Hacking the Academy: New Approaches to Scholarship and Teaching from Digital Humanities. Editors Daniel J. Cohen and Dr. Joseph Thomas Scheinfeldt Ph.D. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2013. 176 pp. $22.95 paper (ISBN 978-0-472-05198-4)

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The *Hacking the Academy* project developed in 2010 after an online posting by the editors Daniel J. Cohen and Tom Scheinfeldt:

> Can an algorithm edit a journal? Can a library exist without books? Can students build and manage their own learning management platforms? Can a conference be held without a program? Can Twitter replace a scholarly society? (3)

The print edition takes a curated sample from 329 submissions, from 177 authors, "with nearly a hundred submissions written during the weeklong event, and the other two-thirds submitted by authors from their prior writing on the subject matter," all of which are online, and breaks them out by subject (3). Opinions will vary about the choices made, of course, but the print version of *Hacking the Academy* brings together many of the best submissions already available online. They offer "more careful diagnoses and potential solutions" to many of the problems facing education right now (4). The brief window of opportunity to be involved with this anthology is, and the editors agree, a great snapshot of the enthusiasm and creativity of those involved with the digital humanities.

Hacking the Academy is broken up into three main sections. Each promises to "hack" a segment of the education system whether "scholarship," "institutions," and "teaching." There is also a brief section titled "conclusions" which offer some brief dissenting views about the digital humanities.

Tad Suiter's essay leads off this collection in the "Hacking Scholarship" section. He argues that the hacking metaphor "is central to this project" (6). However, Suiter expands on this idea to offer some examples of hacking for the layman to reach a larger audience that has less of a background in computers and technology. He mentions films of my childhood like WarGames and Hackers which show idealistic young men getting in way over their heads. In fact, over the years that seems to be the mainstream media's primary meme about hacking. This idealism leads to Suiter discussing what he refers to as the "hacker ethos" that can be applied to everything from actual technological hacking to non-technological examples like life hacks (8).

With that said, Suiter continues by asking why we would hack the academy. He argues that we need to "embrace the hacker ethos" to face the often dire looking future of higher education (9). There are many problems with higher education right now. The Academic Publishing Complex (more on that later) is, as Suiter argues, about to fall apart (9). The job market is terrible, schools are becoming too expensive for the average citizen to attend, and the loan system in this country is corrupt and exploitive. With this said, Suiter argues, and I strongly agree, that users of broken systems like this need to find workarounds, hacks if you will, to rise above its failures. This is an ethos that I, and many of the contributors to this anthology, share and is a strong opening essay and sentiment leading into the first section of the anthology, "Hacking Scholarship."

This concept of hacking a broken system takes on a number of forms in this anthology. One of them is the problematic higher education publishing system. In "Getting Yourself Out of the Business in Five Easy Steps," I really like Jason Baird Jackson's description of academic publishing as a "multinational corporation," which is a splendid description of the closed off, unpaid, labor system that large journals have built into themselves (13). For-Profit systems in education are a problem generally, but specifically I share Jackson's concern that the allegiance that for-profits have to their shareholders is one that is not correlative to education. Refusing to participate, as Jackson argues, can build a much more democratic system not ingrained in capitalistic ideology.

Jackson offers five solutions to create a "more accessible...progressive system of scholarly communication" (13). Do not submit to, edit, or participate in the peer review process for journals owned by for-profits. Do not edit books published by for-profits. Finally, do not join the editorial boards of for-profit journals (14). These are good first steps to begin changing your own publishing interests before, as Suiter previously argued, the entire for-profit publishing system collapses.

A further step is offered by David Parry in his essay "Burn the Boats/Books." Parry begins by citing Marc Andreesen from Netscape, in an interview with *TechCrunch*, who argues print media is dead and that we should "burn the boats" (referring to the famous Cortez quote about his troops travels through Cuba and Mexico). Parry

argues academics need to "burn the books" so "new modes of scholarship" that are powered by the internet can evolve and not just square pegged print models jammed into a circular web (15). One of the most important aspects of Parry's argument is that difference between print models on the web and newer fluid models. He feels that academics are making the same mistakes as mainstream journalism by attempting to protect a print-based capitalistic model. Like Jackson, Parry offers five solutions to avoid print media's mistakes.

