Dr. Robert Gunn
Spring 2021

Extra Credit Opportunity: Poetry Memorization and Recitation

N.b. This extra credit opportunity is available only to people who have not already taken advantage of one of the two other available extra credit opportunities; this, like the other two, is worth a maximum of 5 points.

For this extra credit opportunity, you need to memorize at least 20 lines, or 200 words (whichever is fewer), of American poetry written prior to 1900, record yourself reciting it with your computer camera, and then upload the video to this discussion forum so that others in our class can admire your achievement. You also need to write a brief (1-2 page) reflection on the process of memorization in which you do the following:

1) Explain why you chose the poem (or poems) you chose to memorize and recite;
2) Describe how you went about the work of memorization;
3) Describe how you practiced recitation, including what decisions you may have made about inflection, cadence, and pacing;
4) Reflect briefly on how you think about the experience, and how it changes the way you think about your chosen poem(s) (or, more broadly, about early American poetry, which was often memorized for recitation).

A few tips. First, you can choose a single poem that is at least 20 lines, or 200 words. Or you could choose to memorize multiple poems that add up to the necessary length. Or, you can choose to memorize the first 200 words of a longer poem. The first gorgeous sentence of Walt Whitman's "Out of the Cradle, Endlessly Rocking" (1863), for example, is 23 lines and 203 words. You are welcome to use whatever video-making software you are comfortable with. I will point out, though, that Blackboard is equipped with a video-making and uploading platform called Yuja. It is enabled as a tool for our course, is very simple to use, and it works great. If you are unfamiliar with it, here is a Yuja tutorial page:

https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/bb_tool_vmsstudent.html

The breakdown of points offered is as follows: **five points** will be awarded for assignments graded at an A-minus or above; **three points** will be awarded for assignments graded in the B-minus to B-plus range; and **one point** will be awarded for assignments graded in the C-minus to C-plus range. **No points** will be awarded for efforts that fail to meet the standard of a C-minus.

This assignment, should you wish to pursue it, will be due on Blackboard on Monday, May 19, 2021, by 12:00 noon