

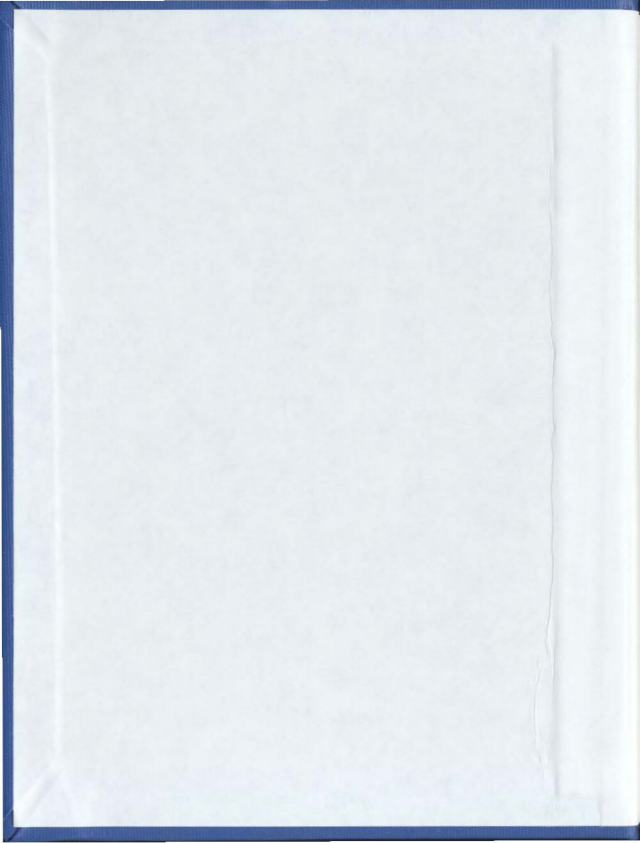
KEEPING OUT THE SHADOWS:  
OVERREADING L.M. MONTGOMERY'S NOVELS  
THROUGH HER JOURNALS

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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KELI JO T. HEALEY







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**OVERREADING**

**L.M. MONTGOMERY'S NOVELS**

**THROUGH HER JOURNALS**

**BY**

**KELI JO T. HEALEY**

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**in partial fulfilment of the requirements**

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## ABSTRACT

The individual who tries to separate Lucy Maud Montgomery's novels from one another or who attempts to study her journals as distinct from her novels soon experiences frustration. Montgomery's writings are interwoven in a pattern so intricate they may never be completely untangled. A study of her work therefore requires a flexible approach to the concept of literary genres. Because each of Montgomery's works are so intricately interrelated, every text responds to another text.

In recent years, scholars have approached Montgomery's writings with renewed interest, as access to her published journals now invites intertextual readings of her work. The journals enable readers to identify the personal and political life conditions that shape Montgomery's fiction. Once the connections between her fiction and nonfiction are established, it becomes possible to discern important connections among Montgomery's novels. This thesis will show that because Montgomery's fiction is rooted in the reality of her journals, each of her novels inevitably becomes a response to other novels as well.

The stories of her heroines Anne Shirley and Emily Byrd Starr are closely connected to one another. The form and content of the Emily of New Moon series speaks directly to that of the Anne of Green Gables series. Our reading of Emily's story depends upon how we read Anne's story. Because Montgomery writes herself into her fiction, it follows that the part of her personality and life story that is closest to Anne's will enter Emily's tale as well. In Emily's story, Montgomery explores her own experiences of writing her first novel, Anne of Green Gables, and of rewriting her journals. The author is present in each of her novels depicting the characters of Anne and Emily,

and the echoes of Anne's story can be traced through Emily's narrative when a direct link is established between the novels and the journals.

To make such connections, the principles of overreading will be applied to the Anne of Green Gables series and to the Emily of New Moon series. The principles of this theory allow the reader to focus on the conditions that influence the writer during the creation of a text. The thesis is divided into three sections. Chapter One provides an intertextual introduction to Montgomery's journals and novels. Chapter Two focuses on the Anne series, and explores how the writing of Anne of Green Gables becomes a therapeutic process for Montgomery. The character of Anne, as she appears throughout the series, will be studied as an emblem of the female artist who is and is not able to use her own voice. In Chapter Three, the Emily of New Moon trilogy will be overread on two levels. First, it will present Emily as an emblem of the female writer in a society that imposes limitations on the artist and her art. Second, it will demonstrate that the form and content of the Anne series is closely connected to that of the Emily series. This chapter argues that in the Emily series, Montgomery traces her own creation of Anne of Green Gables through Emily's acts of writing, and depicts the rewriting of her own journals through Emily's acts of revision. Montgomery's journals will be used to decipher the autobiographical context of the novels in the Anne of Green Gables series and Emily of New Moon series.

Nonfiction and fiction blend and blur in Anne of Green Gables and Emily of New Moon. Montgomery's journals from the 1890's are crucial to understanding the creative process underlying the stories of both Anne and Emily, for she takes life experiences recorded in her journals and incorporates them into each story. Her journals, wherein she records the events that shape her life, enable her to impose order on her fiction. In turn, her fiction and her journals collectively impose

order on her life. This need to write and analyze life experiences leads to the creation of such characters as Anne Shirley and Emily Byrd Starr. Applying the principles of overreading to the Anne of Green Gables series and to the Emily of New Moon series uncovers the autobiographical, the political, and the personal elements in each work and focuses on the function of the form and content in the novels comprising the stories of both heroines.

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## ABBREVIATION SYSTEM

In-text abbreviations have been used for the most frequently quoted works. These abbreviations are followed by a reference to the page of the edition of the work in which the citation is found. Following is a list of abbreviations which have been used:

AGG	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>
AA	<i>Anne of Avonlea</i>
AI	<i>Anne of the Island</i>
AHD	<i>Anne's House of Dreams</i>
RV	<i>Rainbow Valley</i>
AIIn	<i>Anne of Ingleside</i>
RI	<i>Rilla of Ingleside</i>
ENM	<i>Emily of New Moon</i>
EC	<i>Emily Climbs</i>
EQ	<i>Emily's Quest</i>
SJ	<i>Selected Journals</i>
AP	<i>The Alpine Path</i>

## CHAPTER ONE:

### **'Where Montgomery, Anne and Emily Meet': An Intertextual Introduction to the Writings of Lucy Maud Montgomery**

When Lucy Maud Montgomery writes her novel, A Tangled Web (1931), she chooses a title befitting not just one of her novels, but her entire life and writing career as well. The individual who tries to separate Montgomery's novels from one another or who attempts to study her journals as distinct from her novels will soon experience frustration. This is because all of Montgomery writings -- the poetry, short stories, novels, autobiographical accounts, letters, journals -- are interwoven in a pattern so intricate they may never be completely untangled. A close examination of her work requires that the concept of literary genres be approached in a fairly flexible manner. This is because as we enter each text, we quickly realize that each of her works is finely interrelated and every text responds to another text.

In a journal entry from 1900, Montgomery writes that the true test of a classic work of literature is that it "must please every age, from childhood to gray hairs" (*SJF*: 253). Five years before she writes Anne of Green Gables, she isolates the basis of public response to her work: its appeal to both children and adults. Today, Montgomery's work is the subject of increased academic attention as scholars of children's literature devote more time to her and her work, and feminist literary criticism encourages re-readings of her novels. Book-length scholarly studies on Montgomery and her writings have appeared. Her reputation has evolved. This is in part due to the publication of her journals, which provide fans and academics alike with a glimpse into the private

life of Canada's best-known and most successful writer. Such a glimpse offers many clues to the private life conditions and public social conditions that shape Montgomery's writing.

Montgomery's fiction has traditionally been grouped with such classics as Pollyanna, Heidi, Little Women, and Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, sentimental novels that were popular reading material for young girls at the turn of the century. These books tried to instill accepted contemporary social and moral codes into young girls (Schwarz-Eisler 28-29). "Sentimentality" has its roots in eighteenth-century moral philosophy, with its view of human nature as an entity comprising universal moral feelings (Kaplan 3). Thus, the emphasis in the sentimental novel is on emotion and emotional display. Characteristics of the sentimental novel include undeserved suffering, abuse, and affliction. The victim is normally powerless, innocent, and homeless, and suffers a loss at the hands of a villain or fate. Frequently the characters in a sentimental novel are females or orphaned girls. The home is shown as a safe and secure place, in contrast to the outside world. The author often makes direct emotional appeals to the reader to sympathize with or pity the main character. Emotions are expressed freely in words and gestures. There are scenes of parting and reunions (Herget 5-8). Judging from these characteristics, the stories of Anne Shirley and Emily Byrd Starr may seem very formulaic and quite sentimental. Both series are about young girls and each girl is an only child who is orphaned when both of her parents die as a result of illness. Montgomery is careful to show that both sets of parents die because of sickness, for this indicates that neither girl has been intentionally abandoned. Both are adopted and raised by older people. In Anne's case, a brother and sister, Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert, take her into their home. Emily's mother's step-sisters, Elizabeth and Laura Murray, assume responsibility for her upbringing. Their adoptive homes, Green Gables and New Moon respectively, are safe harbours from the outside world. In

these homes the girls acquire values, and are eventually loved and accepted. Both Anne and Emily are appreciative of their surroundings, and enjoy a special and rare communion with nature.

Ann Douglas, in The Feminization of American Culture, comments that the problem with sentimentality and sentimental literature is that they instill "feminine" moral codes and behaviours in females, guaranteeing the continuation of male hegemony by redefining and limiting the possibilities for change in society (13). It is important to note that despite the formulaic elements of sentimental literature which apply to both the Anne series and the Emily series, Montgomery establishes both heroines as exceptions to the formulaic rules as well. Both girls tell stories, devise games, name places; both tend to dramatize every aspect of their lives; and both have imaginations that often wield too much power over them. As young girls, the two are independent and ambitious. Anne refuses to let Matthew carry her valise and carries it herself, while Emily refuses to allow Aunt Elizabeth to cut her hair. Anne and Gilbert Blythe engage in a mock battle of brains, based on geometry and spelling, with Anne determined to surpass him academically. Emily is resolved to become a successful writer. Both Anne and Emily fall in love with the boy next door, but both delay their engagements until they are completely ready. It is not until the third book of each series that the reader is certain Anne will marry Gilbert and Emily will marry Teddy. Judith Miller, in her discussion of Emily Climbs, notes that Montgomery's work has "the superficial appearance of an idyllic novel of girlhood, but a careful reader will see something else" (158). A careful reader will see something else in all of Montgomery's writings. The content and form of the stories in both series work to subvert the seemingly simple sentimental format to comment instead on the limitations placed on the female writer in turn-of-the-century society.

During Montgomery's lifetime, public reaction to her work is mixed: the reading public clamours for more, while critics often dismiss her books as sentimental, juvenile writing. Gabriella Ahmansson (1991) argues that early scholarly material on L.M. Montgomery tends to range from idolatry, to prejudice, to discourtesy (8). Archibald MacMechan (1924) maintains that Anne of Green Gables "just misses the kind of success which convinces the critic while it captivates the unreflecting general reader" (210). Arthur Phelps (1951), discussing Montgomery and other popular writers, argues that by the "standards of discriminating literary criticism none of these writers is important" (85). Sheila Egoff (1975) acknowledges that Anne is "a spirited red-head from Prince Edward Island" who adds "a note of girlishness and mischief to Canadian children's books that was hitherto lacking." But Egoff argues that aside from the island setting, Anne has little else to offer either the reader or the critic. She maintains, "Montgomery belongs to that breed of writers who give themselves away in their second and succeeding books....Only the most avid Anne fans will refuse to admit that the appealing qualities of the first book are soon dissipated." She concludes, "It is sad but true that the Anne books continue to evoke great nostalgia from many adults to whom much vastly superior modern Canadian writing is unknown" (Egoff 304). However, as L.R. Epperly maintains in her article, "L.M. Montgomery and the Changing Times", scholarly work on Montgomery has been opening up (177).

Significant work has been produced on Montgomery recently. In A Life and its Mirrors: A Feminist Reading of L.M. Montgomery's Fiction, Gabriella Ahmansson undertakes a feminist re-reading of Montgomery's work, examining the concept of the female utopia and Montgomery's creation of a matriarchal society in Avonlea. She looks at the ways in which the people of Avonlea shape and influence the development of Anne's character. Ahmansson also argues that Montgomery

uses her life experiences to write fiction (41).<sup>2</sup> Hannah Schwarz-Eisler maintains that Montgomery's work can and should be discussed within the framework of "popular culture", for much of her work is written to order and most of it mirrors her society, expressing ideas and dealing with subjects that are popular from the turn of the century until the late 1930's (2). Schwarz-Eisler also identifies three themes she sees emerging continually in Montgomery's fiction: childhood and family, society and religion, and the quest for identity (79). Catherine Ross Sheldrick, in her article, "Calling Back the Ghost of the Old-Time Heroine: Duncan, Montgomery, Atwood, Laurence, and Munro", examines how L.M. Montgomery contrasts Anne Shirley with the traditional romantic heroine and discusses Montgomery's use of parody in Anne of Green Gables. She concentrates on the chapter entitled "An Unfortunate Lily Maid". She argues that the lily maid "episode makes the point that the 'real life' heroine has to contend with unruly incursions from the actual world that never disturb the conventions governing old-time heroines" (47). As the title of the article suggests, Anne Shirley is included with heroines created by such late-twentieth century writers as Alice Munro, Margaret Laurence, and Margaret Atwood.<sup>3</sup>

In The Fragrance of Sweet-Grass: L.M. Montgomery's Heroines and the Pursuit of Romance (1992), a full-length study of Montgomery's novels, Elizabeth Epperly's focus is on the author's use of romance and the romantic genre, using the words "romance" and "romantic" in their popular senses (10). Through an examination of the quest for romance undertaken by each of Montgomery's heroines, she posits that self-knowledge is the key to finding the truly romantic, which exists in the everyday world of Montgomery's heroines. She concludes that the main message of the Anne books may be that "beauty is within reach for all of us if we determine to recognize/create it here, in ourselves, with our knowledge" (74). The Emily series, as Epperly reads it, is Montgomery's literary

autobiography (145). Epperly discusses the influence of such writers as William Wordsworth, Lord Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett-Browning, and Charlotte Bronte on Montgomery's own narratives.