Parry's solutions are sound and offer a template for the future of academic publishing. His first solution, similar to Jackson's call to stop working with for-profit journals, is to stop publishing in places that charge money for access, are locked down behind a firewall, and restrictive in the author's intellectual property rights (such as publishing the work under a Creative Commons license). Parry calls for, instead of submitting to a journal first, not only a final product, but self-publishing works in progress and "get(ing) over peer review" (17).

The most interesting argument Parry makes is that a PDF "is not a web-based document." PDF is part of the "print-based aesthetic" that he wants academics to move away from. The web, he continues, is networked in a way that requires working hyperlinks. A web based publication needs to feel alive and thriving, which a PDF dumped on the web recreating the print aesthetic Parry argues against often feels quite stale and, perhaps, dead (17). This point raises many possibilities for reinventing publication. There is especially a lot of potential for a drastic shift in how academics publish their MA and Doctoral work on the web.

A further argument for decentralization and more user control can be found in Jo Guldi's "Reinventing the Academic Journal." Guldi's argument is in the same vein of Parry's in regards to the move away from the aesthetics of print towards something new that is not so based on "issue-by-issue websites and PDF servers" (19). What needs to happen, Guldi argues, is journals to become curators of content like social websites such as Library Thing, Delicious, and of course Twitter (20). As Parry calls for academics to demand the ability to publish their works under Creative Commons licenses, Guldi focuses in on an opposition to all forms of exclusive publication, arguing that it is contrarian to the social, sharing, web that has evolved in recent years (22).

The enthusiasm shown in "Hacking Scholarship" for reinventing the academy can be seen in the brief essays found in "Hacking Teaching." These essays continue the discourse from the previous section of reinvention by disregarding not only outdated publication models, but outdated models of instruction. Gideon Burton begins the section by offering sound advice to students in "Dear Students," most notably he argues that soon the presence someone has online and the identity they create will make a resume or CV irrelevant (64). This is something I discuss with many of the majors in my program as they head out into an increasingly networked and public world.

The excerpt from Jeff Jarvis' "Lectures Are Bullshit" argues that the idea of a lecture is a leftover from the industrial age (67). Why, in, he continues, an era of immediate access, do we need standardized testing and methods of assessment like the SAT? These matters of instruction and assessment do not fit everyone and, again, try to jam squares into circles. Life is, Jarvis concludes, "a perpetual beta" which requires different answers for different people (68). This argument is continued in Michael Wesch's "From Knowledgeable To Knowledge-able," which notes that what is more important today for students is their ability to "sort, analyze...discuss...and create information" (69).

The student essay is critiqued by Mark Sample and Anastasia Salter in respective essays of their own. In "Hacking the Dissertation," Salter cites Sample to argue, that essays 'mean nothing to no one' (quoted in Salter 106). She criticizes the outdated idea and mental picture given to previous generations of students buried under a pile of books, not people and the networks they all share, and how this greatly inhibits progress (106). Salter notes that the more networked approach that allows for "continual revision" creates a classroom that breeds creativity and perhaps guts a lot of the unfortunate plagiarism seen by academics, particularly in writing classes (108).

Hacking the Academy is a wonderful project that is worthy of a reader's time. This anthology is a great introduction to the digital humanities. While I had read almost every essay in here before, this is the sort of book I could hand to an administration, curious colleague, or student to get them interested in the digital humanities. There is something for almost any academic in *Hacking the Academy*. The intended audience for this book is clearly those already aware of the digital humanities, but that should not deter newcomers from checking it out. This book definitely reaches what can be perceived as equal parts target audiences: The digital humanities enthusiast and the newcomer.

However, I do have a final concern about *Hacking the Academy*. I greatly appreciate how open this project has been. I think the editors concern about *Hacking the Academy* being a print book "undermin(ing) its argument" is a valid one, but not my major concern (4). Not only are all of the essays included in the book available freely online, but the people behind *Hacking the Academy* have also linked all of the original submitted essays on their website, which led me to some very cool essays. Both this and the print edition also answers their concerns about reaching readers "whom RSS feeds and Twitter are alien creatures" (5). However, something I do not like is that the hard cover for the printed edition is still rather expensive. First, why do we even need to have hardcover academic books? They cost too much and, from pretty much all anecdotal evidence I have observed, do not sell well. For now, *Hacking the Academy* is still an accessible anthology for both the digital humanities enthusiast and layperson, but the evolution of the academy is heading away from these conventions.