



PROJECT MUSE®

Hacking the Academy

Cohen, Dan , Scheinfeldt, Joseph T

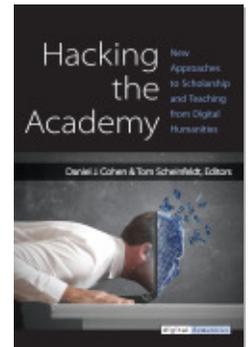
Published by University of Michigan Press

Cohen, Dan & Scheinfeldt, Joseph T..

Hacking the Academy: New Approaches to Scholarship and Teaching from Digital Humanities.

Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013.

Project MUSE., <https://muse.jhu.edu/>.



➔ For additional information about this book

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/22907>

Access provided at 27 May 2019 12:47 GMT with no institutional affiliation



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Voices

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Matt Gold and Jim Groom

The problem with learning management systems lies in the conjunction of three words that should not appear together. Learning is not something that can be managed via a system. We're not producing widgets here—we're attempting to inspire creative thought and critical intelligence. Learning management systems have dominated online education up until now, but must they be what we rely on in the future? Having found our way out of one box, must we immediately look for another? Can we imagine no other possibilities?

—MATT GOLD

Companies like Blackboard emerged as all-in-one solutions for managing courses online due to the relative difficulty of using the open web in the late 1990s given the unilateral nature of content delivery, limited access to the web, and the general difficulty designing and maintaining one's own space. Course-management systems fit a need. They were designed for a learning environment that posed a high threshold of difficulty for two-way participation. Yet, over the the next ten years the web became a far more conducive space for dynamic interaction and participation. At the same time, Internet penetration throughout the Western world became more and more ubiquitous, and applications that offer similar functionality as course management systems began to emerge at a fraction of the cost of centralized, proprietary systems.

So, what happens? The companies that make the learning management systems gentrify the frontier; they try and assimilate the power of these new tools within a controlled space that is safe, closed, and convenient. It is a two-pronged attack—exploiting fears about student safety along with a promise of a centralized convenience and peace of mind.

So, like the artists that moved into SoHo and the Lower East Side of New York City in the 1960s and 1970s, their pursuit of an affordable and diverse alternative to mainstream logic ultimately paves the way for capital to roll in and develop and gentrify these neighborhoods, eliminating most, if not all, of the original spaces that made them interesting and compelling to begin with.

—JIM GROOM