What Is DH?

Digital Humanities?

When starting off, I had no idea what Digital humanities entailed. I knew there would some working with computers, but didn't realize how much computer work would be needed. I am far from a computer literate person, so, this is quite the struggle for me. When finding out just how many programs I needed for this class, I was confused as to why. I still didn't quite understand what Digital Humanities is.

Discovering DH

Upon reading required texts, I finally had a definition for Digital Humanities. In an article by Kirschenbaum, *What Is Digital Humanities and What is it Doing in English Departments*, this is the definition that was given: > "The digital humanities, also known as humanities computing, is a field of study, research, teaching, and invention concerned with the intersection of computing and the disciplines of the humanities." [@kirschenbaum2010]

What Does That Mean?

For starters, you know that there is the word 'computing' in the definition, meaning there is involvement of computers and electronics. So, if you take the rest of the definition, I believe that would mean that in Digital Humanities you'll be researching and analyzing in electronic form. However, with the few weeks that I've had in class it seems to be more than that. There is a lot of technological things going on in Digital Humanities. We've learned how to use different programs in order to make documents and a different way of writing. Meaning Microsoft Word has been taking out of this class and replaced by plan text docs that are written with specific characters that will translate into different things when converted into different documents. After reading the Kirschenbaum article, I still didn't quite understand what exactly DH was. I understand that it's complicated, and it involves technology and research, but I still didn't quite grasp it.

Coming to an Understanding

You would think that having a solid definition, and understanding that definition would then allow you to understand the topic under consideration, it didn't. It caused me more confusion. Until, I read another article by Mark Sample called, *The Digital Humanities is not About Building, It's About Sharing.* In the article Sample states, >"The heart of the digital humanities is not the production

of knowledge; it's the *reproduction* of knowledge." [@Sample2011] That quote solidified everything to me. Digital Humanities was about changing the way that knowledge is presented. It's changing the way that people think about presenting the knowledge that they've gathered. Three weeks ago I never would have thought I'd be writing in Markdown, making rtf files in pandoc, or trying to figure out how to compile an ebook.

Coming to an End

Digital Humanities is about using technology to research and teach and present things in an electronic form. It challenges the typical way of thinking when it comes to technologically presenting information. There is more than just Microsoft Word out there.