"I Must Create a System": Hacking the Book from Blake to the *Blake Archive*

http://digitalliterature.net/bookhacking

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This bibliography provides a survey of readings on the idea of **hacking the book**: rewiring, reconsidering, and rebelling against the conventions of the traditional print codex, beginning with William Blake's masterful Romantic productions. We'll learn about the ways in which Blake hacked the book, how formats such as the Total Work of Art and artists' books have further deformed the standard print tome, and how digital editions—particularly those electronically remediating Blake's hacked books—themselves function as explosions of the conventions of the book. Along the way, we will pay particular attention to the visual design of books and online editions, treating graphical decisions as critical features of these texts and creating a catalog of opportunities and techniques for hacking the book.

As an outgrowth of Professor Neil Fraistat's Technoromanticism seminar, this project takes a Romantic stance on book hacking: making the ideology of the book visible so that it can be critiqued, estranging the codex as *not* the "natural" form of literature, and tracing William Blake's uniquely meaningful interplay of text and image into later literature. Note that this project is imagined more as a primer on "book hacking" than as a traditional bibliography; in some cases, I provide only a brief summary of the article's main argument, with my main focus on those parts of the work pertinent to idea of book hacking.

In the spirit of book hacking, please visit http://digitalliterature.net/bookhacking after noon on Thursday, May 17th, 2012 for a lightly hacked form of the conventional bibliography.

I. The Artists' Book: Deform to Create

Claes, Koenraad and Marysa Demoor. "The Little Magazine in the 1890s: Towards a 'Total Work of Art'". *English Studies* 91.2 (2010): 133-149.

Claes and Demoor examine four journals from the 1890s that exemplify the aesthetic approach of the Total Work of Art (TWOA). The nineteenth-century idea of the “Total Work of Art”, Yeats’ “Whole Book”, and similar aesthetic approaches to literary publication attempted to fuse craftsmanship and visual appeal with similarly stylized content—much like a periodical form of the artist's book. In combination with Drucker's writings on *livres d'artistes* and artists' books, this article provides grounding in the historical moment when printing had advanced far enough that authors began to regularly push the limits of printed textual forms.

The article traces the TWOA from “the Book Beautiful of the contemporary Revival of Fine Printing and the concept of the Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk that reached Britain by way of France” (138). Like later artists' books, the TWOA was conceived as a linking of form and design with content; the TWOA periodicals of the 1890s, however, differed from artists' books in their fusing of the avant-garde with a heavy emphasis on commercial success. The features that set these periodicals apart as hacks of the typical serial publication were meant to attract an audience willing to pay for craft and luxury in their reading: “Bindings, fonts, lay-out, illustrations and other paratextual features all combined to achieve the ambitions of the editors who hoped that this ploy would help their publication escape the ephemeral fate of the average periodical” (134). Sometimes, the target was an audience more interested in displaying the texts as objects than in engaging with them as readable works, a legacy of the Arts and Crafts movement’s Revival of Fine Printing.

Also unlike later artists' books, the Little Magazines dealt with material thematically separate from the main texts they contained. To some extent these extra materials are connected to the forms' commercial needs and serial form; editors striving to create a TWOA had to handle matter that, while necessary to the periodical, might be at odds with the total project (e.g. advertisements that supported the magazine’s existence). But how to incorporate such material?: “In a periodical aspiring to be a Total Work of Art, the aesthetic project would obviously be highly jeopardized if each issue could not be considered an artwork complete in itself, of which every single aspect was artistic (or to use a contemporary term: ‘aestheticized’). Editors could not allow for any loose ends” (134). The form of the periodical supplement arose as a solution; necessary elements of the periodical that detracted from the smooth whole of the TWOA project could be shifted to an associated, yet less detracting location. Such a maneuver created interesting evidence of what was and was not considered part of the TWOA; for example, we can gauge the era's attitude toward paratextual features such as tables of contents by their location in either the main periodical or the supplement.

Although conceived as a bookish enterprise (even in the periodical form of these 1890s Little Magazines), the TWOA is really early transmedia: “In Wagner’s philosophy of art, great weight is attached to the transportation of the audience by way of a unified aesthetic experience. A true artwork transcended the differences in approach between forms of art traditionally kept separate from each other, and by extension should be able to instill social coherence in its audience” (138). Little Magazines are fascinating early examples of transmedia production. For example, the image/text balance in some of these journals (e.g. *Yellow Book*) had an almost equal proportion of visual arts and text entries. Different forms of art were brought into close conversation: "The idea behind the Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk [that influenced the TWOA] was that the work of art should be a harmonious composite: ‘the intention of every single art

form can only fully be achieved through the collaboration of all art forms, elaborating themselves and each other at the same time'" (Wagner as cited in 138). Although these periodicals did not incorporate, for example, sound and drama, their editors attempted to mimic or incorporate these other art forms into the realization of their written text and images, and the inclusion of supplemental materials with the main text of the periodical is a distinctly transmedic move (realized more fully with later transmedia novels and artists' books that include archival objects as supplements to a text). By examining the somewhat niche form of TWOA magazines at the end of the nineteenth century, we can trace how thinking about hacking textual forms developed between the image-text balancing of Blake's work of one hundred years earlier, and the artist book work of the twentieth century discussed in Drucker's *The Century of Artists' Books*.

Drucker, Johanna. "Artists' Books & the Early 20th-Century Avant-Garde". *The Century of Artists' Books.* New York City: Granary Books, 1995. 45-68.

Drucker outlines how the history of the early 20th-century artists' book and the agendas of the avant-garde art groups of that time are intertwined. In the twentieth century books, as opposed to various forms of periodical in earlier years, became a main platform for artistic experimentation. The Russian avant-garde contained authors with training both as writers and visual artists, resulting in productions following the Blakean example of an artist realizing an entire book project. Similar to the artists' books of the '60s and '70s, Russian Futurists at the beginning of the twentieth century were interested in what Drucker calls "democratic multiples": works that were cheap to produce, distribute, and procure on a large scale, with the creator having total control of the process. These mass-produced editions were intended to take art from the museum into more widespread consumption, a counter to single-edition "livres d'artiste" following a fine-press, limited-edition system. In reality, self-publication meant hacked tools less formed to mass-production of texts; techniques such as rubber stamps, stencils, potato prints, and handwriting sections of the text were common. Still, the Russian avant-garde produced more than sixty books in editions of 50-1,000 copies between 1912 and 1917 (49). Drucker sees the Russian Futurism movement as the moment when the book became "first and foremost a means of direct communication" with creation and circulation as easy as that of the periodical (50).