Margaret E. Turner, in her article, "I mean to try, as far in me lies, to paint my life and deeds truthfully": Autobiographical Process in the L.M. Montgomery Journals", argues that Montgomery creates in her journals an autobiographical text that is a complex process of re-reading and re-writing, and therefore an act rather than a form. Based on Montgomery's continual rewriting of these journals, Turner believes that "we are safe in assuming that she does not copy [the material] exactly as it is written....[Thus] we cannot take Montgomery's journals in any sense as naive, objective accounts of her daily life" (95-96). When we read Montgomery's journals, we read her as she reads herself. Her "journalizing" is "enabled, allowed, and caused by her repeated re-reading of her earlier records: her simultaneous roles of writer and reader are layered upon each other and are, perhaps, ultimately indistinguishable" (Turner 94). The act of reading what has been written and rewriting what has been written is just as important in Montgomery's development as a writer as the act of writing itself. This is a pattern we see emerging in the Emily trilogy as well. The young heroine, a writer, keeps a journal and at several points throughout the series, reads what she has written, on occasion editing or rewriting certain entries.

As editors of the periodical Canadian Children's Literature and co-editors of the journals of L.M. Montgomery, Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston have been instrumental in attracting attention to this author over the last twenty years. Together they have published Writing a Life, a brief biography of Montgomery based on her journals. They see the "tortured self-portrait contained in the journals" as "perhaps Montgomery's greatest literary creation" for it is "carefully crafted, by the same skilful hand that sketched the portraits in her novels" (117). There is no doubt that the

journals *are* Montgomery's greatest literary achievement. In various articles that she has written, Rubio examines Montgomery's use of satire and other subversive narrative techniques. In "Subverting the trite: L.M. Montgomery's 'room of her own'", Rubio identifies eight methods Montgomery employs to include social criticism in her stories of girlhood. These include the use of the romantic genre, humour, statements made by marginal characters, authorial intrusion, and literary allusions (Rubio 17-25). In *Kindling Spirit*, Waterston examines the narrative structure of *Anne of Green Gables*. She draws parallels between various characters in Montgomery's first novel and Montgomery herself. She argues, "In *Anne of Green Gables* all [of Montgomery's] selves are revealed, transmuted into fictional characters." As such, she discusses how Montgomery uses such characters as Anne, Marilla, Matthew, and Diana to develop the various themes she explores in her writing.

Rubio's and Waterston's observations form the basis from which we can extend Montgomery scholarship by engaging in an overreading of Montgomery's work as a means of connecting the Anne series with the Emily series. The work already completed by Rubio and Waterston identifies the subversive techniques Montgomery uses in her fiction. It also help us to understand how and why she employs such techniques. It is through our realization of Montgomery's subversion of the sentimental form that we are able to explore her depiction of the female writer and the writing process. At the same time, while studies of Montgomery's works have used her journals to find intertextual connections between the fiction and nonfiction, they have neglected to use the journals as a means of overreading the fiction and establishing direct links among the fictional works themselves. This thesis will concentrate on the writing process as it can be traced through the story of Anne Shirley and the story of Emily Byrd Starr. In this way, we will see that the form and content

of Anne's story is reflected in Emily's as well. Because we will concentrate on the writing process, it is imperative that we are aware of the way Montgomery subverts the sentimental form in her fiction.

In "Montgomery's Emily: Voices and Silences", Judith Miller examines Emily Climbs and determines that in this novel, what is *not* said is just as important as what *is* said. Miller discusses how Emily is influenced by the women and men around her as she grows into a young woman and a successful writer. However, Miller does not make the necessary connections between the characters of Emily and Anne, and between the character of Emily and Lucy Maud Montgomery herself. Neither does E. Holly Pike, who compares Louisa May Alcott and her heroine, Jo March, with L.M. Montgomery and Emily. In "The Heroine Who Writes and Her Creator", Pike argues that as heroines created by Alcott and Montgomery, Jo and Emily are not given the same autonomy as individuals that their creators had. In Pike's view, "The fictional women are depicted as more domestic and limited creatures than their creators are in order to conform to the expectations of the women writer's audience, and perhaps also to hide aspects of their professional life that the authors felt would have been regarded as indecorous for a woman" (56).

Jennie Rubio, in "Strewn With Dead Bodies: Women and Gossip in Anne of Ingleside", concentrates on Montgomery's use of gossip in Anne of Ingleside and identifies the laughter of gossip in this novel as closely connected to unexpressed anger (174). Gossip allows women to say or hint at what they are not normally supposed to discuss. Finally, in her article, "Negotiating Friendships: The Reading and Writing of L.M. Montgomery", Denyse Yeast examines the public and private writings of Montgomery in an attempt to "respond" to Montgomery's "call to help break the silence" (112). She undertakes a feminist intertextual reading of Montgomery's work to discover

how the author "identified her dilemma as a woman living and writing in the Canada of the past and to validate how she defined and wrote herself" (114). Yeast concentrates on how L.M. Montgomery constructs a portrait of herself in her journals. She uses the journals as her primary focus and makes some connections between Montgomery's fiction

and nonfiction. However, Yeast fails to connect the works of fiction themselves. The amount of attention now given to Montgomery's journals and novels facilitates the next important step in Montgomery scholarship. This step, which this thesis will undertake, is the examination of the connections that exist among the fictional works themselves. Once we have examined the ties between the journals and the novels, we are inevitably led to the ties that exist between the novels themselves.

Thus, the focus of this thesis is on the intertextual connections existing among Montgomery's works themselves. That is, given the emphasis Montgomery places on writing and rewriting her journals, no work of hers should be discussed without taking the journals into account. Any intertextual examination of Montgomery's novels and journals must consider the text and autobiographical context that shape her writing, and how the particular literary forms she employs are a response to those conditions. Furthermore, whether we undertake a feminist re-reading of her works, study the Romantic and Victorian influences, examine Montgomery's writing style, consider her work in the context of regional literature, or contemplate such issues as voice and the sentimental or romantic genre, we must focus on how her texts cut across narrative and genre boundaries to speak to one another.

We must also realize that because Montgomery's fiction is rooted in the reality of her own journals, each novel inevitably becomes a response to other novels. Therefore, we will examine the

stories in the Anne and Emily series to determine how one responds to the other. We will see that the characters of Anne and Emily represent two sides of L.M. Montgomery the artist. Anne is the dreamer who imagines and thinks things out, while Emily is the do-er, the writer, who writes out. But because Montgomery writes herself into her fiction, it follows that the part of her personality and life story that is closest to Anne will enter Emily's text as well. In writing the stories of Anne and Emily, Montgomery engages in "life writing", defined by Marlene Kadar as an independent literary genre comprised of texts "written out of a life or unabashedly out of a personal experience of the writer". Life writing may characterize both fictional and non-fictional texts (Kadar 152). Kadar believes that life writing is the gradual reworking of the idea of the self in writing (155). Although the issues of intertextuality and Montgomery's use of the romantic genre have been discussed by various scholars, including Mary Rubio, Epperly, and Yeast, no one has yet used Montgomery's presence in and influence on the characters of Anne and Emily as a means of identifying the echoes of Anne's story in Emily's. The only way to discern this connection between the Anne of Green Gables series and the Emily of New Moon series is to establish a direct link between Montgomery's journals and her novels.

If we approach the Anne of Green Gables series and the Emily of New Moon series as forms of life writing, we see that there is a direct link which emerges in the phrase "writing out", a term used by both Montgomery and Emily. For both, "writing out" means recording on paper (in their journals) the feelings, experiences, opinions, and thoughts that trouble them. The journals act as a confidant, and Montgomery and Emily, in writing on paper what is bothering them, metaphorically write their troubles or concerns out of their minds. This act of writing out provides Montgomery with physical and emotional relief. In a journal entry for 1897, when she is romantically involved

with Edwin Simpson, Montgomery says that the person she used to be is dead and in her place is "the most miserable creature on earth". She decides, "Perhaps it will help me if I write it all out" (S/J: 187). She proceeds to discuss in detail the events of the last few months of her life. Then she concludes, "It is such a relief to pour out my misery in words (S/J: 194).

Emily, too, feels relief at being able to write out, to record in her diary things that burn "for expression" and yet cannot be trusted to anyone's ears (EC 2). She tells us, "But now that I have written it out in my diary I don't feel so badly over it. *Nothing* ever seems as big or as terrible...when it is written out, as it does when you are thinking or feeling about it. It seems to *shrink* directly you put it into words" (EC 9). Both writers seem to purge their souls of torment and experience relief only when they have written on paper something that troubles them. Montgomery writes, "I have always found that the writing out of a pain makes it at least bearable" (S/J: 204). Writing out is a form of therapy.

One thread, then, links the novels and journals of Lucy Maud Montgomery -- Montgomery herself. There are two layers to her narrative voice: the public persona and the private person. The barrier Montgomery erects between the two can easily be lowered if her journals are traced through her novels, because she uses her journals and moulds her own experiences to suit public taste when she writes fiction, dropping hints about her private life into her novels. The main stories, with their predictably happy endings, often trick the reader, for there is always more than one story to be told. We need only possess, as Priscilla Grant remarks in Anne of the Island, "the eyes to see it", or have, as Emily does, the gift of second sight (AI 218 and ENM 325). Just as Emily has second sight, Montgomery's readers must have second sight. We must not accept Montgomery's stories at face value; instead, we must read the narratives presented as a means of uncovering messages

Montgomery embeds in her fiction. We must, as Emily does with Beatrice Burnley's life story, read beyond the accepted ending until we uncover what is really happening in the books being written by female writers like L.M. Montgomery. In Montgomery's case, it is her journals that provide us with this second sight. The private and the public lives of the author meet in both Anne of Green Gables and Emily of New Moon, for these novels are public voices for Montgomery's private thoughts. The life conditions that influence her as she creates the world of Anne resurface and assume an important part of the world she later creates for Emily.

In order to clarify such links between Montgomery's journals and fiction, and to see such connections among her novels, we need turn to the feminist critical process known as overreading, which Yeast discusses briefly in her study. Rather than concentrating solely on Montgomery's journals, as other critics such as Yeast do, this thesis uses the journals only as a point from which we can begin to establish the connections between the characters of Anne and Emily as they represent Montgomery. It does not examine the novels separately in an attempt to show the connections between Montgomery's fiction and nonfiction. It uses the connections to show that the works of fiction parallel one another. For this reason, overreading is a valuable exercise for analyzing Montgomery's texts because it allows the reader to focus on the conditions that influence the writer during the creation of a text.

When we overread, we interpret words, phrases, names, events, and characters as signals to the reader that the author is dealing with issues other than the most obvious ones. For instance, why is Anne's hair red? Why does Anne detest sewing? What does Dean Priest represent for Emily? Why is Emily's first novel entitled A Seller of Dreams? As outlined by Nancy K. Miller in her article, "Arachnologies: The Woman, The Text, and The Critic", overreading allows the connection

between text and text maker to become more apparent to the reader. The article suggests a new approach to studying literary works from the female perspective. In particular, in her attempt to examine the creation of literature by the female artist who has been long neglected by the traditional male canon, Miller discusses the stories of Arachne and Ariadne, as well as George Sand's nineteenth-century novel *Indiana*.

Overreading requires that we approach a familiar text in a new way, and not as it has traditionally been viewed and categorized in (or has been absent from) the canon. One of the aims of overreading is to read women's writing as if it were being read for the first time (Miller 274). This means we bring to the text no preconceptions of what women's writing is, because those preconceptions are likely to have been influenced by or created by the traditional canon. It means reading the text not primarily as a story, but as an object that constitutes a response to certain political or personal conditions in the author's life. It means taking the text and superimposing a pattern that exposes the conditions that are necessary for its creation. We ask what makes the author write it and what makes the author write it in that way? For instance, in examining George Sand's novel, Miller not only considers its content and form, but also the fact that this novel marks the end of a collaboration Sand has long had with Jules Sandeau (Miller 278 and 279). In Montgomery's case, to overread means to use the journals to uncover why she writes and what she writes in the novels. Overreading seeks to establish the close connection between text and text maker, for its goal is to put "one's finger -- figuratively -- on the place of production that marks the spinner's attachment to her web" (Miller 288). The emphasis is not so much on *product* as on process and *production*. When we overread Montgomery's work, we return to the journals to help us search the text for signs

(emblems) that indicate either gender-based or historically-based political conditions, or personal life situations that influence the production of any text.

In theory, overreading treats the text as though it is a moving, living entity that invites a response from the reader. We do not overread a novel only for the story it tells; we read the novel as a means of determining the various conditions that influence the female writer and, consequently, the production of the text. Overreading focuses on the moments or signs in the narrative which by their representation of writing or art itself might be said to figure in the production of the female artist (Miller 274-275). That does not mean that overreading simply highlights autobiographical elements which may be present in the text. It illuminates autobiographical elements as a means of determining the social and political forces that are at play as the author is writing.

Through an overreading, we locate, as Nathalie Cooke discusses in her article on fictive autobiography, the place where the story begins to speak to the form (Cooke 162). In her study of *Indiana*, Miller examines how Sand has her title character engage in journal writing as a means of showing that Indiana tests the limits placed on her by society. She sees Sand's depiction of a female painter as a form of protest against the ideal, domestic and docile female; she even discusses Sand's inclusion of hieroglyphs in her novel. In an overreading of L.M. Montgomery's works, we examine not only Montgomery's use of the sentimental novel, but Anne Shirley's fascination with romantic poetry, chivalry, and fairy tales, as well as Emily Byrd Starr's poetry, prose, and letter/journal writing. We find the place where the author enters the text (or is present in the text through the narrator, characters, or events) and determine the point at which the plot ceases to be the focus and the text becomes instead a commentary on the chosen art form. In other words, we not only identify the genre or theme, we ask *why* a particular genre has been chosen to convey a particular theme. Our

eyes see the spider spinning its web, not just the finished web. Similarly, our eyes follow Montgomery's process of writing *Anne of Green Gables* and *Emily of New Moon*, not the finished novels. We focus on the act of literary creation and the function of the literary form. To overread Montgomery's work is to wonder what is happening in her life and lifetime to make her write the stories of Anne and Emily and to use the form of the sentimental girls' novel.

Overreading is a valuable technique for studying L.M. Montgomery's work. As a feminist theory, it encourages the reader to approach a text written by a female author as though it has never before been read. Therefore, it allows the reader to unlock a door which leads to an alternative reading or understanding of the writing and the writer. As well, the overreader learns to consider the life conditions that surround the production of a work. Overreading does not suppose that a text is produced in isolation from its surroundings or that it is final when it leaves the mind of the author and is committed to paper. It allows for an active reader. We shall see this most clearly in *Emily of New Moon*, when it is apparent that Emily's writings are insignificant as long as no one is reading them. When others, such as her Aunt Elizabeth and Dean Priest, see them, these writings have the power to effect a change in her life.

Through overreading we become the idealized readers of Montgomery's journal, and are able to uncover the autobiographical, social, and political factors that influence her. We see her as an active presence in the text, and we are able to discern the connections between the author and her work. This, in turn, facilitates our understanding of why the author chooses to write in the style and form she uses.

