:** Retraction Watch is a science watchdog that may give the impression of being both an anti-bad science and an anti-science blog. This blog has tried to legitimize its ethical stance by naming its parent organization The Center for Science Integrity Inc. (CSI), and by appointing a former Chair of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Elizabeth Wager, to the CSI board of directors. Jeffrey Beall, another science watchdog, often appears in public alongside Adam Marcus and Ivan Oransky, the CSI secretary and president, respectively, and participates in events with Wager. Beall became academically redundant on January 15, 2017. This is because his blog, which hosted a faulty, controversial and misleading list (and thus potentially libelous) of “predatory” open access journals and publishers, suddenly went blank. Beall offered no apology or explanation to the public, but was offered intellectual asylum and protection by the University of Colorado, Denver, where he works as a librarian. After a grace period of almost two months, members of the global academic community have now largely lost respect for Beall because of his silence, which may be equated with irresponsibility and/or cowardice. Despite this near extinct academic status, Retraction Watch continues to laud Beall, refer to his now-defunct site and lists as valid, as many as 25 times, and even rely on the Beall blog and lists to support several of their journalistic claims. In the world of science publishing, the legitimization of a “fact” using a defunct or false (i.e., non-factual) source, is equivalent to publishing misconduct, and feeds into the “false facts” and “alternative truths” epidemic in journalism that Retraction Watch is now impregnating into science publishing. Why then is Retraction Watch allowed to operate under an ethically superior platform, while expecting scientists and academics to respect basic rules of citing valid references, but while practicing suspect or unethical citation practices? This attitude undermines the ethical publishing foundation of the CSI, the CSI directors, and Retraction Watch as a reliable “journalistic” source of information, undermining trust and respect in this blog, while emphasizing its biased nature.

**Keywords:** Center for Science Integrity Inc.; COPE; ethical boundaries; “predatory” journals

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Conflict of Interest: The author is not associated with any academic institute, blog or web-site. The author was profiled multiple times, often with issues unrelated to retractions, by Retraction Watch. The author has always recognized that the need for a blog like Beall’s, is necessary to raise awareness, but that Beall’s lists have always been deeply flawed.