In contrast to earlier traditions like the Total Work of Art, these artists' books entirely broke with the conventions of printing that had remained mostly static since the 1400s. The works favored "immediate, direct expression" instead of the well-wrought showcase effect of the *livre d'artiste*; the emphasis was not on excellence in printing *qua* printing, but on the content and effect (a choice probably forced by the homemade tactics of printing mentioned above). Most of these books did not play with typography, but play with the written image was common in shorter, more ephemeral works such as playbills and journals.

In the 1920s, Surrealists remounted a Blakean balancing of words and images; where 19th-century books used images illustratively, for the Surrealists "each element extend[ed] the other so that the finished whole is not a predictable aspect of either part, but a new synthesis" (59); for example, Max Ernst's collages remixed Victorian engravings from both fiction and non-fiction texts. German New Realism in the 1920s introduced photography into books, with the form's attendant possibilities such as montage and sequencing. These movements all contributed to the American upswing in artist book production in the '60s and '70s, which emphasized the hacked book as a vehicle for bringing art to people outside museums and collections.

--- "Artists' Books Past and Future". *Figuring the Word: Essays on Books, Writing, and Visual Poetics*. New York: Granary Books, 1998. 167-212.

Drucker discusses a sampler of artists' books, using these examples to highlight some specific, hackable affordances of the print book. Nora Ligorano and Marshall Rees's *The Corona Palimpsest*, a 1995 artists' book, raises questions about the future of the print codex: as we come to understand the affordances of digital mediums that are separate and discontinuous from the affordances of the print book, will the print book be "reduced to a set of iconic referents", or will we be able to continue viewing each medium as important to certain functions and activities that each is best suited for? (167) Her exploration of this question is reminiscent of McGann's “Visible and Invisible Books" article, which suggests that such a regression to symbolic object is unlikely given the non-commensurateness of books print and digital. As with the McGann piece, this line of questioning begged for a thorough discussion of just what were the features print books perform that the digital does not, but neither delved into what I see as the strongest arguments: the specific affordances listed by Kirschenbaum in "Bookscapes" (e.g. volumetricness) and the affective nature of print book's history-laden materiality. Drucker does offer some new broad definitions for the print book, such as Ulises Carrion's idea of the book as a "sequence of spaces", a claim that seems to extend to electronic texts as well (171). If we view books as spaces or fields rather than focusing on the "content" (meaning just the written or graphic content within those spaces), we recognize new areas available for transformation and hacking.

---. “Graphesis: Visual Knowledge Production and Representation”. *Poetess Archive Journal* 2.1 (December 2010).

Historically, books have emphasized text over visuals, but text is not the only way knowledge and story can be communicated. Despite the ubiquity of visually communicated information (e.g. advertising is now a largely multimedia mode emphasizing the visual and aural over the written), up until very recently there has been little framework for critically discussing graphical methods of knowledge transfer, under which heading Drucker includes “specialized writing and notation, codes and symbols... visual art and design... visual expressions that are arrangements of marks or visual forms organized to read on and as a flat surface (in other words, in their literal, visible form, rather than as pictorial illusions)” (3-4). Claiming we lack "a critical frame for understanding visualization as a primary mode of knowledge production", Drucker examines the ways visuals communicate information and proposes the scholarly field of *graphesis*, "the field of knowledge production embodied in visual expressions” (1, 3).

With the goal of "creat[ing] a critical framework within which the forms that are generally used for the presentation of information can be understood and read as culturally coded expressions of knowledge with their own epistemological assumptions and historical lineage”, she treats with the historical importance of graphesis, covering how developments in media technology have shifted both how we communicate and receive knowledge (e.g. improvements in engraved plates allowed the dissemination of complex scientific and mathematical knowledge, 4). The graphical is represented as both the condensed and the complex, covering both purely metaphoric illustrations and visual work such as Blake's that provides additional knowledge or even transforms the information communicated by associated text.

Drucker's ambitious framework covers many methods of visual information communication, from scientific graphics to structural graphic elements such as tables, headings, and layouts (“the graphical forms that express relations and provide clues to reading are part of

the 'information' of the text”, 19). Most pertinent to the topic of book hacking, though, is her discussion of graphical means of interpretation. For example, Ernst Fraenkel’s use of drawings to categorize and compare aspects of Stéphane Mallarme's difficult *Un Coup de Des* perform the possibility of “discovering the 'unconscious' structures of this poetical enigma through graphic analysis... by literally drawing his reading of Mallarme's text, Fraenkel created drawings as interpretative acts” (39). Another example of visual interpretation of textual material is Drucker's and Bethanie Nowviskie's work with "Subjective Meteorology" project, discussed in *Speclab*. These explorations of graphical means of interpreting written texts point to ways that meta-books such as scholarly online editions might begin to privilege their visual design as critically engaged with their textual content. Drucker's detailed analysis of visible but critically ignored elements of texts also highlight neglected areas where the book may shift its focus or be hacked and transformed, a possibility underlined by Drucker's discussion of many of these same graphical elements in works on artists' books such as *The Century of Artists' Books*.

---. "Self-Reflexivity in Book Form". *The Century of Artists' Books.* New York City: Granary Books, 1995. 161-198.

Artists' books, Drucker claims, "are often self-conscious about the elements of book structure" (161). There are two paths for this self-reflexivity: "the idea of the book as idea" (intentional creation of books that are about what books are) and "the idea of the book as art idea" (extending this exploration of book identity "into a dialogue with the concept of art, and shows that books are an art idea"; 161).

Regardless of the nature of the self-reflexivity, in form this awareness translates to heightened awareness of the conventions of the field of the page, from literary conventions ("footnotes, endnotes, marginalia, head, gutter, flyleaf, running heads and footers, the table of contents, indices, and title pages") to color (the "quoting" of the red and black ink palette of old printing taken into standards of Russian Constructivist design; 173) to visual conventions such as negative space (gutters and margins; 163). For the reader, these features are called out such that it becomes obvious how they silently structure meaning (168). Other artists' books draw attention to the book a whole object, as with "unreadable", bound-shut books like David Stairs' *Boundless*, or emphasize the book creation process (as with George Gessert's *Dust and Light*, which records the Xeroxing process). On an even more meta-analytical level, some artists’ books focus on the making of artists' books; Michael Goodman's *How to Make an Artist's Book* reveals certain clichés of artist book production of a certain Xeroxed-and-stapled type, questioning how formulaic this "original" genre, originally defined by its opposition to the set-in-stone appearance and function of print books, has become (191). By their highlighting of often-ignored functions of book making and organization, self-reflexive artists’ books remind the reader that the conventions of the codex extend beyond the visual features of books to areas such books' production and reading.

---. "The Artist's Book as a Rare and/or Auratic Object". *The Century of Artists' Books.* New York City: Granary Books, 1995. 93-120.