Montgomery writes in her journals that she loves to "spin" her short stories: "I love my work! I love spinning stories and I love to sit by the window of my den and shape some airy fancy

into verse" (*SJ*: 263). She likens herself to a spider or a weaver. Nancy K. Miller also compares the female writer to the spider at her web or the weaver at her loom. It is significant that Montgomery would see herself as a spider and her work as "airy" like a spider's web, for Miller argues that in literary and social tradition, "The spinning spider is after all female, as is the lacemaker. In both cases a female subject is bound to the mindless work now performed by women" (289n). In the example just cited, Montgomery is referring to the short stories she writes and calls her work "airy fancy", suggesting it has little or no physical substance; thus, it is akin to the mindless work of women to which Miller refers. Like weaving and spinning, it is work of the hands but not of the mind. Here, it seems that Montgomery categorizes her own potboilers as mindless reading and writing -- or, it may be argued, she is having fun with critical interpretations of her work. In *Emily's Quest*, Dean Priest similarly refers to Emily's writings as "pretty cobwebs", intimating that her work is of no literary substance (30). Dean is jealous of Emily's talent for writing because it takes her away from him. Therefore, he tries to retain control over her life by turning her away from any literary dreams she might harbour.

Overreading Montgomery's work raises the issue of secrecy. To make oneself aware of what is hidden or subverted in various texts is an important consideration in any study of L.M. Montgomery. She engages in deliberate acts of concealment, maintaining even in her personal life a distance between the public and the private. When her husband becomes ill, she hides it from everyone and maintains appearances. She vents her frustrations in her journals, not in public. The private journals become a safety valve, a place where she can record her innermost feelings. But because she is writing these things on paper, she is able to reflect upon them and in due time include them in her fiction.

Significantly, although Montgomery draws on her own experiences when writing her novels, she tries to omit anything negative. Reading reviews of Anne of Green Gables, she notes,

One of the reviews says 'the book radiates happiness and optimism'.  
When I think of the conditions of worry and gloom and care under which it was written I wonder at this. Thank God, I can keep the shadows of my life out of my work. I would not wish to darken any other life -- I want instead to be a messenger of optimism and sunshine (*SJ*: 339).

This seems to suggest that much of Montgomery's writing career constitutes a struggle to keep her own feelings and experiences of sadness, depression, loneliness, and frustration out of her fiction. An examination of the stories of Anne and Emily suggests that there are, however, moments where the seriousness and shadows seep into the writing. Such moments of darkness often become evident only through an examination of Montgomery's literary allusions, a point which has been discussed at length by Epperly, Waterston, Wilmshurst, and Rubio. Wilmshurst has compiled a comprehensive index of such allusions. Epperly draws parallels between Montgomery's references to particular works by Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Barrett-Browning, and Olive Shreiner, and discusses how Montgomery is able to encode deeper meanings into her own writings for those readers familiar with the works to which she refers.

Even the names "Anne" and "Emily" connote secrecy if we remember that Montgomery is influenced by Victorian writers, and both Anne Bronte and Emily Bronte write and publish novels in secret, using pen names. As Epperly shows, parts of Emily of New Moon bear striking resemblances to Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre (*Fragrance* 155). Furthermore, "Shirley" is the title

of a novel by Charlotte Bronte. Both Anne Shirley and Emily Byrd Starr are named, according to Montgomery, at their moments of conception. She says that Anne "flashed into my fancy already christened, even to the all important 'e'" (AP 72). The name Shirley, which can be either male or female, suggests that in addition to cutting across genre boundaries, Montgomery cuts across gender boundaries, too: a male/female name suggests common, human experience, not that which is gender specific.

The importance Montgomery attaches to the names of her characters can be seen in a journal entry from 1921. The entry concerns the name she has chosen for Emily and how her publisher is urging her to choose another. She writes that her heroine "*is* Emily, just as Anne was Anne. She has been 'Emily' for the past ten years during which time I have been carrying her around in my mind, waiting for the time when I could put her into a book. She has 'grown' just as 'Anne' did and so ought to be just as well-beloved" (S/JII: 6). These names have important implications, for her heroines are named after two female writers who cannot publish using their own names. In order to become recognized as writers, each has to surrender part of her identity and assume an ambiguous pseudonym. Thus, even the names "Anne" and "Emily" become codes for applying the principles of overreading to Montgomery's stories. Like the weaver at her loom, Montgomery both weaves and entangles in Anne of Green Gables and Emily of New Moon the constraints that face young women in her society.

The application of the concepts of overreading to Montgomery's writings is facilitated by the fact that embedded in Anne of Green Gables and Emily of New Moon are Montgomery's own life experiences which she records in her private writings. Therefore, Montgomery's voice is implied though she is not physically present in the text. She enters the text by having the narrator or other

characters speak for her. This means that in any piece of prose, more than one person can speak. Other voices can be present besides those of the narrator or the characters. Thus, any utterance can have a double meaning, so that the author achieves more than one purpose through the narrative. Anne of Green Gables is a reflection of childhood and Emily of New Moon is an examination of the mind of a developing writer; yet both become as well a commentary on Montgomery's own life and lifetime. They represent an opportunity for her to confide her own views on relationships, child-raising, and the literary canon. They are a chance for her to change her life on paper.

Nonfiction and fiction blend in Anne of Green Gables and Emily of New Moon. Montgomery's first novel takes the place of her journal for a time, as she uses her fiction to write herself out. Years later, Montgomery -- who by this time is copying her old journals for perhaps the third time -- writes in Emily of New Moon the process of writing out she undergoes in Anne of Green Gables. In other words, she recreates the writing of Anne's story in Emily's. This connection between the writing process as it can be traced through the Anne of Green Gables series and through the Emily of New Moon series is one that has yet to be discussed by scholars. At this stage in Montgomery scholarship it is no longer enough to study the Anne series and the Emily series as separate from one another. What is necessary now is that we use the journals to read intertextually not just between the fiction and nonfiction, but among the fictional works themselves. This is an approach that has not been taken with the Anne and Emily series. This thesis proposes another way of reading the Anne of Green Gables series and the Emily of New Moon series: as stories that are directly and deliberately linked through the life experiences of their author.

Montgomery's journals from the 1890's are crucial to understanding the creative process underlying the stories of both Anne and Emily, for she takes life experiences recorded in her journals

and incorporates them into Anne's tale. Her journals, wherein she records *nonfiction*, enable her to impose order on her *fiction*. In turn, her fiction and her journals impose order on her life. It is this need to write and analyze life experiences that gives life to Anne Shirley and Emily Byrd Starr. Secrecy surrounds their stories, with the emphasis frequently on giving voice to secret or unacknowledged feelings. Secrecy is central in Montgomery's own life writing, as she constantly rewrites her journals. Yet this thesis will demonstrate that what she writes in secret (in the private journals) is given public form in the stories of Anne and Emily.

As a young writer, Montgomery researches the publishing market, learning what the public wants to read and producing it so that her work will be published (Schwarz-Eisler 2 and 6). She caters to public demand yet she challenges the popular and traditional views of writing in her journals. On November 14, 1896, she opens a journal entry with the following admission:

I really have to come to you, old journal, for a little comfort. I am badly in need of some. By the way, would it not be a pat idea to call this my 'grumble book' instead of my journal?

Never mind! I do all my grumbling here and it never gets outside your covers (*SJ*: 166-7).

Montgomery knows that her traditional audience and her male publishers determine what she writes publicly, but they have no control over what she writes or thinks privately. When the demands come for subsequent Anne books, she complies, but grumbles in her journals,

On September first I began work on a third 'Anne' book. I did not want to do it -- I have fought against it. But Page gave me no peace....So I have yielded for peace sake....

I don't see how I can possibly do anything worth while with it....I must at least engage Anne for I'll never be given any rest until I do. So it's rather a hopeless prospect and I feel as if I were going to waste all the time I shall put on the book...I might be doing something so much more worthwhile (S///: 133).

The journals are one means of challenging the system, but it is important also to explore how she writes here what she cannot write or say in public.

In Emily of New Moon, L.M. Montgomery introduces journal writing as an accepted form of female writing. It is non-threatening because inherent in its construction is the assumption that what is written in secret will remain a secret. Montgomery herself challenges this assumption by keeping a journal she intends to have published. Though the idea of a journal or a diary usually connotes privacy, there is always the possibility that someone other than the writer will read it.<sup>4</sup> The journals privately question traditional assumptions about women's writings, but the novels challenge them publicly. In the last sentence of Emily of New Moon, Emily opens a new Jimmy-book and writes, "I am going to write a dairy [sic], that it may be published when I die" (339). She focuses on the act of construction, intending to *write* a diary, not to *keep* one. She cannot yet spell the word properly, but she knows it is something she, as a writer, has to do. The diary is begun with the intent to publish, which has serious implications for how truthful it will be. In this way, Montgomery continually challenges our conceptions of literary genres. Knowing that someone else will read your secrets is likely to affect how honest you will be as you write your diary. Elements of Anne of Green Gables and Emily of New Moon can be found in the journals, while elements of the journals are present in these novels; thus, there is a blurring of genres. It is the journals that will

set the record straight. An avid journal-ist, Montgomery keeps a diary during her childhood but burns it and as a teenager begins to keep what she refers to as "a new kind of diary", where she records more than just the weather (S/J: 1). When Montgomery begins this new diary, she initiates the practice of rewriting that will continue throughout her life. This journal eventually becomes her friend, confidant, and idealized reader. She always makes time for her "journalizing", and although at times weeks or even months elapse between entries, she nevertheless carefully records her life experiences. These journals eventually become such an important part of her existence that she takes special pains to ensure their survival, carefully copying each of the earlier ones into volumes of the same size, intending that they should be published after her death. Her journals explore various themes, including her upbringing, the loss of her mother, love and relationships, family, writing, religion, rural Canadian life, social history, literary history, folklore, and nature.

As Montgomery continues to keep journals, she realizes that they are worthy of public recognition. In addition to writing in her journals, she begins to re-read, revise, and rewrite them. L.M. Montgomery's rewriting of her journals is extensive. Margaret Turner reminds us that the "new diary" Montgomery begins in 1889 is replaced thirty years later when she transcribes it into a set of volumes all the same size. This journal is revised in 1930 when Montgomery begins a typewritten and edited version of the journals, "transcribed again from the already recopied handwritten volumes" (Turner 95). In 1932 she revises that typewritten copy, and in 1942, the year of her death, she is re-reading the typewritten copy and adding dated, parenthetical comments (Turner 95).

That Montgomery intends someone other than herself to read them is as obvious from her narrative voice as when she later outlines her plans for her journals. From the beginning, in 1889, she addresses the reader as if she is speaking to another person. Her entry for October 22, 1889,

reads, "Oh dear, we have an examination in arithmetic tomorrow. I don't like arithmetic. I had to write a composition on Cleopatra tonight. But I like writing compositions" (S/J: 3). As she grows older, she begins to address her unborn grandchildren. Recording her first taste of hot dogs, she writes, "Does some incredibly ignorant great grandchild demand 'What is a hot dog?'" Having described one, she adds, "I recommend them if you are hungry" (S/III: 300). When she refers to the first rewriting of her journals, she says,

This journal is a faithful record of one human being's life and so should have a certain literary value. My heirs might publish an *abridged volume* after my death, if I do not myself do it before....

I desire that these journals never be destroyed but kept as long as the leaves hold together. I leave this to my descendants or my literary heirs as a sacred charge....There is so much of myself in these volumes that I cannot bear the thought of their ever being destroyed.

It would seem to me like a sort of murder... (S/III: 51).

She takes special pains to describe herself in detail. In December 1920, she goes to considerable length to give an accurate description and analysis of herself. She begins with the physical -- her height, weight, hair, complexion, facial features -- and moves to her personality: "I am not bad-tempered and never go into rages but I am inclined to be impatient". She concludes, "Well, that is all...except a few things which I know quite well...but which nothing would induce me to admit" (S/III: 391-394). There are probably a great many things she would not want to admit about herself, and that would in part explain why she chooses to rewrite possibly the most truthful writings she

ever commits to paper. This raises the question of exactly *what* is written in the journals, as well as what has been edited out or substantially rewritten or altered.

The issue of honesty is an important one, for we realize that Montgomery *conceals* as much as she *reveals* in her journals. She challenges the reader's concept and understanding of what a journal is supposed to be: believed to be open, honest, and all-revealing, here it is instead a mask behind which the writer hides. Montgomery takes the very form of writing which would allow her to be completely truthful and superimposes over it a literary framework. That is not to say that her journals contain lies, untruths, or fabrications. They become instead a justification for the turns her life has taken. Montgomery assumes the role of the biographer who must include information from her or his own understanding of the life story being told when insufficient information is available. In this case, she has more control over her journals than she would over even an autobiography -- people expect the autobiography to be biased; they know the journal is biased but they assume it is truthful. This is because the journal is private but the autobiography is public.

But if Montgomery is constructing her life in her journal, how truthful can the entries be? She thus forces us, as her readers, to question the honesty of her comments. Montgomery loves to write about her problems and experiences in her journals, and when she later goes back and rewrites all of her earlier journals, she is aware that she is revising what has been written. Because at that point in her life no one but she has read the original entries, she is free to change whatever she wants.

While Montgomery is alive, it is inappropriate for her to publish her journals because opinions and information contained within the covers could hurt people and damage her reputation. As well, they could affect sales of her novels as children's books. But she intends to have them made public at some point. In the meantime, she embeds her life experiences and feelings in her novels.

In her article, "Life out of Art", which examines the early journals of Elizabeth Smart, Alice van Wart suggests that it is in their diaries that women begin to analyze the process of the development of their thoughts and feelings, and in turn often re-create the process of their thinking and writing style. Writing out one's thoughts, feelings, or ideas "enables a person to understand, to question, to challenge, to conceive of alternatives" (van Wart 22). Journal writing allows for freedom of thought, which is necessary "to enter the currents of one's own thoughts and feelings" (van Wart 22). Montgomery's journals are the written record of her need to write and record, and when her private life is written into her fiction and when we overread the two intertextually, we see many truths emerge: the need to write oneself out, the need to recapture a lost childhood, and the need to control one's own destiny, to name just a few.

