providing such a panoramic view of the practice of teaching to distance learners, Niedorf must discuss many of these topics only lightly. I was often left wishing that Niedorf would offer more than a cursory analysis and go deeper into the subject matter. For that reason, I think the book would be of greatest use to those who are brand-new to the practice of teaching distance students. They should be able to get an overarching view of what the process of preparing for a class is like and how to manage the class once it is underway.—*Scott Rice, Appalachian State University*.

Thomas H.P. Gould. *Do We Still Need Peer Review*? Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2013. 175p. paperback, alk. paper, $60 (ISBN: 9780810885745). LC 2012-021731.

Peer review is used extensively in many professional fields including most academic disciplines, scientific and medical research, and even in computer software development. Peer review uses independent and, in many cases, anonymous reviewers in an attempt to obtain an unbiased evaluation of a work or performance by others in the same field or profession. A work or performance that has undergone the peer review process is considered to have met the gold standard of quality.

The role of the peer review process in scholarly communications is to foster research and intellectual progress by either reaffirming existing theories or by supporting new ideas that are built on commonly accepted methodologies and reasoning. However, new and emerging Internet technologies are not only changing the way that people interact, but also how scholars can communicate their theories and ideas using more direct routes to publication. Although the use of the Internet can expedite scholarly communications, it can also bypass the traditional formal publication and, therefore, the peer review process.

The ability of the peer review system to adapt to the changing technological landscape is addressed in *Do We Still Need Peer Review?* by Thomas H.P. Gould. Gould is an associate professor of Mass Communications in the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications, Kansas State University. This book would be of interest to academics interested in the evolution of the peer review process in the publication of scholarly communications.

In this book, Gould provides an argument for change in the peer review system in the face of a technological environment. Gould argues that, without an immediate effort by scholars to institute reform, the future of peer review is uncertain. Gould argues that, as new technology provides authors with a direct, unsupervised route to publication, the peer review situation is nearing a tipping point, beyond which the nature of academic research will be profoundly altered. Gould proposes that, rather than tossing out peer review altogether, the process can be saved and made stronger.

The book begins by outlining and examining the peer review process as it currently exists by breaking it down into four steps. The process begins with the researcher coming up with a topic, moves on to the preparation of the manuscript, submission to the editor, the manuscript being sent to reviewers, then finally the comments and revision process. Gould discusses many criticisms of the current peer review system such as gender bias, exposes their research to possible data theft, and reviewers being more critical of works that oppose their personal viewpoints. While the various criticisms and faults of the peer review system are discussed throughout the book, the author does not use the book as a soapbox. He supports such criticisms by providing evidence. For example, he pays particular attention to the outcomes of the Peters and Ceci study that suggested that article rejection rate was not related to the quality of the articles but instead was related to author standing, the author's institution, peer bias, and poor performance by the reviewers.

Several chapters are dedicated to providing a history of peer review, detailing

its earliest use by kings and the church to evaluate and lock down works of freethinkers of the Middle Ages to protect society, both physically and spiritually, from danger. It then progresses from the rise of the university, through the development of scientific method and academic peer review, to the development of the anonymous, double-blind peer review process. The history of peer review is very well researched by providing an evolutionary perspective of the peer review process. However, the discussion does take up nearly half the book. The argument for change that the book subtitle suggests doesn't really begin until chapter 5.

Gould highlights a multitude of solutions that have been discussed elsewhere, including the need for strong editors, increased communication between the editor and author, having reviewers publicly sign their opinions, and an open publishing model that relies on public comments and the number of citations to assess the value of a work. A solution Gould suggests is a 6-step, completely blind review model that involves a review of the reviews to help score the value of particular referees. It took a couple of reads to conceptualize what the publishing workflow would actually look like. The solution also relies upon a not-yet-developed software package.

The author does not propose a single peer review model as a solution; instead, he presents a host of models and discusses the pros and cons of each. One such model is the editor-as-sole-reviewer in which the editor is a distinguished expert in the field. Another model involves improving relationships between scholars and the university library's "searchologists" to help identify appropriate databases and search terms. A blended model is then presented where the editor works within the library and then provides a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each of the 3 models. Additional models involving collaboration between publishers and associations as well as academic associations and academic libraries are presented.

The potential roles for libraries as key players in both the peer review and the publishing processes demonstrate Gould's understanding and respect for librarian skill sets. While it is refreshing when a nonlibrarian articulates such understanding, the author used a confusing library reference. It took a while before realizing the use of the term *e*-reserves referred to institutional repositories—not the traditional library service that makes course-related reading materials available to students in electronic format. The library audience would have remained confused had the author failed to mention 'd-space' at the first use of *e*-reserves so the reader could make the connection. Still, the library and information science professional is likely to mentally replace "*e*-reserves" with "institutional repositories" at every instance of the term.

In the end, the question presented and answered in the book is not so much if peer review is needed. Instead, it discusses how emerging technologies have created opportunities for creating new publishing models that can "make peer review more robust, reliable and useful."

As Gould points out, new ideas sometimes require the death of those who guard the gates before they can even be evaluated by the corpus of the academia. This Keuhnian perspective also applies to the peer review system. Enough significant anomalies have accrued against the current peer review paradigm, so much so that new ideas, including many that Gould presents, are being tried. Although a new peer review paradigm is still in its formative stages, what we are experiencing—and the Gould book represents—is the start of the intellectual battle placed between the followers of the various emerging peer review paradigms and the holdouts of the traditional peer review process.

Regardless of which paradigm emerges, one thing seems certain: the breakup of the marriage between peer review structure and the for-profit scholarly journal model.—*Eric Schnell, The Ohio State University.*