Anna Kroon
Class of 2019
English
Digital Editions of *Valentine and Orson*
Mentor: Mary Isbell, Ph.D.

My project began with a research statement more than a question. I wanted to research, transcribe, encode, and contextualize a digital archive of early children's literature as well as create my own metadata tags for themes and reading level. After becoming interested in a particular story I discovered, I narrowed my scope from early children's literature as a whole to a specific story. Thus my research focused on finding as many different versions of this story, *Valentine and Orson,* as I could, curating a cross-section of my findings, transcribing and encoding the texts, and preparing them for presentation online. A key scholar that guided my understanding of children's literature was Seth Lerer, who argues in his book *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter* that as long as there have been children there has been children's literature. Others such as Perry Nodelman argue that children's literature did not truly start until there were pleasure-reading books specifically written and published for them in the early 18th century. I tend to agree with Lerer as children have always enjoyed literature even if they were not the intended audience. There is limited scholarly discussion of *Valentine and Orson* because some scholars find the story dull (Darton). However Arthur Dickson wrote extensively on the story's origins and connections to other stories. He argues that *Valentin et Orson*, published in France in 1468, is connected to a Nordic version called *Valentin und Namlos* as both share many common elements (Dickson).

After secondary research, I began searching libraries and special collections for physical copies or digitized page images of the story in any form I could access. Once I had selected the texts, I began the process of creating the digital editions. This process included transcribing the written text while simultaneously encoding it with the eXtensible Mark-up Language (XML) following the Text Encoding Initiative's P5 Guidelines. Because every tag in the TEI is not applicable, I created project-specific guidelines to document decisions I made about how to represent the artifacts. When this process was complete, I corrected the texts with another person reading each character from the original page image. I uploaded the corrected texts to the TEI Archiving, Publishing, and Accessing Service (TAPAS) platform for display and use online. Finally, I made edits to the texts as they were uploaded to ensure uniformity of style.

The results of my project include 5 fully marked-up and published editions of *Valentine and Orson* on the TAPAS platform. Through my primary source research I found 35 different editions of *Valentine and Orson* and continue to find more as I discover more libraries and special collections. In these editions I saw three distinct styles of literature: picture book/ children's book, chapbook, and novel/ long form. Therefore, for my five transcribed editions, I chose two picture books, one chapbook, and two long-form books. I plan on continuing my work with this story in my Honors thesis. I would like to look at the story structure changes throughout the many editions of the story and see how this could be represented through descriptive mark-up. I am interested in publishing a selection of these editions in a peer-reviewed journal.

Works Cited

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