My expectations of this book were that there would be a great of debate about the way in which Digital Humanities might differ from Digital Sciences and academic disciplines overall. This however this is woven into the arguments in the text rather than being treated as a subject by itself. One particular
topic which is touched upon is whether text mining of big data, the bits and bytes of the digital world, has possibly reduced digital humanities to a form of corpora. Hence we can count words, and patterns of words but this rigid logic of algorithms might be somewhat unsuited to the study of the arts.

This weighty tome of over 570 pages could have felt more daunting had it not been divided into over fifty chapters, covering many different angles on the subject (widely abbreviated to DH within the text). As a librarian I was a little concerned about the lack of an index, although the diverse nature of many chapters may have made this an eclectic list. The chapter and part headings listed give a good overall impression about what is contained within.

There are parts of the book dedicated to ‘Practices’ and ‘Methods’ although the boundary between these two topics is understandably somewhat blurred. The starting point for many chapters include here is about whether the pedagogy of DH has lagged behind much of the fine work which has been undertaken. This issue is first addressed in the introduction to the book, but taken up again many times in subsequent pages. Learning from digital projects which have not worked is referred to at one point as ‘the success of failure’.

For someone less interested in the technicalities of DH, and more concerned with an overall picture, it was encouraging to read the chapter by Miriam Posner ‘Here and there: Creating DH Community’ which was such a digestible and practical summary of how to approach a digital humanities project. This chapter has resonances throughout, and also includes an interesting meditation on whether digital projects are better carried out within the library or in the faculty. Although librarians can provide impetus and enthusiasm for projects, it is vital that outreach to academics and departments is carried out if projects are to succeed. This argument is called poignantly ‘Nobody comes to workshops’.

The ‘big tent’ of digital humanities is a phrase used several times in the volume, and it would have been good to have a chapter, or possibly even a full part to give an overview of what might be included under this large canvass. Spread throughout the work are references to MOOC’s (massive online open-access courses), sonic dictionaries, 3D modelling of historical artefacts. These are three diverse applications of digital possibilities and it would have been interesting to hear about the pedagogy and practical challenges associated with each.

The amount which can be learnt from history in this text is one of the major themes. Thus, despite the temptation to assume that all academic contact these days goes on electronically, there is a good deal of discussion about what constitutes an academic community (particularly evident in Chapter 22). Debate like this will surely improve pedagogic principles in future digital projects. Moreover the way in which this book incorporated illustrations of old library collections, and even card catalogues (courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society) lent a homely yet strangely relevant feel to the whole work.