Drucker presents examples of the artists' book not as a "democratic multiple", but instances of unique text and limited or inconsistent editions. As a demonstration of the possibilities for the "rare" artists' books, she discusses seven possibilities for unique textual performance:

1. Transformed works using another work as their base, as with Tom Phillips' *A Humument*. In this work, the choices of erasure that shape the story carry their own constraints just as they remove the book's original written boundaries, as where Phillips' naming of his protagonist constricts the name to only appear on pages that uses the word "together" or "altogether" (110).
2. Works that use their rarity thematically, as with William Gibson's set-to-encrypt *Agrippa*. The sense of the book as a unique and irrecoverable object creates an aura of meaning (the "auratic object" of this chapter's title).
3. Books that hearken back to *livres d'artistes* with their use of rare or costly ornamentation. An example is Timothy C. Ely's *The Flight Into Egypt*, which includes gold leaf and bindings textured by sand coated with acrylic (95).
4. Works that are editioned, yet have something so unusual in their presentation that the work feels unique. Tatana Kellner's *Fifty Years of Silence* embeds a tattooed plaster cast of a concentration-camp survivor's arm in its cut-out cutout pages (96).
5. Works "which by their genuine or simulacral production of an archive seem to present the viewer with the raw materials of personal memory and experience" (97-98). This technique has been used by mass-produced transmedia books such as J. C. Hutchins' *Personal Effects: Dark Art*, which packages a mental hospital inmate's "personal effects" such as driver's license, photographs, and letters with a book containing a narrative mystery requiring use of these objects. The incorporation of boxes or archives can create the effect of surreptitiously going through someone else's belongings or of conducting historical research to resurrect a forgotten individual or solve a mystery
6. Journals, diaries, and travel logs recording fictional or real lives and journeys.
7. Sculpturing books, as with the carved and torn books of Helmut Lohr, or book-like objects like Anselm Kiefer's giant lead books.

Each of these examples demonstrates ways hacked books can create a powerful emotional effect by twisting their form into connection with their content.

---. "The Artist's Book as Idea and Form". *The Century of Artists' Books.* New York City: Granary Books, 1995. 1-20.

In this chapter, Drucker attempts to define the category "artist book": "a book created as an original work of art, rather than a reproduction of a preexisting work... a book which integrates the formal means of its realization and production with its thematic and aesthetic issues" (2). She warns that it is difficult to make a single statement about what this definition means at the level of deciding whether an individual book is an artist book (e.g. there are no quantifiers such as required number of editions or involved makers; 2); most definitions are "too vague ('a book made by an artist') or too specific ('it can't be a limited edition')" (14).

It may be easier to define what an artist's book is not, and Drucker uses the near-miss genre of the *livre d'artiste* as a prime example of what artists' books do not typically do, as well as through a zone of intersecting activities often related to the artist book form: "fine printing, independent publishing, the craft tradition of book arts, conceptual art, painting and other traditional arts, politically motivated art activity an activist production, performance of both traditional and experimental varieties, concrete poetry, experimental music, computer and electronic arts, and last but not least, the tradition of the illustrated book, the *livre d'artiste*" (2-3). The *livre d'artiste* was popular in the 1890s and early 1900s; these were luxury market editions of texts, with the author or illustrator being a current or new celebrity artist (e.g. Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, and Max Ernst). Finely made and almost artists' books, they stop "just at

the threshold of the conceptual space in which artists' books operate" by failing to "interrogate the conceptual or material form of the book as part of its intention, thematic interests, or production activities" (3). Unlike *livres d'artiste*, which were basically finely made editions of existing or new traditional books, part of most artists' books design is a self-consciousness about the identity of the book, reflected in both content and form. *Livres d'artiste* also usually maintained the "standard distinction between image and text, generally on facing pages", were envisioned by an editor and created by author and artist who did not necessarily meet, and were otherwise market-oriented (4). Finally, Drucker separates artists' books from installation art and sculptures that "function as icons of book-ness or book identity, but [do] not provide an experience associated with books themselves" (10). From her description, I conceive artists' books as print books that have been hacked such that they both retain book conventions and depart from them in a way that comments on our expectations for the media form: a category of codex that is difficult to define because it is based on testing the boundaries of its conventions.

--- "The Art of the Written Image". *Figuring the Word: Essays on Books, Writing, and Visual Poetics*. New York: Granary Books, 1998. 55-75.

Drucker considers the visual aspect of the written: how the form of writing is itself meaningful: "writing embodies language in an unlimited variety of distinctive forms... color, composition, design, and style" (57). The visual forms of writing are always both images and elements of language: "all writing has the capacity to be both looked at and read" (59). Drucker considers the implications of following standard conventions of writing versus structuring and shaping the words on the page beyond the usual restrictions on type and letter.

Along with being both images and elements of language, writing is also both personal and social expression. In Mira Schor's work *Personal Writing*, this duality is illustrated by writing in a school-model hand juxtaposed to the same information in a painterly personal hand; the work explores when writing is from us (a deeply personal expression) and when writing is a tool we use for that deeply personal expression (a societally agreed-upon, taught system of symbols). Drucker also explores writing through the idea of *exercise d'ecriture*, the performance of gestural traces, almost alphabetically meaningful, that point at writing as both an action (gesture) and a "bringing into being" (64). Gestural traces stop just short of meaning, in contrast to the glyph, another form of writing image, purposefully imbued with hidden, complex meaning. The gesture of writing suggests writing as a "record of temporal production", as the movements required to write occur over a sequence of time rather than instantaneously; this time-taking action can be perceived both instantaneously (if viewed as an image) or over time (if read as information; 72). Through these three explorations of text as visual image, Drucker reveals a potential space for hacking the book as interweaving the format of the written letters of text with textual meaning.

---. "The Codex and its Variations". *The Century of Artists' Books.* New York City: Granary Books, 1995. 121-160.

A definitional piece exploring both the traditional codex, this chapter offers a nice expansion of Kirschenbaum's "Bookscapes" article on book affordances, estranging the traditional codex and looking at non-traditional codices as well. The codex, a form books take so frequently that people usually mean "codex" when they say "book", is most traditionally a set of pages of the same size bound in rigid sequence. As opposed to earlier technologies of recording

such as the scroll and the tablet, the codex evolved because of the increasing pliability of writing surfaces as papyrus, vellum, parchment, and finally paper were invented.

Drucker explores the definition of the codex by considering two extremities that fit within its boundaries: "At one extreme, the codex is a set of uniformly sized pages bound in a fixed and intentional sequence. At the other extreme it is an accumulation of non-uniform pages in an unintentional and unfixed sequence which is barely recognizable as a book" (123). Drucker's use of artist's reimaginings of form to understand the codex suggests that similarly, we might look to digital artists (e.g. e-lit authors) to understand how we might push the boundaries on digital forms of literature. While looking "forward" to digital literature helps us think about print books, looking backwards is somewhat less helpful, since little modern work is done with scrolls because of their rigid constraints; what artists' books do employ scroll form usually do so either to make a religious reference or emphasize the slowness of reading (153).