Direct application of the principles of overreading to Anne of Green Gables and Emily of New Moon suggests two things. First, Montgomery uses sentimental writing and journal writing for two reasons: to comment on the literary conventions of the day and to make sense of her personal life. On one level, the sentimental novel helps her to achieve commercial success while ironically preventing her from being taken seriously as a writer. On another level, it opens for her a gateway to the enchanted world of childhood. As we can see from her journals, by the time Montgomery writes Anne of Green Gables and even later, when she writes Emily of New Moon, she has experienced a great deal of sorrow and loneliness. The opportunity to write about children who overcome such odds, and are loved and accepted, may be one way in which she tries to deal with her own feelings. Perhaps she hopes that she, like her heroines, can learn to live happily ever after. The second thing that an overreading reveals is how this personal life creeps into and shapes her public writings so that it is likely that she uses the novels, as she uses the journals, to impose order on her

existence. That is, just as the journals allow her to commit ideas and feelings to paper, so do the novels. She uses her public writings to help her as much as she uses her private writings. Overreading identifies the parts of herself she writes into her fiction and shows the effects such "writing out" has on her.

By writing herself into her novels, Montgomery reduces the distance between author and reader. That is, although she writes things in her journal that she cannot tell anybody, she writes the same things in her novels. She entrusts her readers with her own thoughts and feelings. She wants us to know her, and by entering her own text under the guise of narrator or character, she is able to make herself known. Through the process of writing her journals and the Anne of Green Gables series as well as the Emily of New Moon series, Montgomery continually writes herself out. What emerges from a parallel reading of the journals and novels is a composite of the author herself. If we read the novels in isolation, we may assume that the narrators, characters, and plots are completely fictional. If we examine the journals, we realize that Montgomery is at once narrator or any given character, and the plot is, in part, her life. In *making* these texts, she *unmakes* herself.

Because the literary forms she uses have a deliberate and specific function, Lucy Maud Montgomery's ultimate challenge to the literary canon is perhaps best put as a question: what is a genre, anyway? There is a blurring of genres in her work. Like the journals, the Anne of Green Gables series and the Emily of New Moon series are masks: not completely adult, but not completely a child's world. Just as Anne is a "woman-child", these books are about adult lives written in the form of children's stories (AGG 11). They are works of fiction yet they contain a significant amount of autobiographical material. They are sentimental girls' stories but they mock the sentimental and explore life writing, a genre which consumes half of Emily's story. They appear

to offer only an idyllic portrait of childhood, but enable their author to relive her childhood and to move away from the shadows and darkness of her own life as she creates them. Each genre allows for the truth but prevents it as well, because so much is secret. Pieces of L.M. Montgomery and her life are scattered throughout the novels. It is up to her readers to pick up the pieces and fit them together. Applying the principles of overreading to the *Anne* series and to the *Emily* series allows us to uncover the autobiographical, political and personal elements in each and to focus on the function of the fictional form, rather than exclusively on the story.

## CHAPTER TWO

### "A Tongue of Her Own":<sup>5</sup>

#### Overreading Anne's Story

In Creative Writing in Canada, his 1952 treatise on Canadian literature, Desmond Pacey asserts that Anne of Green Gables is "a children's classic" and "it would be silly to apply adult critical standards to it". Furthermore, he maintains that it has "all the features of the kind of escape literature" craved by a "materialistic and vulgar generation" (106). It is against a comment like this that Anne's story should be overread if we are to establish the conditions that lead Montgomery to write her first novel and to trace the pattern of this writing through her next fictional series about Emily. What we must study, instead of the pastoral and romantic tale, is the relationship of those forms to the life conditions and literary traditions that shape Montgomery's writing at the turn of the century. We must examine Anne of Avonlea, Anne of the Island, Anne of Windy Poplars, Anne's House of Dreams, Anne of Ingleside, Rainbow Valley, and Rilla of Ingleside as well as the original Anne novel. In the Anne books, form and content are inextricably connected to create several patterns depicting the female writer and how she is or is not able to use her voice.

If we are to undertake an overreading of the Anne series, then we must approach the text as if we have not previously read it. We must re-interpret the content and form not as a girls' novel, but as a coded text which allows the reader to re-interpret Montgomery's fictional writing through a reading of her journals. Such a reading uncovers the issues of gender, identity, and power structures Montgomery carefully embeds and subversively explores in her stories. At the same time, we must keep in mind that Montgomery manipulates the form of the sentimental novel so that it becomes, for

her, a means of slipping away from the loneliness and emotional bareness of her own life into a beautiful, safe world. It is her way of keeping the shadows out of her life, at least temporarily.

Montgomery writes Anne of Green Gables during the evenings, after she finishes a long day of housework, on her grandmother's Cavendish farm. In balancing her writing with her domestic duties, she is not unlike the majority of women writers of her time. As Virginia Woolf points out in A Room of One's Own, most women, if they wanted to write, had to do so in public, as opposed to private, places. Instead of a den, a library, or one's own room, women writers (including Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen) wrote in the kitchen or the sitting room, while normal household activities (cooking, cleaning, talking) went on all around them (Woolf 6). By some accounts, much of Anne of Green Gables is written in Montgomery's bedroom, but Montgomery later says that she had been sitting in the kitchen and had just finished the first paragraph of her novel when her future husband, Reverend Ewan MacDonald, came to pay a visit (*SJII*: 147).<sup>6</sup>

Montgomery writes Anne of Avonlea under similar circumstances. She writes in the winter, which is especially difficult because she has no room of her own. It is too cold upstairs and she has to write in the kitchen, where she is interrupted constantly by the comings and goings of people to the post office she runs from her home (*SJII*: 334). By the time she begins Anne of the Island, she is married and living in Ontario, where she finds family duties intruding upon her writing time. Nevertheless, in Ontario she does have her own library into which she can retreat behind a locked door while she writes.

If we are to examine how Montgomery's writing is shaped by both private life conditions, such as the loneliness she experiences, and her public life conditions, including the restrictions placed on female writers of her generation, we must realize that Montgomery directly embeds details

from her personal life into the fictional life of her heroine as she creates a projection of herself in Anne. A comparison of Montgomery's journal entries with excerpts from the Anne books reveals that she enters her novels in a number of ways. Her journal entry for December 1891 reads,

The old year did not slip away in a green twilight and a pinky-yellow sunset. Instead, it is going out in a wild white bluster and blow....

I am cosily tucked up in bed now, sitting up to write this. It is a wild night out -- one of the nights when the storm spirit hustles over the bare frozen meadows and black hollows and the wind moans around the house like a lost soul and the snow drives sharply against the shaking panes -- and people like to cuddle down and count their mercies (*SJ*: 71).

In Anne of the Island, we read,

The old year did not slip away in a green twilight, with a pinky-yellow sunset. Instead, it went out with a wild, white bluster and blow. It was one of those nights when the storm-wind hurtles over the frozen meadows and black hollows, and moans around the eaves like a lost creature, and drives the snow sharply against the shaking panes.

'Just the sort of night people like to cuddle down between their blankets and count their mercies,' said Anne to Jane Andrews, who had come up to spend the afternoon and stay all night (58).

Montgomery copies this descriptive scene almost verbatim from her journal of 1891 when she is seventeen years old, roughly the same age Anne is when she speaks the same words. Montgomery allows that 1891 has been a happy year for her. She is not yet romantically involved with either Edwin Simpson or Herman Leard, and her journal entries are still those of a contented, fun-loving young girl, as she relates her experiences of giggling through prayer-meetings and rehearsing for concerts in December 1891 (S/J: 70-71).

The passage just cited appears in Anne of the Island in the same chapter which depicts Anne's first marriage proposal. Anne invites her schoolmate Jane Andrews to spend the night at Green Gables over Christmas vacation, and after they are in bed, Jane acts as a proxy by proposing marriage to Anne for her brother, Billy. Anne, shocked and humiliated, refuses the proposal. It is as if Montgomery is alerting her readers to the fact that just as her own life changes in the years immediately following the journal passage quoted, Anne's life and relationships, too, will soon become more complicated and disillusioned. And they do: when Anne declines Billy's/Jane's proposal, Jane tells her, "He likes Nettie Blewett pretty well, too, and mother would rather he married her than anyone....I think, when Billy is once sure you won't have him, he'll take Nettie" (Δ1 61). By the time Anne fends off proposals from Charlie Sloane and Gilbert Blythe, she is left to anguish, "There [is] nothing romantic about this. Must proposals be either grotesque or -- horrible?" (Δ1 143). We also realize that when Montgomery writes such passages from her journals into her fiction, particularly when she writes her own thoughts and opinions into the mouths of both her narrator and heroine, she makes us realize that anytime Anne or the narrator speaks, Montgomery could be speaking.

L.M. Montgomery clearly identifies with aspects of her heroine's life. At other times she takes incidents from her own life and incorporates them directly into Anne's so that they become the heroine's thoughts, feelings, or experiences. In this way, she assumes the role of heroine herself. In September 1889, she writes about her flowers in her journal:

I amused myself repotting all my geraniums. Dear things, how I love them! The 'mother' of all them is a matronly old geranium called 'Bonny.' I got Bonny ages ago....I called it Bonny -- I like things to have handles even if they are only geraniums -- and I've loved it next to my cats....it blooms as if it *meant* it. I believe that old geranium has a soul! (SJ/ 1).

Shortly after arriving at Green Gables, Anne Shirley befriends her surroundings in a similar fashion. She asks Marilla, "What is the name of that geranium on the windowsill, please?" Marilla tell her that it is an apple-scented geranium, to which Anne replies,

"Oh, I don't mean that sort of a name. I mean just a name you gave it yourself. Didn't you give it a name? May I give it one then? May I call it -- let me see -- Bonny would do -- may I call it Bonny while I am here? Oh, do let me....

"Oh, I like things to have handles even if they are only geraniums. It makes them seem more like people. How do you know but that it hurts a geranium's feelings just to be called a geranium and nothing else? You wouldn't like to be called nothing but a woman all the time. Yes, I shall call it Bonny...." (AGG 34-35).

Montgomery later admits in a journal entry that this naming habit of Anne's is an old one of hers which she transfers to her heroine (*SJII*: 40).

The passage quoted above is significant for three reasons. If we look at the journal entry on geraniums, the first entry Montgomery makes in her new diary of 1889, and compare it to Anne's remarks, spoken the day after she arrives at Green Gables, we see that the two are similar in tone. Both speakers, Anne and Montgomery, are contented, energetic, and filled with a youthful enthusiasm. The young Montgomery, talking about her flowers, exclaims, "Dear things, how I love them" (*SJII*: 1). Anne tells Marilla that "it's so hard to keep from loving things" (*AGG* 34). In this example, Montgomery allows Anne to feel as she feels herself at one point in her life. She sets Anne in a time in her life when she is very happy. Thus, Anne, when she is settling into Green Gables, closely resembles the young L.M. Montgomery we first meet in the journals.

Second, in this passage Anne stresses the importance of having a name of one's own when she challenges, "You wouldn't like to be called nothing but a woman all the time" (*AGG* 35). Even at her young age, Anne knows the importance of naming because naming suggests ownership and belonging, which in turn allow control. This importance of names for non-human and inanimate objects surfaces throughout Montgomery's work. In *Anne of Ingleside*, we learn that Diana's daughter talks "to the spirit of the flowers." She has a dolls' tea-set with tiny pink rosebuds which she uses only when the "Three Green People" come to tea with her (5). The reader is further assured of the little girl's kinship to the young Anne Shirley through Montgomery's choice of a name for Diana's daughter: she is called Anne Cordelia.

Third, it becomes apparent, in the phrase "nothing but a woman", that Montgomery is using Anne to comment on the issue of gender in both writing and society. As only a woman,

Montgomery can write only of flowers, children, and happiness. She is not supposed to write about repression, depression, or the darker life situations that women face. Also, at first glance Anne appears to be only a heroine in a sentimental girls' novel, not a great literary hero. It is important to observe that in even the most seemingly simple passage, Montgomery manages to embed some of her more radical views on gender.

Montgomery creates obvious and deliberate similarities between herself and Anne Shirley. As we overread examples from the journals and the Anne novels where Montgomery and Anne seem to merge as one, we begin to come to the realization that these similarities are chosen to indicate to the careful journal/novel reader that Montgomery is establishing Anne as an emblem of the female artist at the turn of the century in Canada. Like Montgomery, Anne has imaginary friends. One of Anne's imaginary playmates is Katie Maurice; when Montgomery is a little girl, she has an imaginary friend by the same name. Anne tells Marilla that the family she lived with had a bookcase, and they kept their best china in it. One of the doors was broken, but "the other was whole and I used to pretend that my reflection in it was another little girl who lived in it. I called her Katie Maurice, and we were very intimate. I used to talk to her by the hour...and tell her everything" (AGG 58). Montgomery remembers, "In our sitting room there has always been a big bookcase used as a china cabinet....When I was very small each of my reflections in these glass doors were 'real folks' to my imagination....The one in the left-hand door was *Katie Maurice*....*Katie* was a little girl like myself and I loved her dearly. I would stand before that door and prattle to her for hours..." (S/I: 306).

In both cases, we see the image of a reflecting glass used as a means of speaking to another component of the self, a technique reminiscent of Margaret Atwood's poem, "Tricks With Mirrors":

I wanted to stop this,  
this life flattened against the wall,

mute and devoid of colour,  
built of pure light.

this life of vision only, split  
and remote, a lucid impasse.

I confess: this is not a mirror,  
it is a door

I am trapped behind.  
I wanted you to see me here,

say the releasing word, whatever  
that may be, open the wall (iv, 27).

Like the life of this speaker in Atwood's poem, Montgomery's voice is "mute" -- metaphorically, she can move her lips but no sound comes out because she cannot publicly speak out or write out about particular subjects. Montgomery writes subversively in her fiction and unless we use her journals to read her novels intertextually, we cannot fully uncover what she is doing in her writings. Her

journal is important to her because even though she is mute, she can write in it and the public does not have to "hear" what she is saying.

Atwood's "I" lives a "life of vision only" -- an inactive role of observing and imitating, not participating. Montgomery, too, lives a life of "vision" because she can look at the male world of serious literature, but she cannot become a member of that traditional male canon. Then, Atwood says, "I confess: this is not a mirror/it is a door/I am trapped behind"; similarly, Montgomery is trapped and the only way she can "open the wall" is to write subversively in her novels. Both Anne and Montgomery love this secret, hidden part of themselves they label "Katie Maurice", which only they can see. However, when they talk or write about Katie they are, in effect, publicly revealing that other part of themselves. And if Katie is a special part of Anne and a special part of Montgomery, it follows that Montgomery is embedding, in the character of Anne, another side of herself that she rarely reveals. Anne no longer needs Katie after she moves to Green Gables because she has Diana Barry as her special friend, but she vows never to forget her imaginary friend (AGG 60). When Montgomery commits Katie to paper in Anne of Green Gables, she is, in effect, breaking the glass that holds Katie in the world that neither Anne nor Montgomery has been able to enter, and imposing Katie's world on her own. Anne tells us that "if I only knew the spell I could open the door and step right into the room where Katie Maurice lived....And then Katie Maurice would have taken me by the hand and led me out into a wonderful place, all full of flowers and sunshine and fairies, and we would have lived there happy for ever after" (AGG 58). In writing this novel, Montgomery seems to find a way to enter Katie's world, for she creates a place just as beautiful in Avonlea.

