



The *Lyrical Ballads*

Stephen Miller

AAC / ÖAW

Texts & Files SS 2006

Universität Wien



Revision

- “Wordsworthian revision sustains the illusion of mastery but steadily postpones that achievement
Revision is endlessly open, not simply because any field of vision is open to numerous, potentially infinite interpretations and organizations , but because each view discovers new motions, changes, and interchanges.”



Versioning

- Editing in the traditional sense gives way to what has been called "versioning" in which textuality comes to be represented more as a series of snapshots rather than a single, composite portrait.
- The result is a "genetic" edition which documents the historical development of the work, but which takes no single text as its standard.



“Dynamic Collation”

- Replacing the static footnote with active comparison
- David Greetham:
 - “dismembering the scholarly apparatus” will be a consequence of the transition to the new electronic medium
- “Variant Map”



“Variant Map”

- “Rather than footnotes which distract attention from a definitive text, the variant map is an abstraction of the poem which does not privilege one version of the text over another and that piques the reader's curiosity by means of gaps in the text to pursue the significance of revisions made in successive versions. Together with its links to the four display windows, the variant map makes possible a dynamic collation of variant texts that cannot be achieved in print.”



Key Aims of the *Lyrical Ballads* project

1. The complex interaction between authors, publishers, and printers that brought it into being and
2. The multiplicity of versions of the collection that readers had available to them in the early nineteenth century.



Conclusion

- “Because this new medium reinscribes textual stability as a series of moments in a lengthy creative process, the dimension of time must somehow be added to those of space. In our project, it is hoped that by adding motion to comparative views, hypertext will enable us to represent this fourth dimension in a way readers will find comprehensible. If electronic texts are to justify themselves, they must move beyond the three-dimensional space of the book. It is not enough to produce texts that are indexed and searchable; like the Aldine editions of old, electronic texts must establish their own unique conventions and develop easily-understood forms of presentation that distinguish them from what went before. The new medium should neither replace nor reproduce the book, but must strive to do things books could never accomplish.”