When codex form is hacked, the most common non-rectangular artist book forms are "polygons and fold-up works, boxes and accordion folds, scrolls, pop-up structures, and tunnel books... card stacks" (123). These retain some connection to the idea of the book (e.g. bound sequentiality) lest they become something only book-referential (i.e. book sculpture); there's a fine line between what works "with the codex as a point of reference" and what merely quotes it. Another area for play with codex form is the binding, which can take the form of a straight line along the edge of the pages, a post binding that allows pages to fan like slats, or accordion folding; hacked bindings or lack of binding can create effects such as fragmentation or "change access to the information" by granting the ability to read all pages simultaneously (129-131). Opacity and translucence are a third way to hack the traditional behavior of the codex. Drucker ends by considering digital forms of codices from the real (e.g. online archives and hypertexts) to the conceptual (the idea of an electronic book as a field of three-dimensional, navigable, floating, unlinked information.

II. William Blake: A New System of Codex Literature

Ault, Donald. "Re-Visioning William Blake's The Four Zoas." *ImageTexT: Interdisciplinary Comics Studies* 3.2 (2007).

As a counterpoint to the bulk of literary criticism about Blake's work I have encountered, Ault offers textual criticism that foregrounds the visual elements of his work instead of discussing them only in support of Blake's writing, considering the relationships between the visuals of *The Four* and the proof sheets of Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* (which Blake illustrated). In particular, he explores Blake's juxtaposition of "the torsional suggestiveness of the designs and the rigidly enclosed spaces reserved for the words of Young's or Blake's poem", a visual-textual constraint especially interesting because of what it says about Blake's process of illustration, segregating the space of the written word from the area of free visual play. Blake's illustrations of *Night Thoughts* include visual puns (e.g. the word "reorganize" illustrated with a demon's eyes: re-organ-eyes) and designs that particularly call out the space of the written texts as a visual element: "in experimenting with these designs as places where his *Four Zoas* could materialize, Blake was creating a scenario of possible reading, where page layout becomes instruction rather than representation". Ault highlights unusual elements for book hacking play—negative space and the space created by blocks of written text—demonstrating Blake's awareness of the entire field of the codex as space for customization.

Bentley, G. E., Jr. "The Printing of Blake's *America*." *Studies in Romanticism* 6 (1966): 46-57.

Spurred by Blake's poetic claim that "Re engraved Time after Time[,] / Ever in their Youthful prime / My Designs unchangd remain", Bentley follows the artist through his process of creating and printing *America*, a work that Blake printed, altered, and reprinted over a period of twenty years. While the bulk of the article is a detailed forensic analysis of printings attempting to date when changes happened (as with the addition of lines changing the tenor of the poem), its discussion of the different phases of *America* are pertinent to our topic of book hacking; as discussed in Drucker's chapter on "auratic" artists' books, the effect of impermanence created by these small changes adds an outer personal dimension to each text through its record of Blake's small edits over the course of two decades. This article demonstrates the non-fixity of Blake's printed productions, a reminder that Blake regularly altered post-printing texts both immediately (as with the addition of watercolor) and by hacking his own plates (e.g. covering up some lines before making a new copy). Thus, in addition to hacking book form in various ways to suit his needs, we see Blake also hacking his own work to conform to his changing ideas.

Chayes, Irene H. "Picture and Page, Reader and Viewer in Blake's 'Night Thoughts' Illustrations". *Studies in Romanticism* 30.3 (Fall 1991): 439-471.

Chayes examines a convenient location for understanding Blake as a "total artist"; in contrast to works such as the *Book of Urizen* where Blake provided both the text and the graphics, Young's *The Complaint, and the Consolation; or, Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality*, for which Blake provided 537 watercolor drawings, provides an opportunity to examine Blake functioning as illustrator only. *Night Thoughts*, Chayes argues, draws an unusually inharmonious reading process from the viewer: "the viewer is required to be a reader first, but his response to the drawing may take him far from the original text; moreover, after he has experienced the drawing his reader's understanding of that same text may be drastically altered" (442). She suggests that the opportunity of illustrating texts not his own encouraged Blake to experiment: "explore visual possibilities of even minor verbal passages, construct narrative or dramatic situations out of passing suggestions in the text, or contend wordlessly with the philosophical or theological positions taken by his author" (442). By contrasting Blake's visual tactics for Young's work with those employed in his own productions, we can achieve a better understanding of Blake's "composite art" (442).

The article walks us through what we can resurrect of Blake's drawing process for *Night Thoughts*; for example, we can tell that Blake often masked the written text on a page while producing his first sketches over it, at least visually divorcing the text from his illustrations. Chayes works through particular plates of *Night Thoughts*, comparing them to Blake's work as an illustrator for his own writings; she also considers Blake's thinking as a reader of Young's text through Blake's illustrative interpretations and metaphor choices as well as lines of verses apparently marked by Blake for illustration: "usually a single cross or asterisk in pencil, which direct the reader to quit the text at that point and turn to the drawing, shifting from verbal apprehension to visual" (447). These marks balance Blake the reader and Blake the editor, tracing how he encountered Young's text and how he moved toward interpreting it visually.

Drucker, Johanna and Emily McVarish. "Modern Typography and the Creation of the Public Sphere". *Graphic Design History: A Critical Guide*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009. 95-117.

Drucker and McVarish provide an overview of trends in graphic design from 1660 to 1800, grounding our understanding of the trends that shaped Blake as well as what he was working against. Through the rise of the printing press, this period saw the creation of communities of readers no longer bounded by geographical proximity; the popular press, media networks, easily distributed propaganda, and a growing book trade were all results of the creation of the "public sphere" made possible by the cheap mass production of text. Along with the spread of printed information, the authority of print as a source of information rapidly increased.

In terms of technology, refinements in copperplate engraving allowed greater accuracy and detail, influencing the improvement of graphics for both scientific and fictional works. Information visualization was born as governments began to use graphics to understand statistics, and encyclopedia projects developed as individuals attempted to record and organize large amounts of knowledge.

Visual trends varied from the elegance, artifice, and excess of Baroque and Rococo styles to the simplicity of Neoclassicism. Type design and casting became specialized; possession of exclusive types were a selling point for printing houses. The period saw the introduction of greater contrast between thick and thin strokes, the standardization of point sizes so that type from different foundries were comparable, and letterforms evolving into basic units that could be recombined. Graphic images were often reused for different purposes (e.g. criminal depictions in newsbooks about sensational crime were "a matter of stereotyping rather than portraiture"; 99). Bibliographic codes developed as the news began to be broken into columns and departments, with expected contents and a skeletal structure that stood farther apart from the content and contained its own visual reading cues.

