Geoffrey M. Rockwell  
Togo Salmon 309A  
grockwel@mcmaster.ca  
URL: http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~hc-courses/ihchome.htm

McMaster University
Evaluate a hypermedia work

- How would you evaluate a hypermedia work?
- What criteria would you use?
Possible Criteria

• Usability - Is it easy to use?
• Audience - Is it appropriate for its audience?
• Accuracy - Is the content appropriate and accurate?
• Multimedia Integration - Are the different media used appropriately and well integrated?
• Hypertextuality - Is the hypertext design appropriate to the content?
• Interactivity - Is it interactive? Would it be better on paper?
What is Hypertext?

Well, by “hypertext” I mean non-sequential writing--text that branches and allows choices to the reader, best read at an interactive screen.

As popularly conceived, this is a series of text chunks connected by links which of the reader different pathways.

(Nelson, Literary Machines, p. 0/2)
Nodes and Links

Entry Point

Path

Node 1

Node 2

Node 3

Node 4

Node 5

Node 6

Link

Bidirectional Link

Link

Link
Anchors and Links

Node

This is an anchor.

Anchor  Link (Type and Direction)  Destination (Anchor)

Link with graphical anchor

Destination

Destination
Some Proto-Hypertexts

• Encyclopedia - "See also".
• Library - Footnotes.
• Literary Allusions and References.
• Manuscripts and Marginal Glosses.
# Text and Hypertext

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Hypertext</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sequential</td>
<td>Non-sequential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Browse or Navigate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text and Images</td>
<td>Text, Images, Audio, Video, and Interactive Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to carry and use</td>
<td>Needs expensive computer and takes time to install, launch, and use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be read in bed</td>
<td>Usually browsed at a multimedia station</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1945, Vannevar Bush

- 1945 - “As We May Think” article in the *Atlantic Monthly*
1965, Ted Nelson and Xanadu

THIS BOOK DESCRIBES THE LEGENDARY AND DARING PROJECT XANADU, AN INITIATIVE TOWARD AN INSTANTANEOUS ELECTRONIC LITERATURE; the most audacious and specific plan for knowledge, freedom and a better world yet to come out of computerdom; the original (and perhaps the ultimate) HYPERTEXT SYSTEM.

(Nelson, Literary Machines, Cover)
First Systems

- 1967/8 - Hypertext Editing System and FRESS. Andy van Dam, Brown University
- 1978 - Aspen Movie Map. Andy Lippman, MIT
- 1985 - Intermedia.
Hypertext (media) Comes of Age

- 1993 - Hypermedia Encyclopedias. Print encyclopedias are surpassed in sales by hypermedia ones.
- 1995 - Netscape. Netscape Corp is traded on the stock market.
Designing a Hypertext

- When would you decide to use hypermedia for a work over print technology?
- How would you go about designing a hypermedia work?
- How would you make sure your readers are not lost in your hypermedia work?
- What sort of people would you need in a team?
Hypertext and Interactivity

- Hypertext is one form of interactivity
  - The most common on the Web
  - Home Pages, Tables of Content, Navigation Bars, Indexes, Site Maps, Associative Links,
  - Image Maps

- What are some other types?
  - Searching (Google)
  - Visualization (Video, Virtual Spaces)
  - Interactive Games and Toys
Design of the Whole - Audience

What is the point of this work?
Who is your audience?
Why will they bother?

My Hypertext

How will they interact with it?
Hypertext Topography

Branching

Home Page

Page 1 → Page 2 → Page 3

Linear

Home Page → Page 1 → Page 2 → Page 3

Axial

Annotation ← Page 1

Page 2 ← Annotation

Page 3 ← Annotation
Page Structure

- Where am I?
  - Identification
  - Banner
  - Table of Contents

- What can I do here?
  - Page Abstract
  - Content
  - Internal Associations

- Where can I go?
  - Landmark Links
  - Toolbar
Tips

- Have a clear titling scheme so that the reader knows where they are.
- Keep the site fairly flat - don’t dice your content into so many layers of pages that the reader gets lost.
- Be consistent - graphically and hypertextually.
- Have a common toolbar at the bottom of every page.
- Have a credits page.
- Have a signature at the bottom of each page.
End