Not only do both Montgomery and Anne name inanimate objects and elements of nature, both revel in the beauty of their natural surroundings: trees, in particular, are welcome friends. In

Anne of Avonlea, Diana catches Anne throwing "her arm about a slim young birch and kiss[ing] its cream-white trunk." Anne explains, "That white birch you caught me kissing is a sister of mine" ( $\Delta\Delta$  75). Montgomery describes a walk in the woods on spring day, when, enchanted by the "calm, fresh loveliness", she put her "arm around a lichened old spruce and laid my cheek against its rough side -- it seemed like an old friend" (*S/J*: 78). In the Emily series, Emily wonders if she will ever be able to transmit even some of the world's ethereal beauty she witnesses during her "flash" back to the everyday world (*EC* 177). Having Anne revel in the natural beauty around her is one way Montgomery tries to make her reading public aware of the world's beauty as she sees it.

In Anne of the Island, Anne comes across one of her old stories from The Story Club, entitled, "My Graves", which she describes as "a harrowing tale of the wanderings of a Methodist minister's wife....She buried a child every place she lived in. There were nine of them and their graves were severed far apart, ranging from Newfoundland to Vancouver" (209). Montgomery admits to writing the same story as a child. In The Alpine Path, she reveals, "A certain lugubrious yarn, 'My Graves,' was my masterpiece. It was a long tale of the perigrinations of a Methodist minister's wife, who buried a child in every circuit to which she went. The oldest was buried in Newfoundland, the last in Vancouver, and all Canada was dotted with those graves" (57). When Anne shows it to her friend, Stella, the two enjoy a laugh over it. However, Montgomery shows how much her heroine has developed as a writer when Anne also finds another piece she has written as a school teacher. She decides to rewrite it and when she sends it to a magazine it is accepted for publication. Montgomery tells us that the romance that pervades Anne's imagination as a child is not the type of writing that will bring either success or satisfaction to the artist; instead, it is the

material she becomes capable of writing as she grows older that will have literary merit. Anne now has the potential to develop into a good writer.

The fact that Anne has red hair makes her a not-so-typical heroine of a sentimental novel. In fact, Montgomery spends some time establishing Anne as the antithesis of the sentimental heroine. She does not have an alabaster brow, she is not angelically good, she is not divinely beautiful. She is "dreadful thin" and, as she tells Matthew, "so homely nobody will ever want to marry me -- unless it might be a foreign missionary" (AGG 13). The style and type of novel Montgomery writes promises a heroine and delivers one, but she will be a new type of heroine. Therefore, this novel cannot and will not be the typical sentimental novel. Its content challenges its form. Neither are completely traditional.

In order to determine the connections between Anne's story and Emily's, we need to apply the principles of overreading and view the text as a response to the political conditions surrounding gender and writing that exist at the turn of the century, when Montgomery writes her first novel. Yet Anne's story may also be overread as a form of life writing for its creator. Such writing allows L.M. Montgomery, at a point in her life when she is in need of comfort and release from pain, to retreat into a pastoral, painless world.

Anne of Green Gables takes the place of her journals for Montgomery for a period of time, as she writes herself out in public, not in private. Montgomery does not mention her first novel in her journals while she is creating it. Judging from the journal entries she prepares while she is writing subsequent novels and considering the secrecy that characterizes her journal and her fiction, Anne of Green Gables appears to have been written secretly and with an intensity of emotion that Montgomery never again matches. E.R. Epperly, in her article, "Approaching the Montgomery

Manuscripts", analyzes the Anne of Green Gables manuscript, calling it "the tidiest, most clearly written, and most obviously inspired of all the manuscripts." She asserts that having studied "many of the later manuscripts, scholars will return to this one with renewed appreciation for the evidence of joy and speed in the composition as a whole" (76). Anne of Green Gables, by Montgomery's own account, is written from the heart and out of pure love of writing, not for material gain. On Friday, August 16, 1907, she tells her journal: "I wrote it for love, not money -- but very often such books are the most successful -- just as everything in life that is born of true love is better than something constructed for mercenary ends" (*SJ*: 331). We may compare this intensity to the way Montgomery describes her writing as she prepares her journal entry on her engagement to Edwin Simpson: "I am writing wildly and distractedly" (*SJ*: 194). When she is writing Anne of Avonlea she refers to it in her journals at least seven times; The Story Girl at least three times; Kilmeny of the Orchard, three times; Anne of the Island, three times.

Montgomery feels differently about writing Anne of Avonlea than she does about writing her first novel. She claims to be happy when she begins it but soon tires of the work (*SJ*: 332-333). When she finishes the book, she admits that writing it has been "back-breaking" (*SJ*: 340). When she begins Anne of the Island, she says that she has fought against writing it, but has yielded for "peace sake" (*SJ*: 133). She later discusses how difficult it is to begin writing a book and feels that the beginning of this third Anne novel is "horribly flat". Furthermore, her "pen drags" and she has "no faith" in the story (*SJ*: 147). These admissions might perhaps be surprising to her readers, for in the third Anne novel, Anne the college student is witty, intelligent, and independent. As Epperly points out, "Anne of the Island is filled with humour....we find in [this novel] a story that relies on comedy but finds its strength in symbol and symmetry. Anne matures" (*Fragrance* 57).

Nevertheless, Montgomery is glad to finish it (*S/III*: 156). It appears that these later Anne books do not excite her or capture her imagination in the same way Anne of Green Gables does. A parallel reading of the journals with the novels will allow us to overread the life conditions which create her changing views of her own work. Not only is Anne of the Island written during World War I, other personal life conditions are at play to influence Montgomery and her work at this stage in her life. As Epperly maintains, "During the months of composing Anne of the Island...the peaceful life of a Green Gables home [becomes], indeed, a thing of fiction" (*Fragrance* 57).

If we consider Anne Shirley as an emblem of her creator, we must ask, as Nancy K. Miller does in her study of George Sand's nineteenth-century novel Indiana, "Against what model [could] a *female* artist measure herself" (278) in turn-of-the-century Canada (278). For Montgomery, form follows function. The sentimental novel is adopted as the form for Anne's story to sell books, and, as we shall see, to challenge the generic classification of women's writing. But the sentimental format also primarily comforts an author who relishes the chance to retreat into the innocent, idyllic world of her childhood. From 1887-1904, Montgomery endures much emotional upheaval. Her friend, Will Pritchard, dies; her father dies; her grandfather dies and she is forced to give up a teaching career to move back to an isolated farm and take care of her aging grandmother; she suffers through one relationship in which she discovers she hates Edwin Simpson, the man she has agreed to marry; and she experiences moments of ecstasy and despair in another relationship with a young farmer she knows she can never marry. These changes affect what she writes, and analysis of her journals indicates they begin to be less a diary and more a reflective outlet, for she uses them to console herself and to pass the lonely hours. Throughout her life her journals continue to comfort her. In 1925 she writes, "This journal seems like an understanding friend and to confess my worries

in it is like talking them over with such a friend" (S/III: 225). In Anne of Green Gables, Montgomery attempts to reclaim and recapture her lost childhood, unearthing a part of her she feels has died. The process of writing Anne of Green Gables appears to be a therapeutic one for Montgomery. That Anne is a redeeming, transforming power becomes obvious if we pay close attention to the first glimpse both Anne and the reader have of Green Gables: "Over [the house], in the stainless southwest sky, a great crystal-white star was shining like a lamp of guidance and promise" (AGG 21). At first reading, we realize that the star means that Green Gables will be a safe and happy home for the orphaned girl. But if we overread this we begin to see a religious meaning in the words. Anne is the messiah who comes to Avonlea to shape that world the way her creator would like it to be. Gabriella Ahmanson compares Anne's passage through the White Way of Delight with the newborn's passage through the birth canal. She also points out that the Avenue is likened to a church, implying a ritualistic baptism is conferred upon Anne as she enters Avonlea, an act that confirms belonging (Ahmanson 78). Ahmanson's interpretation would lead us to believe that Anne is being newly reborn as she enters Avonlea. Likewise, overreading allows us to realize that Montgomery also is newly reborn through the therapeutic process of writing Anne of Green Gables.

Montgomery does encode clues to help us see this if we read her text carefully. Anne arrives in early June, as spring blends into summer, and when nature is fully rejuvenated. She looks about her at the natural splendour and states, "This Island is the bloomiest place" (AGG 14). She carries only her old, shabby carpetbag, containing, as she tells Matthew, "all my worldly goods" (AGG 12). Matthew offers to carry the bag but Anne insists upon taking it herself because "if it isn't carried in just a certain way the handle pulls out -- so I'd better keep it because I know the exact knack of it"

(AGG 12). This bag Anne carries represents the emotional burdens Montgomery has to carry and handle herself at this point in her life because she has no confidants except her journals. Montgomery has to carry her emotions and carefully conceal them because if not, she will lose control of them. Furthermore, it is to *Green Gables* that Anne is going, and green is synonymous with hope and the promise of new life (Nathanson 94). We may conclude that Montgomery begins *Anne of Green Gables* with the need for an emotional outlet, and Anne, for a time, metaphorically carries that emotional baggage for her. As she enters Anne's world, Montgomery is like an infant being reborn into a world of hope and promise.

L.M. Montgomery would need such an outlet because her journals from 1887-1904 suggest that, during this extended period of time, she experiences feelings of depression and mourns her lost childhood. She writes that the carefree, innocent girl she had once been is gone and in her place is a woman with a shadowed past. On June 30, 1897, she proclaims,

The girl who wrote on June 3rd is as dead as if the sod were heaped over her -- dead past the possibility of any resurrection. I cannot realize that I was ever *she*. And indeed, I was not. What or who I am now I do not know. I only know that I have made a terrible mess of things and am the most miserable creature on the face of the earth.

It is all my own fault -- and I wish I were dead! (SJJ: 186)

She believes that in place of the girl is "some altogether new creature, born of sorrow and baptized of suffering, who is the sister and companion of regret and hopeless longing" (SJJ: 204). On March 2, 1901, she states, "The dear old days are gone and can never return. There are times when I would

give much to be as care-free and *blind* as I was then" (*SJ*: 257). She has witnessed and experienced much pain in her adult life and wants to relive her youth. In November 1901, she asks, "After all, have we not lost as much as we have gained? The beautiful childhood of the world is gone forever. I believe its happiest days were in the dead-and-gone centuries of its song-singing, love-making, war-waging youth!" (*SJ*: 271). Montgomery turns to Anne and the fictional world she creates for Anne as a means of slipping out of her own weary existence. In this sense, then, Anne of Green Gables is a form of escape literature -- but it is primarily Montgomery's own escape, not just her readers', that she seeks to achieve through her writing.

Montgomery wants to relive her youth and yearns for the "beautiful childhood of the world", and Anne Shirley, too, voices a longing for the past when faced with the prospect of change (*SJ*: 271). When Diana is about to be married, Anne moans, "It does seem so...so...so *hopelessly* grown up" (*AA* 267). Echo Lodge is painted as a part of the world where time stands still (*AA* 185). Miss Lavendar confesses to Paul Irving that she has an imaginary little boy but she never lets him grow older than ten or twelve years (*AA* 251). Several people remark in Anne of Ingleside that Anne has kept her looks, youth, and girlish figure. In Rainbow Valley Anne is described as "girlish" (2). The Meredith children have heard that Mrs. Blythe is different from other adults in the Glen because she has never really grown up; instead, she has stayed a child inside (*RV* 25). This is significant because L.M. Montgomery is struggling to keep Anne young. Of course, she will lose this battle if she continues Anne's story chronologically, so the only way to keep Anne young is to go back in her life and fill in unaccounted-for gaps. And this is exactly what Montgomery does.

At the same time, she is establishing Anne as a symbol of youthfulness -- Anne represents the part of us that never grows old. Anne continues to resist change in Anne's House of Dreams,

lamenting the fact that there are telephones in Avonlea. She tells Diana, "I don't want Avonlea spoiled by...modern inconveniences'. I should like to have it kept always just as it was in the dear old years" (3). In Anne of Ingleside, when Anne Blythe returns to Avonlea for her father-in-law's funeral and spends one week at Green Gables, she invites Diana Barry on a picnic, promising, "we're going to be girls again tomorrow" (AIn 4). During that picnic, Anne and Diana recall their many adventures together as children, but by the end of the day both are lamenting the fact that their own children are growing up.

It should not be surprising, then, that after Anne of Green Gables is completed and even before it is published, Montgomery's journals record a notable change in her outlook, attitudes, and emotions. A pattern becomes evident as, from 1905 on, Montgomery's voice sounds happier and more contented. On July 30, 1905, she writes, "Not a grumble! Not a blue! What does this mean? Well, this has been a pretty good summer -- I've been less worried than usual and I feel quite happy and cheerful" (*SJF*: 307). She harbours no grand illusions about her life but she learns to find satisfaction and contentment in her everyday doings because she has found a way, through her writing, to deal with her pain. Writing Anne's story, Montgomery temporarily works the pain out of her life. On July 6, 1904, her entry begins, "I think that Cavendish just now is really one of the prettiest spots on earth" (*SJF*: 296). On November 14, 1904, she lightly comments, "I like to hear a storm at night. It is so cosy to snuggle down among the blankets and feel the storm can't get at you" (*SJF*: 296). Now her journal entries seem to recall those of the teen-aged Maud who names her plants and loves nature.

Still, in 1905, she shrinks from the oncoming winter because of the inevitable physical isolation she will have to endure and the loneliness that will be the result (*SJF*: 310). Perhaps when

she writes Anne of Green Gables Montgomery is like Emily Byrd Starr writing A Seller of Dreams. Both author and heroine lose themselves and temporarily forget their problems and sorrows while writing their first books. They keep the shadows out of their lives by keeping them out of their work. Unfortunately, for both, the euphoria of creation soon wears away and they are left to face the very real conditions of their own lives.

Montgomery later remarks, in The Alpine Path: The Story of My Career, "Were it not for those Cavendish years, I do not think Anne of Green Gables could ever have been written" (52). She suggests that her childhood and her upbringing influence her to create Anne Shirley. However, an overreading of Montgomery's journals suggests that it is not her childhood years in Cavendish but the years she spends there as a young woman at the turn-of-the-century, isolated, lonely, and craving companionship, that create the need for her to create the character of Anne. This dark period in Montgomery's life affords her time for reflection and time to deal with her emotional suffering. She uses writing as an outlet to deal with her isolation, loneliness, and grief. Initially, Montgomery's focus is to work through her difficulties by writing them out of her mind and into her journals. However, Montgomery writes herself out in another genre as well: the novel. When she writes Anne of Green Gables, she channels the negative aspects of her life into the personal (journal) writing while the positive goes into the public (novel) writing. Thus, the novels represent one side of her personality; the journals another. Although Montgomery writes in her journals that her childhood is lost and buried, she resurrects it and gives it a voice in Anne of Green Gables.