Printing was largely a formal career, passed down through families and retaining guild-like secrecy of methods, its teaching was largely an informal matter of on-the-job apprenticeship in shops. There were no stand-alone designer roles yet, though certain printer were recognized for their excellence in illustration, typesetting, and other graphic skills. In 1683, Joseph Moxon published *Mechanick Exercises*, a textbook for the printing industry meant to push forward the English printing business, which had not improved much over two hundred years.

Frye, Northrop. “Poetry and Design in William Blake”. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 10.1 (September 1951): 35-42.

Writing at a time when complete editions of Blake's engraved works were either difficult to obtain or non-existent, and always poor substitutes—a time when those who could not afford to travel to libraries with actual Blake works on hold probably only knew Blake from his text and not from his complete works—Frye argues persuasively for the necessity of always considering the whole of each piece of Blake’s work, both image and text. This article highlights an interesting and not completely past point in literary history, when a literary scholar would need to argue for taking someone like Blake as a whole artist rather than just as an author of text. Frye’s argument is also useful today in his presentation of key places in the poems to examine Blake’s balancing of image and text, with the attendant illustration of how the poor editions Frye bemoans effect similarly poor, incomplete readings of complex texts.

In contrast to earlier illustrated works where the visuals were largely independent of the words (e.g. the intricate capital letters in the Book of Kells), Frye traces points early in Blake’s work where the author moved away from the emblem book genre (where poem points to picture or design provides simple version of textual meaning), using design to add new dimensions or nuances to the meaning of the text (e.g. pictoral symbols of experience parodying the symbols

used for innocence). From earlier, more text-centric works such as *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* with its marginal decorations, Frye traces Blake's artistry into his more mature works, arguing that by the point of such poems such as *America*, *Europe*, and *The Song of Los* Blake had achieved a near-perfect balance of meaningful text and meaningful image (38). These later works were truly pieces of "mixed art", with Blake's creation process involving a sequential-art-like use of drafts incorporating image and text simultaneously, rather than a text script followed by later sketches; thus, we should understand Blake's work as even in its earliest stages conceived as a balance of meaningful image and text.

Johnson, Mary Lynn. "Emblem and Symbol in Blake". ***Huntington Library Quarterly*** **37.2 (February 1974): 151-170.**

Johnson offers an in-depth discussion of the emblem book precursors mentioned in Northrop Frye's article on Blake, helping to situate just how revolutionary Blake's balancing of image and text was. Emblem literature, popular in the 1500s and 1600s, were books where "the design, motto, and epigram or verse commentary specify an unambiguous relationship between a visual and verbal conceit and an abstract idea" (151). Emblem is allegorical rather than symbolic; Johnson claims that Blake was situated in a gray area between the two modes through his work as both poet and designer (152).

Blake created his own "self-sustaining symbolic world" by quoting emblematic symbols that readers would recognize (e.g. the sunflower in "Ah! Sunflower" and *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*); knowledge of these emblematic conventions was not necessary to read Blake, but recognizing the traditional meanings of these images reveals Blakean commentary and rejuvenation of clichéd symbols (170). By contrasting Blake with traditional emblematists, the article explores how Blake hacked the convention of emblem books into a more subtle, nuanced Romantic form, offering an interesting art historical backdrop for Northrop Frye's discussion of Blake's balancing of image and text (153).

Leslie, Esther. "Blake's Lines: Seven Digressions Through Time and Space." ***ImageTexT: Interdisciplinary Comics Studies*** **3.2 (2007).**

Leslie focuses on a single, powerful bibliographic metaphor, the line, tracing its appearance both literally and associatively through Blakean images. She explores seven types of line, beginning with an catalog of actual line figures visibly woven through Blake's plates: "small outlines of figures, snakes, vegetables, twiddled lines... graphic lines between the lines of words. There are lines in the drawings above and below the words on the page. Vines and letters coil into each other. Strands of hair become cascades of water. The curls of a serpent are echoed higher up the page as a long spiral filling up the space of a short line" (46). "Aesthetic lines" those styles of lines that mimic and invoke the lines of contemporary aesthetic thinkers such as Hogarth, outlines demarcating positive and negative space and their effect on page layout are other visible lines Leslie discusses. Next, she considers conceptual lines, such as those that (feeling like the metaphor is stretching a bit thin) connect the economic lines of circulating metallic money with the economics of printing during Blake's time. Finally, she considers the lines of literary legacy reaching from Blake into designs in the future, with a particular focus on Blake's invocation in Alan Moore's graphic novel *From Hell*.

While some of these types of lines are a stretch to connect back to Blake's original design choices, the idea that one can take a single, basic element of design and extrapolate so much about a single writer's texts is an interesting one, suggesting the pursuit of other simple features

and affordances both literally and metaphorically through Blake's work. As the above readings on artists' books demonstrate, such thorough addressing of ubiquitous elements of the book allow more effective, meaningful hacking and deforming of a text.

Mitchell, W. J. T. "Poetic and Pictorial Imagination in Blake's *The Book of Urizen*". *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 3.1 (Autumn 1969): 83-107.

Mitchell considers *The Book of Urizen* as a non-linear artist book performance, focusing on its balance of visuals and text in metaphoric relation: "the live question in Blake studies is no longer whether his illustrations have anything to do with the text, but how the transactions between his two media occur" (83). Rather than view Blake's work as following the tradition of conceptualizing media forms as related "sister arts" (Horace's *ut pictura poesis*), Mitchell argues that Blake's productions are critical of such half-hearted "poetical painting" and "pictorial poetizing" (83).

This criticism of equating forms of media can be seen in *The Book of Urizen* depiction of Urizen inscribing two books; in some versions he holds a quill in one hand and an engraving tool in the other, showing these methods as ironically symmetrical forms of inscription: "under the control of Urizen, the two arts become mechanical exercises, devoid of intellectual purpose" (84). With Urizen as a symbol of the traditions against which Blake rebelled, we can look at Urizen's systems of inscription and art to get a sense of what production practices Blake reviled.

