

Dylan Conrad

Dr. Justus

Digital Humanities

December 14th, 2016

HACKTIVISM

When we I first started Digital Humanities, I also started to watch the hit show on USA Network Mr.Robot. Mr. Robot follows hackers, this really got my attention and really interested me. Not to long ago we went over hacktivism in class and again I was hooked. I was addicted to Anonymous and Aaron Swartz, and was truly taken back by the stuff that they do and actions they take. It got me wondering what really is hacktivism? What does it really do? Who are some famous hacktivists?

What is hacktivism? [Hacktivism](#) is the use of a computer to set a political agenda. They believe highly in free speech, freedom of information, and human rights. It was created in 1994 by the [Cult of the Deadcow](#). It was created by the member known as Omega. They believe that everyone should be entitled to information, and basically nothing should be private. In recent news during the 2016 election you saw hacktivism, when [Wikileaks](#) showed some of Hillary Clinton's deleted emails, and other things about the Clinton foundation. I wanted to look deep into famous hacktivists, that is why I have chosen to look deeply into Anonymous, Aaron Swartz, The Jester, and Deric Lostutter.

Anonymous

[Anonymous](#) collectively became increasingly associated with collaborative hacktivism on a number of issues internationally.. They run their website very loose, and decentralized material. Anonymous was founded in 2013, in their early form the performed hacks, or pranks on The Church of Scientology. “[Individuals](#) claiming to align themselves with Anonymous undertook protests and other actions (including direct action) in retaliation against copyright-focused campaigns by motion picture and recording industry trade associations. Later targets of Anonymous hacktivism included government agencies of the U.S., Israel, Tunisia, Uganda, and other countries.”

After the hack of Scientology, Anonymous really took off. They went up against child pornography. They hacked a child porn website called Lolita City, once they hacked this website, they released thousands of user names and emails of the users that were subscribed to this website. In 2013 they ran an operation ferguson hack after the fatal shooting of Michael Brown. They did something similar in Cleveland with a 12 year old African American boy was shot to death by police. They hacked the police station and released the name of the officer and his home address. Anonymous went back to work after the ISIS attacks in Paris, declaring war on ISIS. In about a week after declaring war on ISIS, Anonymous had shut down nearly 20,000 pro ISIS Twitter accounts.

If anyone has ever seen the movie V for Vendetta, they know the famous mask that V wears. This is also the mask of Anonymous. This mask is the Guy Fawkes. Guy Fawkes was “a member of the [Gunpowder Plot](#), was arrested while guarding explosives the plotters had placed beneath the [House of Lords](#). Celebrating the fact that [King James I](#) had survived the attempt on his life, people lit bonfires around London, and months later the introduction of the [Observance of 5th November Act](#) enforced an annual public day of thanksgiving for the plot's failure.” Guy Fawkes was really a hacktivist, and in not terms of the internet, but in terms of doing what was right, and this is why Anonymous wears the Guy Fawkes mask.

Now after seeing what Anonymous has done in my opinion they are heros. They do things that us the American people need. They show us things, that others are refusing to show us. It is because of Anonymous that we are the greatest country in the world, because we have groups who are not afraid to show us what we need to see.

Aaron Swartz

[Aaron Swartz](#) was a software developer, and a famous internet hacktivist who graduated from The University of Stamford. Swartz is by far the most famous hacktivist that their is. He is most famously known for breaking into MIT, and connecting his laptop to their server, and making thousands of academic journals available to the public. Swartz was arrested, he was given a 1 million dollar fine and 35 years in prison, for

making academic journal articles available to the public. Swartz tragically committed suicide while under federal indictment, but his legacy lives on. His legacy lives on through his works rather it be liberating academic journals, or coming up with [Reddit](#), which is a social news aggregation, web content rating, and discussion website. One thing is for certain this hacktivist will live on forever and ever in the heart of the internet, this is why he is known as the [internet's own boy](#). Which is a documentary based film on the life and the work of Aaron Swartz.

The Jester

[The Jester](#) to me is a very interesting person. I have to say person because we do not know if it is a man or a women, know one knows who The Jester is. Is he the clown faced psychopath chasing around Batman in Gotham City? No exactly, The Jester is an online hacker, who claims to be responsible for attack on [WikiLeaks](#),^[5] [4chan](#),^[6] [Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad](#). So where did this Jester character come from? He first appeared on Twitter, when he announced that he was going to attack the Taliban website in 2010. In reading the article on Wikipedia it states that The Jester was a former military member that has served in Afghanistan. According to Wikipedia "The Jester gave a live chat interview to a class of Computer Science students at the [University of Southern Maine](#) where he confirmed his military service and stated he served four operational tours." The Jester has claimed to have hacked

multiple things. One major hack he takes responsibility for is the hack of Wikileaks, claiming that they were endangering United States Troop. In 2013 The Jester claimed to hack basically everywhere that said they would give Edward Snowden peace. Snowden told the people that the NSA was spying on Americans. One big thing The Jester has done is known as the QR code hack, a QR code is simply just a bar code. Well one day The Jester changed his Twitter Avi which is just his profile picture to just simply a bad code. People scanned this because QR codes are scannable. "When anyone scanned the original QR code using an iPhone or Android device, their device would silently make a [TCP](#) shell connection back to my remote server," The Jester wrote. "Like a phone call, if you like." Once you are connected to his server, he ran a check of your twitter to see if you were affiliated with Anonymous, LulzSec, AnitSec, and terrorist groups. If you were not you were ignored, but if you were this gave him access to your twitter, and he spilled information on everyone. This is the hacker The Jester.

Deric Lostutter

In 2012, there was a rape that occurred in [Steubenville Ohio](#). The victim was a 16 year old highschool girl, and the accused were two high school football players. In a very interesting rape case that involved the indictment of two coaches, an elementary school principal, and a school superintendent. A case that was not seeing any progress whatsoever. [Anonymous](#) to the rescue, literally anonymous hacked twitter, facebook,

and text messages that showed the truth about what really happened. For the first time there was a face behind anonymous and that was Deric Lostutter, who for giving people the truth is now facing more prison time than those who committed the rape, kind of mess up right?

This rape case is not the only thing that Deric Lostutter has done for Anonymous. He has also shut down revenge porn kings Hunter Moore's website for a friend. Deric has a friend whose ex boyfriend posted a naked picture of her on Moore's website. Lostutter gave him the opportunity to shut down the website, and Moore said back to "try it". Lostutter tried it and he did it, shutting down the revenge porn website.

To conclude, throughout my research I have earned a great deal of respect for groups like Anonymous, and hacktivists like Lostutter, and Swartz. I am happy that people exist in this world like this group and these people, it almost makes you feel safe to know that people can and excuse my language but cut through the everyday bull shit that goes on in this world. The world is a better place with Hacktivists.