Aliases and Links

Objectives:

At the end of this episode, I will be able to:

1. Create and modify file system aliases in macOS.
2. Describe and create UNIX-style hard links and symbolic links.

> Additional resources used during the episode can be obtained using the download link on the overview episode.

- Aliases

  - Aliases are pointers that indicate the location of a file
  - Consume less space than a second copy of the file

    - Links are around 300Kb
    - Can be larger than a text document

  - Created by:

    - `Option-Click` on a file and choose `Make Alias`
    - `Command-L`

  - DEMO: Creating an alias
  - Will continue to point to the original even if it has been renamed or moved.
  - Aliases are not recognized by the file system
  - DEMO: Moving the source file

- UNIX-style Links

  - The BSD Unix system has native support for links
  - Mac GUI will follow them, but not create them
  - Two types

    1. Symbolic Links
    2. Hard Links

- Symbolic Links

  - Filesystem pointer to another file
  - Does not track the file
  - Moving the original breaks the symlink
  - `ln -s <target> <link>`
  - `ln -s /Volumes/USB\ HD /Users/donpezet/Documents/USB\ HD`

- Hard Links

  - An additional filesystem entry that points to existing data
  - Will survive the original being renamed/moved
  - Not typically used with directories
  - `ln <target> <link>`
  - `ln ~/Documents/file.txt ~/Desktop/file.txt`