Urizen offers image and text in even dialogue, limiting either being read as purely illustrative of the other; in fact, Blake's irregular ordering of the book's pages means that there is no one definitive reading of the illustrations in narrative parallel to the text: "In the seven extant copies the order of the ten full-page designs is never repeated... the coloring, and even the number of figures in some designs, varies widely from one copy to another" (97). Mitchell reads this effect as transmedically mimicking aleatoric music, which allows a reordering of pages resulting in variations among performances (97). Images are subtly altered to convey different meanings; in some versions of the image of Urizen discussed earlier the pen and the burin are almost indistinguishable, while images of Urizen's book of brass sometimes show esoteric-looking symbols implying deep wisdom and sometimes offer garbled marks that seem the writings of madness rather than sagacity (97). Throughout, *Urizen* is readable less as a linear narrative and more as "a series of 'epiphanies' or what Blake would call 'opened centers'", with recurring visual images providing cohesion and sequence; for example, we see Urizen as he "reaches down to circumscribe the abyss with his golden compasses" and Los as he reaches down to enclose the earth with a veil (89). Thus, Mitchell locates *Urizen*'s meaning not in "the abstract linear skeleton or in the specific representational illusion which it structures", but in a balance and interplay between the two, the living counterpoint to Urizen's deathlike paralleling of writing and engraving (106). Mitchell presents Blake's book hacking as not just a move to include both image and text in non-linear relationships, but to present the two as playing together rather than mechanically replicating each other's work.

III. Digital Platforms and Editions: Meta-Books and Electronically Exploded Book Performances

Drucker, Johanna. "The Future of Writing". *Figuring the Word: Essays on Books, Writing, and Visual Poetics*. New York: Granary Books, 1998. 213-238.

In this chapter, Drucker consider the digital remediation of language: "What constitutes the 'information' of language and how does this 'information' change in moving language from a material [i.e. print] to an electronic environment?" (213).

To answer this question, she first considers "materiality as signification" (i.e. how the material form of content's vehicle shapes that content), giving the example of Geofroy Tory's Pythagorean Y, interwoven with tiny figures illustrating the ease of vice and the hardships of virtue. Its materiality and thus meaning are not transferable to the digital, she claims; turn it into "Futura Bold and see what happens to the meaning" (213). Of course typing a Y in Futura Bold utterly contorts the meaning—but why are we assuming that a print, illustrated Y should be commensurate with a digital, non-illustrated Y? Drucker's not claiming they are, yet her example seems to say that no digital approximation of Tory's Y is possible because print/digital can't portray the same meanings. I imagine a counterexample moving in the opposite direction: a letter of early modern type versus a letter created in Adobe Illustrator—its outlines contorted, colored, illustrated into an entirely new form from that letter included in the original font file. What is at issue here seems to be the difficulty of transferring such complex creations made in either digital or print to the other platform, not the impossibility of moving print to digital; a move between the two realms will always be a remediation and thus a translation, not a transferral.

Drucker next considers how the format of language contains information; outline form with its headings and bullets, for example, tells us certain things about how we should treat content without explicitly writing out these directions, and the example of the expanding structural format of the newspaper Drucker and McVarish discuss in the chapter of *Graphic Design History* functions similarly (213). The form of conveying language is mutable, but affects reception. Drucker gives the example of a handwritten versus a typed grocery list; both result in the same items being purchased, but an official versus a handwritten stop sign might have different results (221).

Lastly, Drucker considers the effects of the digital platform on language. She outlines three stages of computer code:

1. Claude Shannon's founding ideas of information exchange, the binary encoding of data, and the phenomenon of information being shaped to function via machine
2. The evolution of "natural" language in constrained form (i.e. the coding languages that let us interface with machine language, but again bend and shape information to fit certain machine-necessitated forms)
3. The shift of coding languages from the first, less-human-readable versions to the newer, more human possibilities.

All these forms of machine-constrained "language" contain information, but don't materially embody it (217). Drucker also finds digital letters divorced from embodied materiality; printed text retained traces of its font even if it is afterwards transformed (e.g. with scissors or paint), but digital font, she claims, does not leave traces visible to the reader: there is "no longer any necessary relation between the input form of the written message and its output" (221). Reading this fifteen years after its writing, I'm aware of the file metadata generated with each permutation of digital font, though indeed these changes are not recorded in any immediately visually perceivable form alongside the font itself, the way print keeps its history of transformations close. I am not certain, however, that we need to worry about "the vanishing trace of inscription" in our texts (230). Drucker's worry that "the many functions of history and memory that are supported and served by materiality will inevitably transform as the seamless erasure and mutation of documents becomes a matter of course" is perhaps just another affordance, neither

good nor bad, of the digital remediation of print (230); we segregate the history of out digital text in a separate compartment from the visible presentation, but it is none the less available (at least with appropriate forensic tools) and is perhaps even conveniently packaged to undergo new sorts of transformations and deformations.

Hayles, N. Katherine. “Print Is Flat, Code Is Deep: The Importance of Media-Specific Analysis”. *Poetics Toda*y 25.1 (Spring 2004): 67-90.

Hayles discusses media-specific analysis (MSA) as a technique fundamentally opposed to content essentialism (i.e. ignoring the vehicle of a text): “a mode of critical attention which recognizes that all texts are instantiated and that the nature of the medium in which they are instantiated matters" (67). MSA cannot be achieved without greater critical attention to materiality, "the interplay between a text’s physical characteristics and its signifying strategies"; Hayles emphasizes that this wording brings media-awareness into the critical process instead of presenting it as a strategy separate from content interpretation (67). By defining materiality as an "emergent property", Hayles asks the scholar to consider the textual vehicle with new, unfamiliar eyes for every text, rather than allowing ourselves preconceived definitions of different types of media; we can see the problems with relying on media definitions applied across the board for different specific instances of media in our modern difficulty readily identifying the affordances specific to that most pervasive media form, the codex (67). MSA is an important tool for critically aware book hacking; if we think of book hacking as releasing texts from the traditional constraints of print book form, how do we critically assess these works once we recognize them?

Hayles argues that media forms not be considered apart from, but in relation to one another; we must always be remediation-aware, considering how texts imitate and incorporate aspects of other media. This bibliography contains much discussion of how digital books imitate print, but considering similarities among media types means also identifying features specific to each form. Hayles provides a helpful counterpoint to Kirschenbaum's list of book affordances with a list of nine electronic hypertext features:

> They are dynamic images; they include both analogue resemblance and digital coding; they are generated through fragmentation and recombination; they have depth and operate in three dimensions; they are written in code as well as natural language; they are mutable and transformable; they are spaces to navigate; they are written and read in distributed cognitive environments; and they initiate and demand cyborg reading practices. (68)

By insisting that literature be met as "the interplay between form and medium", Hayles suggests that no text can be separated from its vehicle, thus implying that every text is to some extent a hack of a media form (thus, we might consider hacked books along a spectrum of rebellion or dissimilarity from the most frequent book attributes, rather than as hacked and non-hacked books; 69).

Kirschenbaum, Matthew. “Bookscapes: Modeling Books in Electronic Space”. Human-Computer Interaction Lab 25th Annual Symposium. May 29, 2008.