The changes Anne encounters or causes in this novel demonstrate the changes in Montgomery's own attitude as she writes the book. When Anne first arrives at Green Gables, the room she is given is "painfully bare" and the walls seem to "ache over their own bareness" (AGG

27). The room is symbolic of Montgomery's own emotional "bareness" as she begins Anne's story. The walls she erects to protect herself and to hide her feelings also ache with loneliness. At this point, Montgomery may not be very different from the "lonely, heart-hungry, friendless child" who cries herself to sleep at the end of her first day at Green Gables (AGG 29). In the Emily series, which we shall examine in the next chapter, Montgomery uses architecture as a metaphor for the traditional male literary canon. In the first Anne novel, she uses Anne's room to convey her own emotional state as she enters Anne's world. By the end of the novel, Anne's room is very different. We see that "the whole character of the room" has changed: it is full of "a new vital, pulsing personality" and it is characterized by "the dreams, sleeping and waking, of its vivid occupant" (AGG 162). The floors are covered, the walls are no longer bare, and it contains white furniture (AGG 266). Having existed for just a short time in Anne's world, Montgomery lets down her emotional guard and experiences happiness. We may also consider the colour white to represent purity, thereby suggesting that Montgomery cleanses her soul of dark thoughts and feelings as she writes Anne's story.

Other differences are noticeable. When Anne first arrives in Avonlea, she does not want to pray to God but after she meets Diana she tells Marilla, "I'm the happiest girl on Prince Edward Island this very moment. I assure you I'll say my prayers with a right good-will to-night" (AGG 88). Anne initially does not want to pray because she believes God has deliberately made her hair red. Anne's anger over her red hair may reflect Montgomery's own frustration or resentment over her current lot in life.

As she writes Anne's story, Montgomery has very little freedom to do as she pleases. She feels responsible for taking care of her aging grandmother, who is very set in her ways and rebukes

all hints of change. Montgomery is in her early thirties, and has no real prospects for marriage at this point. In her journals, she confides, "Life at times lately had worn a somewhat sombre aspect to my forward-looking eyes" (*SJ*: 187). She feels that her life is characterized by "a haunting sense of emptiness" (*SJ*: 258). She seems doomed to a lonely life on this Cavendish farm. That Anne reconciles herself to God suggests Montgomery's gradual acceptance of her own situation, perhaps because she realizes that as long as she can write she can temporarily escape her unhappiness. She admits as much herself when she is writing Emily of New Moon. She tells her journal, "I have had more intense pleasure in writing [Emily of New Moon] than any of the others....I have *lived* it, and I hated to pen the last line and write *finis*" (*SJIII*: 39).

There are other indicators of the effect the writing of Anne of Green Gables has upon Montgomery. Before Anne is told that she may stay at Green Gables, she is reluctant to go outside to play because she is afraid she will fall in love with the place. If she falls in love with Green Gables, she will befriend the trees and flowers. If she does this, it will be very difficult for her when she leaves. As she tells Marilla, "There is no use in loving things if you have to be torn from them" (*AGG* 34). Like Montgomery feeling pain, Anne is afraid to open her heart because she may be hurt again. But, having lived at Green Gables for four years, Anne is able to say, "Dear old world...you are very lovely, and I am glad to be alive in you" (*AGG* 307). The experience of seeing the world through Anne's eyes enables Montgomery to reclaim some degree of childhood innocence by entering Anne's world. Describing Anne Shirley after she first arrives in Avonlea, L.M. Montgomery writes, "No commonplace soul inhabited the body of this stray woman-child" (*AGG* 11). The key phrase here is "woman-child". Anne Shirley represents childhood innocence, something the "worldly" Montgomery craves. Anne stands on the threshold which marks the

passage from childhood to adulthood. In order to move through safely, she must go through various rites of passage -- learning from her mistakes, making friends, and using her gifts of speech and imagination to her advantage. Montgomery has her own threshold to negotiate as she moves from a young girl to a woman, and the sentimental novel offers her a means of emotional release as she attempts to assume control for her own life.

The sentimental novel also allows Montgomery to explore the political conditions that shape women's writing. The issue of gender is at play when Montgomery chooses the form of the sentimental novel for the construction of Anne's story because she knows, having researched the writing market, that this is the only genre likely to bring commercial success to a female novelist. However, because she really has little choice over which genre she will use if she does want to be successful, she uses the sentimental form to challenge the literary canon of her day and even continues to challenge it today in a number of ways. One way she accomplishes this is in the form she chooses for her stories. Her novels masquerade as children's stories but also are critiques of the sentimental and romantic forms. This parody of the sentimental novel has been discussed by Elizabeth Epperly and Mary Rubio, but a brief discussion will be useful here as we examine how Montgomery uses Anne as an emblem of herself and her own life conditions.

The parody becomes obvious if we consider that each time Anne fictionalizes her life, reality hits hard. In Anne of Green Gables, her attempts to carry out her daydreams -- being a nun taking her vows at the altar, having raven black hair, living in Camelot -- become parodies of the sentimental novel. In the process, she intoxicates her best friend, dyes her hair green, and almost drowns. After her hair turns green, she complains to Marilla,

"This is such an unromantic affliction. The girls in books lose their hair in fevers or sell it to get money for some good deed, and I'm sure I wouldn't mind losing my hair in some such fashion half so much. But there is nothing comforting in having your hair cut off because you've dyed it a dreadful colour..." (AGG 218).

Anne's attempts at playacting turn hilarious when, echoing Tennyson's Elaine, her boat capsizes and she is rescued by Gilbert Blythe in Harmon Andrews' dory, while her visions of ghosts in the Haunted Wood paralyse her with fear until she faints (AGG 187). As Epperly maintains in The Fragrance of Sweet-Grass, Anne embroiders her life with romance, and usually comes to grief in the process (25). The stories Anne tells, reads, and writes are sentimental love stories and fairy tales. Her plots are melodramatic; her heroines, like Geraldine Seymour and Cordelia Montmorency, are "beautiful maidens" who live in the same village and are "devotedly attached to each other". Geraldine has an "alabaster brow". Both ladies fall in love with the same dashing stranger who rides into their lives, and the tale ends with all three dying for love. As Anne tells Diana, "It's so much more romantic to end a story up with a funeral than a wedding" (AGG 208-209).

Catherine Sheldrick Ross argues that the "old-time heroine" of traditional literary romance exists in Anne's imagination, and when Montgomery contrasts Anne with the old-time heroines she justifies Anne's claim to a verisimilitude never possessed by the completely formulaic characters of romance (46). If we overread this Camelot scene, we see that Anne Shirley is a formulaic heroine who wants to be a formulaic heroine. She is a heroine in a sentimental novel who wants to live the life of a literary heroine. Through Anne's failed attempts at romance, both she and the reader recognize the shortcomings of the formulaic novel and its characters. If Anne is able to recognize

this, then she must be a different kind of heroine -- a more realistic one. Montgomery seems to be asking us, how realistic is Tennyson's Camelot? Applying the principles of overreading, we see that Montgomery's novel is anything but a simple girls' tale. It is a subtle critique of the way women are presented in literature and it is Montgomery's way of showing that her heroines will not be depicted in the same way.

Montgomery parodies the sentimental novel and also creates intertexts with classic works of literature. Anne's life, as well as the lives of other characters, is often set in the context of other literary works. Miss Lavendar's impression of old maidenhood is that some "are born old maids, some achieve old maidenhood, and some have old maidenhood thrust upon them", echoing Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (AA 202).<sup>7</sup> We are drawn directly to another writer and text when Anne first sees Leslie Moore and is reminded of "Browning's 'cord of gold' and 'gorgeous snake'" (AHD 25).<sup>8</sup> Miss Cornelia comes to tell Anne and Gilbert that she is going to be married, and in her present restless state, she "sew[s] not, neither [does] she spin" (AHD 210). This Biblical allusion to Matthew 6:28 is repeated in similar forms at least four times throughout the *Anne* series. Creating such intertexts allows Montgomery to subvert these works and parody her chosen literary form. When Montgomery includes them in her fiction, these works no longer appeal to a limited, educated, well-read audience. Instead they are incorporated into daily existence so that even children can read them. She is showing that if her sentimental writing can support such references to classic literary works and to the Bible, then her work must have some literary merit as well.

Montgomery's use of parody and subversion in her *Anne* novels in some ways anticipates the features Linda Hutcheon identifies as postmodernist. According to Hutcheon, pos'modernism challenges traditional beliefs by setting up and subverting the powers and conventions of art. It

establishes and then undercuts prevailing values and conventions in order to provoke a questioning or a challenging of culture (Hutcheon 2-3). Hutcheon argues that through parody, Canadian postmodern writers contest canonical myths. This is achieved by first recalling the (male; American/British) canonical texts of our culture, then challenging them by undoing their status and power. Anne tells Marilla, "I read in a book once that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but I've never been able to believe it" (AGG 38). As an older woman, Anne wonders, "Perhaps there's more in a name than Shakespeare allowed" (Δin 5). When Anne and Montgomery make statements which show they question or disagree with what has been written by such literary masters as William Shakespeare, it shows that they never have and never do adhere to traditional literary beliefs. They are willing as girls and as women to challenge the traditions of literary thought. Yet Anne makes her comments to Marilla and Diana, not to male characters. Montgomery could test her audience by having Anne make such statements, but she could not have Anne blatantly challenging male thought.

Montgomery and Anne attach great importance to names, and by the time Anne has her own children, she chooses names for them based on people she has known and loved, so that her children's names have special meaning for her and her readers. The names "James Matthew", "Nan", "Di", "Walter", "Shirley", and "Bertha Marilla" remind us of characters we know from earlier Anne books. Anne's first baby, Joyce (Little Joy) dies soon after birth. The only one of Anne's children to die in childhood, Little Joy is also the only one not given a name that harkens back to characters we remember from Anne of Green Gables. The name is important because for a brief time, the little baby brings joy into Anne's life. When Anne has her other child<sup>en</sup>, having experienced an almost unbearable sorrow through Joy's death, she, like L.M. Montgomery in her journals and her fiction,

goes back to the happy, pastoral world of Avonlea to name her remaining children. In this way, Anne, like Montgomery at a dark time in her life, attempts to resurrect her childhood for herself as a means of helping herself to both temporarily escape and to find the strength to face the pain of losing a child. In *Anne of Ingleside*, it still causes Anne pain to mention Little Joy (266). Anne gives new life to people in her childhood who have since died or grown up. She shows that as long as these children are alive to remind us of the other characters from Anne's idyllic childhood at Green Gables, some of the magic may remain. Perhaps this is Montgomery's way, as well, of attempting to sustain some of the youthfulness and innocence of childhood she injects into her first novel.

In "Arachnologies: The Woman, The Text, and The Critic", Nancy K. Miller finds that in George Sand's novel, the character of Indiana is "immobilized by her own imagination". Miller writes, "Indiana perceives the poetic structures" of her landscape, but "when she wanders over the island and contemplates the sails on the horizon, her vision does not translate into acts of representation. Instead, the woman is immobilized by her own imagination; she dreams not of making art, but of being in love in Paris" (Miller 278). Anne Shirley, too, has a rich imagination but does not dream of being successful or having a career. When she does think about a career, it is wearily, with teaching and writing seen as an unfulfilling substitute for marriage and a family. Although Anne initially refuses Gilbert's marriage proposal, she later realizes how much she loves him when he is ill. She fears it is too late for them to make amends for her mistake, and tries to "reconcile herself to a future where work and ambition must take the place of love....But -- but --" Anne is not sure this can satisfy her (*Δ* 241).

Throughout the Anne series, imagination is glorified. Paul Irving finds imaginary friends in "The Rock People", who visit him on the shore near his grandmother's house. In Anne of Windy Poplars, imagination is all Little Elizabeth, like the orphaned Anne Shirley before her, has. But the dangers of an overactive imagination are also shown when Anne starts to let hers get carried away during the night she stays at the Tomgallon house, and has to remind herself that imagination has its limits (237). Montgomery has become immobilized by *her* own imagination, which originally has led her to create Anne. Because of Anne's success, Montgomery must attempt to meet reader expectations with every novel. Montgomery writes about a dreamer because the central reason Anne is different is because of her imagination. Unfortunately, not even Anne's or Montgomery's imagination can free them from tradition. The only way Montgomery can temporarily escape is through the use of parody in her novels.

A re-interpretation of the Anne series shows that Montgomery also challenges the parameters of the literary canon by writing adult problems and situations which show a darker side of human nature into her children's novels. Not everything is always happy; there are darker, shadowy elements of human nature and human life included here. As Elizabeth Waterston discusses in Kindling Spirit, "Drunkenness, meanness, unimaginative life, and undignified death have been a part of Anne's experience" before she comes to Green Gables (36). In Anne of Green Gables, Marilla asks Anne to tell her about her early life; Anne complies and tells the sad story which stirs pity and sympathy in Marilla's heart. At the end of her tale, Anne sighs with relief, and the narrator interjects, "Evidently she did not like talking about her experiences in a world that had not wanted her" (40). In Anne's House of Dreams we are permitted to hear about Leslie Moore's tragic life. Leslie watches as her brother is crushed to death; she finds her father's body after he commits suicide in the parlour;

and she is forced by her mother to marry Dick Moore, about whom "nasty stories" of his involvement with a girl from the fishing village once circulated (AHD 73). Although L.M. Montgomery does not elaborate on the "nasty stories" in this children's novel, just a brief reference to anything sordid raises several possibilities in the reader's mind regarding Dick Moore's behaviour.

In her discussion of Anne of Ingleside, Elizabeth Epperly refers to the scene which presents the neighbourhood women assembling at Anne's house for a quilting party. At the end of the afternoon and after a few hours of gossiping, the women are shocked to discover that young Walter Blythe has overheard everything they have said, and their tongues, previously powerful and unrestrained, now become "paralyzed" as they wonder whether they have said anything the child should not have heard (AIn 211). Walter overhears the women referring to Peter Kirk's funeral, and when he later asks his mother to tell him the story, Anne refuses. Then, as Epperly discusses, Montgomery contradicts her characters and her narrator by proceeding to tell the reader the story as Anne remembers the event in vivid detail (Fragrance 138). The reader, presumably a child, is allowed to read a story that has been labelled inappropriate for a child to hear.

