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**Digital vs Analogue Textual Scholarship**

G. Thomas Tanselle has written that printed and digital editions are not ontologically different ,[[1]](#footnote-1) a statement that still generates uneasiness among professional digital humanists aiming to bring the humanities into a new era in which openness and democratization are at the forefront of the conversation. In contrast, commentators such as Ray Siemens and Elena Pierazzo,[[2]](#footnote-2) emphasize that editing has fundamentally changed in the digital age and declare that their work in Digital Humanities is acting to “revolutionize” editing.

The unprecedented success of crowdsourcing transcription projects, such as Transcribe Bentham, and massive digitization enterprises, like Trove (National Library of Australia), which rely on the general public to correct and tag both text and images, have been both a pleasant surprise and a challenge. These examples make clear that some aspects of our work as textual critics have radically changed. However, it is not clear that all aspects of textual critical and editorial work have been affected to the same degree.

Any attempts to develop theoretical models for editions should arise from within the philosophical framework of the discipline in question, which means, in this case, from an ample and general knowledge and understanding of textual scholarship. When necessary, models can (and should) be modified to fit the developments of the field. But such developments should mainly arise from issues within the discipline, rather than respond to the limitations or possibilities of the tools of tools developed in adjacent fields, as is the case of Digital Humanities.

In this paper, I will explore current practices to build a catalogue of current techniques. I propose to compare those with methodologies used in the past with the aim of assessing the degree of difference between them. For this, I will draw from my own experience with digital editions and textual criticism but also from work done by others in the field.

1. G. Thomas Tanselle, “Foreword” in *Electronic Textual Editing*, Burnard, O’Brien O’Keeffe, Unsworth, eds., 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Elena Pierazzo, *Digital Scholarly Editing*, Ashgate, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)