This piece argues that contrasting books with their on-screen counterparts helps us call out the specific features important to the analog form because “books on the screen are not books, they are models of books”–and a model is a system intended to be manipulated, hacked, and analyzed in order to understand what it models. Offering a nice starting point for thinking about the features of books, Kirschenbaum identifies five affordances specific to the book:

simultaneous random access and sequential ordering, volumetric (three-dimensional) storage space, finity/boundedness, the comparative possibilities offered by a layout of two facing pages, and writeability (i.e. ease with which a reader may inscribe the text with her own writing).

While this piece is quite short (it is an abstract for a symposium presentation), the invitation to alienate our habituation to how we use books is extremely useful. Kirschenbaum's basic list of affordances suggests further ways of identifying and describing how physical books function as technologies, knowledge that can help us identify what aspects of the book we are unconsciously duplicating in our attempts to inscribe digital space and rethink those features of digital books that have lost the efficacy they held when in physical form (e.g. pagination).

McGann, Jerome. "Visible and Invisible Books: Hermetic Images in N-Dimensional Space". *New Literary History* 32.2 (Spring 2001): 283-300.

McGann addresses a trend of concern over the continuing shift of information into digital forms, reminding us that our information legacy remains firmly bound to the print book, even though for our meta-books (e.g. editions, archives, criticism), "we no longer have to use books to analyze and study other books or texts" (283-284). Perceived inequalities between print and digital motivate this concern, but McGann argues against the idea that the digital is a superior platform to the print book, somehow "more complex and more powerful": "they are just tools designed to manage knowledge and information at different scalar levels" (284). While I agree with this assessment—different forms of media are non-commensurate—I disagree with McGann's assessment of just what the specific abilities of print books are. He privileges print as a platform for imagination, with the digital more fitted to information: "The history of the book medium and the development of fictional conventions within that medium have evolved an extraordinarily nuanced and flexible set of tools for the imagination" (284). I suspect this conceptualization is caused by the earliness of our explorations of the artistic possibilities of the digital; regardless, McGann's identification of electronic forms of media as more fit for "storing, retrieving, and transmitting information" might be more of an assessment of current usage than creative possibilities, as he compares the recent history of digital creative production to the history of movable type, which was first used to increase information access, with the creative work we see today developing later in the technology's history. (Indeed, McGann later acknowledges that digital just as print is always laden with meaning via its form and presentation, beyond its textual content: "In a recent essay the brilliant computer-text theorist Steven DeRose writes that 'A book is "the same" if reprinted from quarto to octavo and from Garamond 24 to Times 12 in all but a few senses'... the fifteenth-century humanist printers knew better. Those 'few senses' are never nontrivial, and in many cases-a list is too easy to develop-they carry the most profound kinds of 'content'", 299).

McGann discusses the benefits of the shift to digital platforms, focusing on those features of digital editions that cannot be replicated in print form (286). Editions of books that are print books themselves are necessarily limiting, as it takes a less restricted form of media to capture a text's discourse field. Awareness of digital-specific features that allow editors to express multiple performances of a text lead us into awareness of or ignorance not only of newer digital forms, but of the print book: "What is a literary work, what are its parts, how do they function? We assumed we knew how to answer such questions but our attempts to translate our bibliographical materials into coded instructions showed us that we did not" (287). As with Kirschenbaum's "Bookscapes" article, McGann suggests that the language of the digital provides good metaphors for comparison and discussion of affordances of both print and digital texts.

Saklofske, Jon. "NewRadial: Revisualzing the Blake Archive". *Poetess Archive Journal* 2.1 (December 2010).

In an attempt to evade what he perceives as the archive's "restrictive" mimicry of traditional book structure, Saklofske describes a reconception of the *Blake Archive*'s interface. This prototype and his associated arguments are evidence that the *Blake Archive* is only one of many possible ways of digitally representing Blake's work. Believing the current site design encouraged users to interact with the objects in "fairly traditional ways" that do not make use of the archive's digital format, he imagines a new interface, "NewRadial", that retains the *Blake Archive*'s system of juxtaposing objects while using radial rather than linear presentations. Saklofske re-imagines scholarly archives as the initial provider of data, with new interface overlays shifting our critical interfacing with that data. Although the visual appearance of the extra-textual elements of both the Blake Archive and NewRadial have notable differences, in this case it is more meaningful to consider the differences in interface, as Saklofske's goal was a new set of appearance-aided functions and not an entirely new site.

Despite an incomplete overlap between interface (with its emphasis on function) and design (with its focus on appearance and mental response), NewRadial is useful as a demonstration of the interpretive resonances of redesign: "Reading is interpretative play within the gamespace of the book and if the parameters of that gamespace change or are radically redesigned, the parameters and possibilities related to interpretative play change as well" (Saklofske). Saklofske's interest in the interpretive effects of visual presentation emphasizes the importance of the form to interpretative experience; where the official Blake Archive visually invites close inspection of individual objects, NewRadial shifts that invitation to afford the juxtaposition of sets of related material rather than single or paired objects.

---. "Remediating William Blake: Unbinding the Network Architectures of Blake's Songs". *European Romantic Review* 22:3 (2011): 381-388.

Expanding on his NewRadial prototype work (see **"NewRadial: Revisualzing the Blake Archive"**), Saklofske focuses on the "local area network architecture" in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* he attempted to mirror with his NewRadial interface idea. His focus is on conceptualizing digital Blake studies through the metaphor of the digital network, an image that brings together the networked nature of Blake's production and reception (e.g. interlinked texts, interlinked types of media, networks of patronage and pay), "the networking functions of Digital Humanities methodologies and applications", and the real digital social networks that replicate the structures of both (382).

Where his previous work focused on radiality as an interface method of displaying non-hierarchical information, here Saklofske moves to radiality as a metaphor that rejects and replaces previous critical systems within Blake studies. Traditional systems of Blake studies, he argues, are performed as branches that constrain thinking into linear "relationship[s] of interpretative inheritance and information aggregation", building out form previous thought but never bringing thinking from different points in the chronology of Blake studies into conversation on equal footing (385). Set against this linear structure, he conceives radiality as a discourse field, with an individual at the center and non-hierarchical nodes reaching outward; instead of a linear flow of information, a radial system "enables all of its nodes to communicate with all other nodes, and establishes interconnective possibilities that support anti-systematic, multi-directional and even contradictory exchanges" (385). While these re-conceptualizing of

system of Blake criticism nicely parallels Saklofske's interface work, I'm uncertain how it functions out of the abstract; radiality as he explains it seems more appropriate as an author-agnostic critical strategy than a Blake specific one.