It is partly because of this that Epperly argues that this book "suffers from mixing two modes of writing" and "the writing aimed at children sits uncomfortably beside the writing aimed at adults." She argues that neither type "is so well done that it can appeal to both audiences at once" (Fragrance 138). But Epperly's interpretation fails to consider that such a mixing of two forms of writing, children's and adults', is, like the rest of the series, a challenge of the form rather than a contradiction of it. Montgomery's inclusion of such stories in a children's book is deliberate and planned. As we overread Anne of Ingleside, we realize that the novel's dual form constitutes yet another subversive

technique Montgomery uses to test the boundaries between two literary genres, adult literature and children's literature.

Furthermore, Epperly also does not consider that the precarious structure of the novel that is not entirely a children's story yet not completely an adults' story either serves another important role for Montgomery. The structure of the novel reflects the character of the young Anne Shirley, who is not still a girl and not yet a woman. The form of the novel imitates the content. Montgomery writes in her journals that the further she progresses in a series, the more difficult it becomes for her to accurately portray young people, for she is restricted by her publishers. She comments upon the difficulty of blending childhood and adulthood in fiction when she is writing Anne of the Island in 1913, just as we shall see her do when she is writing Emily Climbs:

*Anne is grown-up and can't be made as interesting as when a child. My forte is in writing humour. Only childhood and elderly people can be treated humorously in books. Young women in the bloom of youth and romance should be sacred from humour. It is the time of sentiment and I am not good at depicting sentiment -- I can't do it well. Yet there *must* be sentiment in this book. I must at least engage Anne for I'll never be given any rest until I do (S/JII: 133).*

Montgomery is making an interesting and significant judgement of her own work when she maintains that she cannot depict sentiment very well in her writing. This leads us to look at what she can do well: she can manipulate the form of the sentimental novel. It suggests to a reader of her novels and journals that perhaps she is not writing a sentimental work at all, but something that just resembles it in appearance.

By testing such boundaries and including such material, Montgomery does not let us forget that we are reading a text. We are conscious all the time, through various reminders, that the lives of these characters are being written and constructed for us. When she sets her stories in the context of other literary works and subverts these works, we are aware of Montgomery's proximity as a narrator at play with both her writing and her readers. Anne constructs her own life as a story not only in her daydreams when she imagines herself as a nun or a lily maid, but eventually marks each stage of her life as a chapter of a book. She remarks in *Anne of Avonlea*, as she prepares for Miss Lavender's wedding, "Oh, it's delightful to be living in a storybook" (258). Even she realizes that she is a part of a story, a fiction that is being constructed. Again, we may ask, how can Anne be a formulaic heroine when she seems fully conscious of trying to be a formulaic heroine but never quite succeeding? When she finishes her final day of teaching before entering college, she says to herself, "Another chapter in my life is closed" and although she is sad, "the romance in the idea of that 'closed chapter' [does] comfort her a little" (*AA* 254). To Marilla, she remarks, "The year is a book, isn't it...? Spring's pages are written in Mayflowers and violets, summer's in roses, autumn's in red maple leaves, and winter in holly and evergreen" (*AI* 151). When she thinks Gilbert is dying she keeps an all-night vigil at her bedroom window, and we learn that there is "a book of Revelation in every one's life, as there is in the Bible. Anne read[s] hers that bitter night" (*AI* 237). As she dresses in her little gable room on the morning of her wedding day, she thinks about "the past that [is] to close today before the chapter of wifehood [opens]" (*AHD* 19). If Anne's life is a book, then the narrator or author has complete control.

Anne's life is first shown as chapters in a book in *Anne of Avonlea*, when Montgomery is beginning to feel the pressure of having to continually spin stories for her red-haired heroine. Using

the analogy of the book allows Montgomery to retain the feeling that she is in command of what will happen to Anne and in control of how long Anne will exist. From a reader's perspective, it allows us to be conscious, at all times, that the chapter or novel that we are currently reading is part of a series or a larger plan L.M. Montgomery eventually has to devise for this heroine. In a journal entry dated January 27, 1911, Montgomery describes Anne as an old and dear friend. She cannot deny Anne's existence because Anne is a part of her:

...she is and always has been, from the moment I first thought of her,  
 so real to me that I feel I am doing violence to something when I deny  
 her an existence anywhere save in Dreamland....She *is* so real that,  
 although I've never met her, I feel quite sure I shall do so some day --  
 perhaps in a stroll through Lover's Lane....And I shall not be in the  
 least surprised because I have always known she was *somewhere*  
 (S/JII: 39-40).

It is interesting to further note that L.M. Montgomery first refers to Anne's life as a book in Anne of Avonlea, suggesting that with the prospect of other Anne sequels looming before her, Anne has gone from being "very real" to become a fictional heroine about whom stories must continually be spun.

Just as in Montgomery's later journals we read her as she reads herself, in Montgomery's novels we read characters as *they* read *themselves*. The author maintains her presence in the text; not just as narrator, but as *writer*. Anne, reading Montgomery writing the chapters of her life, becomes Montgomery's idealized reader. Such moments allow us to put our finger on the point Miller identifies as marking the "spinner's attachment to her web" (Miller 288). In Anne's story,

characters find ways to fictionalize their lives. When Miss Lavendar tells Anne about her romance with Stephen Irving, it is the fairy tale of the lost love and the princess who waits in the enchanted palace for him to return (AA 202-203). When Irving comes back to see Miss Lavendar, Anne tells Charlotta The Fourth that "Prince Charming" is coming back to the "enchanted castle" where the princess is "weeping her faithful heart out for him" (AA 259). Dora is described as "a book where every page is the same" (AA 233). In *Anne's House of Dreams*, Captain Jim's life is a story which eventually becomes a book; his death is related in terms of Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar". Miss Cornelia's narration of Leslie's life paints a tragedy. In *Rainbow Valley*, John Meredith and Rosemary West learn that it "is never quite safe to think we have done with life. When we imagine we have finished our story fate has a trick of turning the page and showing us yet another chapter" (89).

Each time these characters acknowledge that they are part of a story, they are establishing themselves as a part of literature. Thus, even as Montgomery is subverting the classics, she is saying that it is acceptable to write about women and women writers and everyday existence. Everyone's life is worthy of being a story. And, as we have seen with Anne, this method of having characters turn their own lives into fictions or stories serves to substantiate these characters as realistic entities with realistic lives in realistic settings. Otherwise, Montgomery seems to suggest, how could they be formulaic characters if they, as characters in a novel, want to be formulaic characters but find they cannot? Again, L.M. Montgomery challenges the concept of genres -- her novels about Anne cannot be formulaic sentimental novels if the characters accept that they are not traditional heroines and heroes yet try to make themselves into those very things.

As we read for clues that indicate that Montgomery is writing about the power structures and gender barriers in her novels, we see that she continually weaves into Anne's story the plight of the female writer of her generation. It is acceptable for women to tell stories if they are storytellers in the oral tradition. Montgomery makes this clear when she has Diana tell the romantic story of Hester Gray after Anne and three of her female friends stumble upon Hester's overgrown garden. In the vein of all traditional storytellers, Diana begins with "Long ago..." (AA 109). Miss Cornelia, too, can tell the story of Leslie Moore, for "everybody in Four Winds knows poor Leslie's story" (AHD 70).

But it is mostly gossip these women tell. In Rainbow Valley, Anne and Gilbert Blythe return home after a trip to Europe and Miss Cornelia visits with the intention of telling all the news of what has happened while they were away. Anne says that she is "starving for Glen St. Mary gossip", while Susan Baker admits that "every proper woman likes to hear the news" (3). This type of gossip is not malicious or spread with the intent to hurt anyone; instead, it is a necessary step for these women if they are to be included in and welcomed into the community. It is the first thing that happens to Anne when she returns home; thus, she is re-initiated as a member of the community. Patricia Meyer Spacks has prepared perhaps the definitive work on gossip to date. Her study labels the type of gossip in which Anne engages as "serious": it exists only as a function of intimacy and provides a crucial form of solidarity (Gossip 5). Spacks writes, "Inasmuch as gossip...inhabits a space of intimacy, it builds on and implicitly articulates shared values of its intimates" (15). Gabriella Ahmanson sees such gossip as "regional fiction" (40). It is the stories people, particularly women, tell about themselves and others. It is permitted because it has its basis in reality, even if that reality is sometimes distorted.

Though we know that Anne writes stories, in Anne of Green Gables we do not see her in the act of writing; instead, she *tells* others about what she has written. She tells Diana about her own fictional romantic heroines, Geraldine and Cordelia. We know that she forms a Story Club but we do not see any of the members in the act of writing. However, in Anne of Avonlea, we actually see Anne as a writer. She fights for her right to speak as she prepares to tell Mr. Harrison that she has sold his Jersey cow by mistake and he keeps interrupting her. Anne pleads, "Let me tell my story" (20). As such, throughout Anne of Avonlea and Anne of the Island, Mr. Harrison, like Mr. Carpenter and Dean Priest in Emily's story, represents what Epperly calls a gatekeeper of the literary establishment, who attempts to prevent the female from telling her story (Fragrance 154). When Anne writes "Averil's Atonement", Mr. Harrison tells her that her characters "talk too much and use too high-flown language" (AI 91). This criticism could very well be one which Montgomery's detractors aim at her own writing. Mr. Harrison criticizes the language of "Averil's Atonement" but it is ironic that the story is published and becomes a huge success. This is Montgomery's way of showing what a female writer must do in order to be published: she is practically forced to use a particular writing style, of which male readers, represented here by Mr. Harrison, disapprove, yet which they still proceed to demand and to publish.

Anne is a writer and Montgomery outlines the writing process throughout each of her books about the red-haired heroine. In Anne of Avonlea, under conditions not very conducive to the production of great literature, Anne writes a whimsical sketch with which she will later have publishing success. She falls through a neighbour's roof and then is caught there in the rafters, amid splinters and shingles, during a rainstorm. After the storm, she jots down a fanciful dialogue she has imagined during the storm but does not yet submit it to any publications. Ironically Anne, like

Montgomery herself, is to have her best literary success with a piece of writing she produces under very unfavourable circumstances. Years later, she picks up, amid a pile of old Story Club manuscripts, the same sketch she has written on the Copp roof. She copies it, sends it off, and it is accepted for publication. Anne finds these old Story Club tales and manuscripts in her trunk one evening. She has taken them to college with her. This indicates that Anne's success and her best writing, like Montgomery's, will come from Avonlea, its people, and her own experiences.

In Anne of the Island, Anne imagines and then writes out a short story called "Averil's Atonement". She sends it off for publication. When it is rejected, she is devastated, but Diana secretly rewrites the ending and enters it in a contest for Rollings Reliable Baking Powder. Anne's heroines now extol the supremacy of this baking powder over all others. As Epperly points out, Anne has unknowingly stumbled upon formula writing (Fragrance 63). Anne resists the publication of "Averil's Atonement" in its altered form and does not even want to think about the story. She shudders every time she thinks of the money it has won her. Thus we see the female writer in protest against the formula style of writing to which she must adhere in order to have publishing success. Her story, which she writes out of love of writing, is desecrated, and is no longer hers. The same thing happens to Montgomery and is perhaps an important reason she loses interest in the Anne series after the initial book: once Anne becomes commercially viable, she becomes public property. Once private and sacred to Montgomery, she now is no longer Montgomery's own.

This may be why Anne begins to take a minor role to other characters in Anne of Avonlea (1909), where Davy and Dora Keith provide many of the antics. In Anne of the Island (1915), the description of college life adds colour to Anne's story. Anne's House of Dreams (1917) is charged with the presence of Leslie Moore. Anne of Ingleside (1939), Rainbow Valley (1919), and Rilla of

Ingleside (1921) depict Anne's children. In Anne of Ingleside we catch glimpses of the original Anne, but only briefly. We witness her near death, her tense reunion with Christine Stuart, and her concern over her marriage. Not even Montgomery can keep Anne a child forever, and with increased demands for Anne sequels, she loses interest in her famous red-haired creation and grows bored. Instead, she turns her attention to Anne and Gilbert's children, perhaps hoping they can maintain the innocence that Anne -- with increasing experience of life, marriage, childbirth and death -- has lost. As she works on Anne of Avonlea, she writes in her journal, "I'm working at it but it will not be as good as Green Gables. It doesn't come as easily. I have to force it" (S/J: 336). For her, the creative impulse is just not there for the sequels.

By the end of Anne of Green Gables, the narrator's voice is the dominant one, not Anne's. We listen to the narrator, not Anne. In The Fragrance of Sweet Grass, E.R. Epperly argues that Montgomery spends so much time in Anne of Green Gables establishing Anne's voice that by the time Anne goes to college, the reader easily assumes Anne's perspective (12). This suggests that we no longer need to hear Anne's voice in order to know what she feels or thinks or wants, or how she sees things. This may be true, but in that process we lose the energy and vitality that radiates from Montgomery's first novel. It is not there, even for Montgomery, in her other Anne books. The missing "magic" of the sequels is the character of Anne herself -- the innocent spirit that permeates the first novel. Anne Shirley is born of loneliness and emotional suffering; thus, Anne of Green Gables serves an immediate purpose for L.M. Montgomery because through it, she is able to write herself out, channelling her negative energy into something positive. This is also why Montgomery loses all interest in subsequent stories about Anne: she has no emotional need for them and there is only so far she can take Anne if the books are to appeal to both her publishers and her public.

If we follow Anne's life chronologically, we see, in Anne of Windy Poplars, that Anne is once again pictured as a writer. She writes letters to Gilbert while the two are engaged to be married. Her epistles relate the events in her life during the three years they are separated while he attends medical school and she is principal at Summerside High. These letters differ from those we see Emily Byrd Starr write to her father because Emily has no reader, while Anne does. Anne's letters are meant for a public audience: Gilbert Blythe. Emily's, addressed to her deceased father, are for herself, and are more a form of life or journal writing. Both are confidences, but of a different type, because Anne will have a response to hers.

As the book progresses, the amount of letter writing decreases and the narrator tells more and more of Anne's story. Epperly maintains that Montgomery stops using the letter format because she feels uncomfortable letting Anne do all the talking and feels the need for a narrator to be present in the text (Emgrance 133). But Epperly's interpretation does not allow for the connection between the form and content of Montgomery's novels. Neither does it permit us to consider this interplay in the context of Montgomery's portrayal of the female writer. It is therefore interesting to apply the principles of overreading to this plot development. When we do so, we see that as Anne's marriage to Gilbert draws closer, she writes less and less. She seems to be gradually slipping into the traditional female role of being silent. Writing Anne of Windy Poplars (1935) allows Montgomery to suggest a connection between the diminishing letter writing and the few formulaic pieces to which Anne confines her writing in later books. Thus there are more serious implications for the fact that Anne's writing tends to diminish as the story continues. She moves farther away from the original, outspoken Anne and develops into the traditional sentimental heroine.

