



It is a common belief that some of the issues characterizing contemporary scientific communication have recent roots. Issues such as predatory publishing or breaches of research ethics and integrity are often seen as a result of the rise of digital publishing, particularly open access. Although open access can, under certain conditions, increase the risk of unethical or illicit behaviours, by making research findings openly and freely accessible, it also enhances the visibility and dissemination of publications, facilitating the detection of distortions that might otherwise be more difficult to identify. Phenomena such as predatory journals and conferences, paper mills that fabricate scientific articles, zombie papers that resurrect from the ashes of poor science, and various other issues concerning research ethics and integrity are indeed on the rise but have simultaneously become more noticeable due to technological advancements. This book traces and describes the harmful practices in scientific communication that currently undermine its credibility, while also looking back to highlight the continuity with events of past centuries. The intertwining of the history of printing, pressures from literary piracy, and the debate on intellectual freedom which led to the first copyright law and sparked intense discussion among Enlightenment thinkers has become crucial again in our time, emerging as a probable transitional state toward a new paradigm.

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