In addition to proposing a new metaphor for our systems of critically encountering Blake's systems, the article makes the interesting suggestion that we rethink Romantic writing (particularly Blake's production and reception) against the metaphor of digital networks. He traces networks within single copies of Blake's works (i.e. among different plates in one pamphlet) as well as among different copies (i.e. because of post-production customizations, books from the same printing often differed): "poetic parallels, figurative overlaps, word/image dialogues, symbolic inconsistency, and thematic echoes and oppositions between these pages establish a decentralized, nonlinear, and rhizomatic network" (383). Though I can readily trace such a network in Blake's work, Saklofske's subsequent claim that we imagine this network as specifically a LAN (local-area network) because of its possible extension to "wider area networks of technologically-mediated criticism" muddied the overarching use of digital network as metaphor, given my initial reading that Saklofske was pointing to digital social networks as a method for describing Blake's relationship with his contemporaries (382).

The introduction of this digital metaphor of networking (whatever specific types of network it points to) necessitates viewing digital Blake work as remediation, with all the disjunction that usually arises when a text moves into a new form of media. Saklofske describes Blake's work in terms reminiscent of e-lit: "a dynamic collection of related and interdependent poems that affect and impact each other in harmonic and dissonant ways" (382). The re-conceptualizing of existing texts in terms foreign to the time of their production draws the specifics of media and the commonplaces of form into the light; Saklofske's discussion of Blake's work in estrangingly digital terms has for me highlighted to what extent editions (especially electronic editions, with their move into a different form of media) are hacks of traditional books. Editions aware of the networks of allusion within related texts (as with the *Blake Archive*) allow readers to view many copies against each other (something Blake's contemporaries could not do with Blake's work). NewRadial's idea of highlighting network pathways in Blake's work proposes to "customize one's perception of Blake in a collaborative space that preserves and accumulates traces of other critical paths", again hacking print works so that they provoke reading along new lines (387). Editions, it seems, can be viewed as a form distinct from books even as they imitate them; regardless of what hacking they employ as to adding features to the original text, editions necessarily estrange commonplaces of the text, hacking a traditional form, as when a print edition contains both its own table of contents as well as reproduces the table of contents of the text at its center.

Shillingsburg, Peter L. *From Gutenberg to Google: Electronic Representations of Literary Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

By examining the experience of readers of both print and digital platforms, Shillingsburg suggests several important questions for the editor looking to fully represent a text on a digital platform. He discusses the ways the design and platform of the print book–the format, font, negative space, price, distribution methods–fold into the totality of our reading experience: "the bibliographic elements telegraph to the reader the ways in which they should read the lexical text" (16). The visual elements of a work such as layout, font, and negative space are meaningful elements in the reception of an print text; from Shillingsburg's argument about print readers, we can extrapolate that similar elements in an online edition might produce similarly meaningful

effects on the reader. Just how these elements translate to a digital platform, though, is problematic; Shillingsburg points out that with digital facsimile editions of literary texts, digitized images may fail at truthfully representing the original bibliographic codes.

Shillingsburg discusses the collaborative nature of texts, reminding the potential editor that their production should reflect this shared production history rather than portray the work as the work of the mythic Solitary Author. In contrast to many artists' books, with most print texts the final appearance is often created by someone other than the text's author, even if the author does have some input (64). This is not a major problem if one is working with certain art editions or author-printers such as Blake; when attempting to design an edition where the visuals critically engage with the text, though, you just need to be aware when your design should reference a discourse field or collaborative authorship, rather than an individual.

From design, Shillingsburg moves on to consider how we conceptualize the copy-text behind an edition. What do we lose when we give up the idea of a “definitive” edition to end all editions of a text? Shillingsburg argues that we lose a lot of things worth losing, and gain an honesty about ignorance that makes us better editors because we can be upfront about our motives (165). Admitting that our edition is not definitive allows the editor to acknowledge her true intended audience; to attempt an averaging of multiple texts, Shillingsburg argues, fits no one (84). Shillingsburg quotes McGann in *The Textual Condition*: “The textual condition’s only immutable law is the law of change”. The text is always changing and accruing new twists and details, so the ideal platform for representing a text would be a frame dynamic enough to allow for this mutability while keeping a record of a work’s past, rather than a single tome meant to put to rest the editing of one work for all time.

Shillingsburg argues for online scholarly editions as finished but quasi-open products: readerly text with editorial sign-posts rather than a bewildering forest of information. By acknowledging that any given edition cannot be definitive, editors support their function as critical rather than pre-critical beings: “We have once again discovered that scholarly editing is not best served by editors whose main goal to efface their presence from a project, but rather by those who confidently and boldly assert their presence, demanding that readers recognize the scholarly edition as a contribution to criticism” (144). Shillingsburg's discussions of design, audience, and editorial methodology are guideposts for scholars considering transforming a print book into a digital remediation, emphasizing how honesty about the limits of our abilities can result in richer texts.

Viscomi, Joseph. “Digital Facsimiles: Reading the *William Blake Archive*”. *Computers and the Humanities* 36.1 (February 2002): 27-48.

Viscomi's article presents an editorial rational for the *Blake Archive*, with an emphasis on the technical possibilities affecting possible editorial choices when dealing with facsimiles of non-standard texts such as Blake's "printed manuscripts" (28). He offers a rationale for both the macroscopic and microscopic choices made by the *Archive*, from broad choices such as using diplomatic typographic transcriptions of Blake's text (i.e. not standardizing Blake’s punctuation choices) to choices specific to individual illustrated plates. Beyond describing the choices specific to the *Archive*'s project, Viscomi illuminates the kind of questions that might be faced by any editor dealing with a digital edition of materials best suited to facsimile presentation, imagining in effect what the a best-practice digital archive would look like not through abstract conceptualizations, but through discussion of specific technical choices (e.g. photographic choices, scanning settings, and the differences between slides and transparencies).

Viscomi's piece identifies the limitations of the digital archive platform, such as aspects of Blake’s work that are missed in digital reproduction (e.g. the screen fails performing three-dimensional details such as “whether a mark was etched on the copper or added or changed afterwards in printing or coloring the impression”, 30). At the same time, a digital platform can add features unavailable even when working directly with an original manuscript; the ability to zoom in on an image at greater than 100% magnification allows the same sort of analysis that might be conducted with a microscope, but the digital platform can also allow for visual transformations of an image without jeopardizing the original: “enhancements [of digital images]... can reveal such subtleties as a black-inked signature faded into a black wash, or, when creatively 'deformed,' as demonstrated by Jerome McGann, yield hidden structural information” (42). Of course, as with any transformation, it is important for the scholar to understand the underlying code of deformative action filters so that it is clear just what a given visual hack reveals rather than adds to the image of a manuscript. Laying out the technical perils and possibilities of hacking Blake's work into a digital presentation highlights the effects of transforming print to digital: as with any change in media form, conversion is not a simple process but one where many aspects of the print works must be thoughtfully realized through the best possible digital translation of their print terms.