English 2273 - Winter 2005
Hypermedia Project
# Hypertext Edition with Audio
Due: Monday, January 31

Your hypermedia project will be based on a poem by a sixteenth-century author. Ordinarily, you will pick a poem from the course anthology, *The New Oxford Book of Sixteenth-Century Verse*.[1] Choose your poem carefully. You will work on and around it for the entire term. Once you have chosen a poem, you will transcribe it onto your computer where you will re-constitute it as a hypertext edition.

In addition to re-writing the poem as a hypertext, you will record yourself reading it aloud and post that recording so that a reader of your project can play back your reading of the poem. For this aspect of your project you will be graded on inflection, pronunciation, and fluidity. You will need to become very familiar with the poem in order to decide what words to emphasize, where to end the aural sense of a given passage, etc. A good poetry reading is not one wherein the auditor can automatically hear each line ending.

Make your hypertext edition as attractive and as readable as possible. Choose a font that is easy to read, and a background that does not obscure the text. Ideally, you will find or create a background that is suggestive of the poem's theme. Failing that, try to find or create a background that suggests the poem's significance *to you*,[2] or that conjures the poem's author, or that speaks to the poem's geographical or historical place.

The nature of the hyperlinks you create for your poem will vary according to what you think will help a reader understand the poem in the way in which you want her to understand it. In other words, the hypertext edition, in addition to re-producing the poem *qua* poem, is itself a form of argument in which you, as reader-interpreter-writer, will try to convince a reader to share your understanding of the poem. What words have more than one meaning? What lines point both forward and backward in the poem? What images are conjured? What allusions are made to other literary works? To events or people either historical or fictional? What happens to the meaning of a line when the pronunciation of a word is modified, or when the emphasis is shifted from one place to another? Do you want to call your reader's attention to any subtleties of language such as irony, synecdoche, metonymy, or metaphor? Once you get started, you may find yourself compelled to make every word in the poem a hyperlink. This is, in itself, neither good nor bad. But the ultimate effect will be either good or bad, perhaps overwhelming,

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[1] In exceptional circumstances you may be given permission to work on a sixteenth-century English poem not reproduced in the course text, but such permission will be granted only grudgingly.

[2] You may find yourself unable to produce such a background early in the term. The poem's significance to you may only appear later, after you have read what others have to say about it, studied its author, and written an essay about it. In such a case, you can certainly change the background at that time. Alternatively, you may choose your poem based on what it signifies to you, and so this option may seem particularly attractive to you from very early in the term.

perhaps confusing, perhaps perfectly convincing. I know of no way to determine the outcome short of producing it. The most attractive part of reading poetry in a hypertextual environment is the easiness of revision. If, upon producing a hypertext, you find it overwhelming, you can easily scale back by deleting links, or combining the links from individual words into links that lead the reader from phrases, lines, or blocks of text to longer, more fluidly integrated paragraphs of commentary on the poem, the metaphor, the phrase, etc.

You will be graded on the final version of your hypertext edition, so you should feel free to improve it as the term progresses, and your familiarity with your poem and its context increases. However, you are required to have an early draft of your hypertext edition posted by no later than Monday, January 31. Failure to post by that date will result in a reduction of 50% of the grade awarded for your hypertext edition (*nb*: not the entire hypermedia project).