Beginning in Anne of the Island, Anne is publicly recognized as a writer. In Anne of Windy Poplars, she is sometimes held in distrust because she writes. Rebecca Dew anxiously asks, "You won't put this in a story, will you?" Anne writes Gilbert, "Ever since Rebecca Dew discovered that I do an occasional bit of fiction for the magazines she has lived in the fear...or hope...that I'll put everything that happens at Windy Poplars into a story" (39). People ask her if she will write about them (and offer her *their* stories) but they are also concerned that she will write about them without them knowing or sanctioning it. At other times, people tell her stories because they hope she will write a book about them. Such is the case with Miss Minerva Tomgallon, an elderly spinster who invites Anne to dinner. She proceeds to fill the evening with sinister tales of the "Tomgallon Curse". Even as Anne listens to Miss Minerva, she is thinking, "The Curse of the Tomgallons! What a title for a story" (234). Miss Minerva tells these stories because she has heard that Anne is writing a book about everyone in Summerside. When Anne denies it, Miss Minerva appears disappointed. She tells Anne, "Well, if ever you do you are at liberty to use any of our stories you like, perhaps with the names disguised" (239). Minerva, the Roman name for Arachne, is an appropriate name for this spinner of old tales. Miss Minerva weaves these old stories -- stories that should not appear in children's books -- and, "cursed" by her family name, must live in her huge mansion alone with no one to whom she can talk. Both Miss Minerva and Anne fictionalize and dramatize Miss Minerva's life as a series of tragic and horrific tales. Anne delights in the "mystery and horror" which characterize the older woman's tales, and she realizes that Miss Minerva "gets no end of satisfaction out of her tragedies" (AWP 242).

Just as George Sand relocates Indiana on what Miller calls the island of her beginnings, so too Montgomery shows the limits of her narrative by ultimately locating Anne in a traditional rural

community. Anne goes away to college and earns a B.A., but when she marries Gilbert Blythe she must stop teaching and move with him as he sets up his own medical practice in Glen St. Mary. Anne can acquire an education and publish stories but she will not be a complete, fulfilled, real person until she loves and marries Gilbert and begins a family. Montgomery returns Anne to what Miller, in her discussion of Sand's novel, labels the "limits of femininity": eternal reproduction. We find, as Miller does with Sand's work, that Montgomery's use of sentimentality and the pastoral setting is itself a mode of critique (Miller 280-281, 286). Anne will remain in this world and be seen as a mother, but not a writer.

Montgomery suggests this when she separates the male and female worlds by showing the differences between male and female writing. In *Anne's House of Dreams*, the female world centres upon sewing (even Anne sews for her babies); fairy tales (the kind of writing Anne produces); and babies. The male world revolves around writing; the stories are life stories; and the talk is of politics. As a doctor, Gilbert heals and saves lives, while Captain Jim has actually lived the stories he tells. The house Anne will live in when she first marries has a romantic story attached to it, a story only one man can tell. When Gilbert rents the house, he is told Captain Jim is the only one who can "spin that old yarn now" (10). This novel posits the female artist against the male artist, with the male writer presented as the real artist, until we remember, as Epperly points out, that it is a female who creates and writes all of their stories (*Fragrance* 88).

Captain Jim is used as Montgomery's mouthpiece when she has him comment on women's writing. He reads a newspaper serial written by a female and called "A Mad Love", and although it is not his favourite type of fiction, he reads it "jest to see how long she can spin it out" (*AHD* 56). Here, we see the emblem of the female as spinner or spider. The narrator tells us that while Captain

Jim knows that Anne writes, he does not take her writing very seriously, believing that women cannot write. He uses "A Mad Love" to point out the faults of women writers: it is "one hundred and three chapters when it could all have been told in ten. A writing woman never knows when to stop; that's the trouble. The p'int of good writing is to know when to stop" (ΔΔΔ 144). Montgomery uses Captain Jim to talk about the trap or web in which she herself is caught, for she is unable to stop telling Anne's story. She hopes each Anne book she writes will be the last, but the public and her publishers continue to cry out for more. Also, Captain Jim voices the problems faced by women writers who are limited in the types of stories they can write. Montgomery puts these words in Captain Jim's mouth *because* he is a man. As a male, he represents the tradition that forces Montgomery to write, ironically, in the very style he does not like.

Anne of Ingleside marks the first time we see Anne as a weaver. As Anne reflects on her family after giving birth to Rilla, Montgomery writes, "She would hold all the threads of the Ingleside life in her hands again to weave into a tapestry of beauty" (ΔΔ 55). Anne has always hated to sew; it has, along with geometry, been her nemesis since her early days at Green Gables. One of the sacrifices Anne makes for Marilla (other than delaying her education and remaining on the farm after Matthew's death) occurs when Marilla is contemplating whether or not she should adopt the twins, Davy and Dora Keith. She complains that there will be a great deal of sewing to be done, and her eyesight is poor. Anne agrees to do the sewing for her (ΔΔ 56). Anne initially resists sewing, thereby recalling Nancy K. Miller's impression of the female artist who refuses the limits of the woman who embroiders her way through life. Miller sees Laure, the female painter in Indiana, as resisting the limitations and restrictions placed on the female artist (280). Anne, as we first know her, also does not seem prepared to follow tradition. However, Montgomery gradually

sets limits on what Anne can and cannot do. We see Anne occasionally resisting or mocking the traditional role but she does resign herself to the fact that people have to do things they do not like (AA 56). When Diana is engaged, she tells Anne that she will not be married for at least three more years, and she will need that time to prepare for housekeeping, explaining, "I haven't a speck of fancy work made yet. But I'm going to begin crocheting doilies tomorrow. Myra Gillis had thirty-seven doilies when she was married and I'm determined I shall have as many as she had." Anne teases, "I suppose it would be perfectly impossible to keep house with only thirty-six doilies" (AA 268).

Nevertheless, Anne sews for Davy and Dora, and when Ruby Gillis dies, her mother gives Anne the last piece of embroidery Ruby has worked. This has serious implications for Anne's future: Ruby has always been flirtatious and has intended to have a great number of beaux before marrying and having children. When Mrs. Gillis hands over Ruby's fancy work, she is also handing over the traditional role Ruby personifies. In Anne's House of Dreams, Gilbert has an office, but Anne, ironically, has a sewing room. In Rilla of Ingleside, Rilla Blythe detests sewing and babies, and Anne admits that Rilla is the only one of her children who does not seem ambitious (7). Through the character of Rilla, Montgomery shows that while the female may not have academic aspirations, she can still resist the traditional role of the docile female and be a strong person. Rilla fits somewhere in the middle of these two extremes. Like the young Anne Shirley before her, then, Rilla will be a new type of heroine.

Sewing suggests that the seamstress must follow a pattern, repair, or alter. In short, there is nothing creative about it because the seamstress must rely on or improve upon what already exists. Anne says as much in Anne of Green Gables, when she tells Mariila that "there's no scope for

imagination in patchwork" (92). When Marilla instructs Anne to work on her patchwork, using old scraps of material to produce a square, she is encouraging Anne to uphold tradition -- not only in the act of sewing, but in the act of using material which has already been used. Anne does not want to use material from old bed sheets and dresses; instead, she wants to create a new tradition by playing in the world she has created in Idlewild with Diana. In the quilting chapter in Anne of Ingleside, Anne is absent from the immediate scene. She remains inside to help Susan prepare the meal while the women stay outside on the porch to quilt and gossip. Jennie Rubio maintains that Anne is absent from this quilting, gossiping group because she is supposed to be a "model of more appropriate women's behaviour" (173). However, when we make connections between this scene and the rest of the Anne books, we see the development of another interesting pattern that Jennie Rubio does not consider. When this scene is overread in the context of what we know to be Anne's attitude toward sewing, we realize that she is absent from the quilting scene because she never has enjoyed sewing. Furthermore, a quilt is constructed from old, used, and discarded scraps of material. That the young Anne detests patchwork and the older Anne does not quilt shows that Anne never does completely follow tradition, even if she does give up her own teaching and writing career to become a wife and mother.

In contrast to sewing, weaving suggests creating or devising one's own pattern. In Anne of Ingleside, we repeatedly see Anne as creator: giving birth, cultivating a garden, and writing (as she tells Christine Stuart) "living epistles" (ΔIn 268). That these stories are "living" suggests that they are ever-changing, never keeping one pattern. Furthermore, because Anne's family is a young one, it has the power to establish its own, new traditions. The emblem of Anne as weaver is appropriate

because Anne is, after all, the thread that holds this book and the series together. As well, she assumes her place as the ideal mother, head of the family, and weaver of lives.

Just as we see Montgomery creating a safe haven for herself in Anne's world, we see Anne creating her own haven in her garden at Ingleside. Anne Blythe stays up late at night reading seed catalogues and Gilbert teases that she will buy any book that has "garden" in the title (ΔIn 93). For Montgomery, the pastoral setting of her first novel is necessary for the therapeutic process she will undergo as she writes Anne of Green Gables. In Anne of Green Gables, Anne initially looks beyond her own world for happiness and adventure. The name given to her community, "Avonlea", is not too different from the mythical "Avalon", the idyllic, mystical world of Arthurian legend. Avalon represents *an other* world, an escape from reality. That is what Montgomery achieves for herself through Avonlea: an escape, a release into a pastoral world. Unlike Avalon, Avonlea is not a different world; rather, it represents the ability to find release and wondrous beauty in the everyday world. Avonlea is a representation of the Cavendish of Montgomery's childhood, which she so desperately longs to re-create. She feels that she has physically, though not emotionally, outgrown this place. In Anne of Avonlea, as Epperly points out, Anne no longer has to look beyond her own world to find romance because in the second Anne novel, romance is all around her, but in disguised forms (Fragrance 42). Anne finds romance not only in her own life, but in the lives of others when she meets Miss Lavendor Lewis, and in the landscape, when she discovers Hester Gray's garden. In Anne of Ingleside, Anne's world is smaller; she has learned to find adventure in the activities of her children. Her garden becomes a different type of text that she can create. As Anne's writing diminishes, her texts become her children and her garden. She plans and chooses her flowers with the same care she has previously given to choosing names for the heroes of her stories.

This need to cultivate an escape in the surrounding world surfaces throughout the series. Montgomery's choice of setting is another form of escape. The community of Avonlea offers both the writer and the reader an opportunity to enter, if only for the duration of the Anne series, a paradise. Writing Anne's story provides Montgomery with an opportunity to slip the bonds of her own life, which include taking care of her grandmother, running the community post office, and coping with demanding relatives who visit for the entire summer. Writing allows her to enter, for a time, Anne's world. Epperly argues that Montgomery creates, in *Anne's House of Dreams*, an "enchanted coast" that works to build the sanctity of the home and community against the ravages of a war-torn world (*Fragrance* 75). Anne's children continue the tradition of finding an escape in their everyday world when they create their own magical kingdom in Rainbow Valley. The little valley behind the maple grove, where they play, is "a fairy realm of romance to them." It is full of "dear, friendly hollows", and there is "a certain wild woodsiness and solitude about Rainbow Valley, in spite of its nearness to the village, which endeared it to the children of Ingleside" (*RV* 14-15). As the Blythes grow older, no one plays in Rainbow Valley any longer, but it is still used as a retreat when the "real world" is too painful to face. Rilla and Walter go there when World War I breaks out; and in the midst of bloodshed, violence, death, Montgomery once again creates a safe haven for her readers and herself. We see as well that personal and public life conditions continually shape Montgomery's writing. Montgomery argues in 1914 that Anne's world is gone forever, but she still manages to recreate a remnant of it with each successive book (*SJ*: 147). She needs Anne's world as much as her readers want it.<sup>9</sup>

The same gift of imagination that inspires Anne to tell and write stories gives her a voice of her own. Before Anne is established as a writer, she is a speaker. The first thing Montgomery

does for Anne is give her a voice of her own. When we first meet her, Anne is completely alone. Tired of moving from one family to the next, she is anxious to have a home to call her own and sees Green Gables as that opportunity. She immediately begins to take charge of her life, using the spoken word as a way of establishing control over her lack of control. Likewise, Miller argues that Indiana, in Sand's novel, uses her writing to exert her own form of control and order on her life, which is governed by social traditions (Miller 278). Anne quickly names and claims space as her own, and her voice makes others aware of her presence. Anne is unafraid of voicing her opinions, emotions, and thoughts.

That her voice is important is obvious early in the novel. When Matthew arrives at Bright River, the stationmaster tells him that if he has any questions, he should ask Anne and she will be able to explain, for "she's got a tongue of her own, that's for certain" (AGQ 11). His tone suggests that Anne is a force to be reckoned with. Anne's first speaking act is to introduce herself; her second is to claim space. She tells Matthew, "I was imagining all the things that might have happened to prevent you [from coming]. I had made up my mind that if you didn't come for me tonight I'd go down the track to that big wild cherry tree at the bend, and climb up into it to stay all night" (AGQ 2). When Anne names and claims space, she shows people the beauty in the world around them. They see the same old things differently when they look through her eyes. Thus, a cherry tree becomes a beautiful and romantic place for a child to spend the night.

Anne names and re-names space throughout the novel. As she and Matthew drive to Green Gables, they pass through the "Avenue", "a stretch of road four or five hundred yards long, completely arched over with huge, wide-spreading apple trees....Overhead [is] one long canopy of snowy fragrant bloom" (AGQ 17). Anne is struck "dumb" by its beauty as she lifts her face

"rapturously to the white splendour above" (AGG 7). Upon learning the name of this place, she responds, "They shouldn't call that lovely place the Avenue. There is no meaning in a name like that. They should call it...the White Way of Delight.... When I don't like the name of a place or a person I always imagine a new one..." (AGG 8). Then they pass Barry's Pond. Anne pronounces a distaste for the name "Barry's Pond". She changes the name to the "Lake of Shining Waters" (AGG 9). As Mary Rubio points out, "The names she chooses show us the particular quality of her perception of reality. She takes the commonplace and makes it beautiful" ("Satire" 34). What is important here is not so much the names Anne chooses as the act of naming itself. Anne claims these public places in Avonlea as her own and in the later Anne books, they are called by the names she has given them. Anne's naming acts are important because they draw attention to her voice.

Anne is delighted with the sound and spelling of names, too: she wants to be called Cordelia but will settle for Ann -- with an "e". She loves the names "Avonlea" and "Diana". Anne wants to call Marilla "Aunt Marilla", but Marilla will not allow it. Conformity is suggested, however, in the name Anne gives one of her daughters: she calls her twins Anne and Diana, and both girls' names are shortened. Anne becomes "Nan" and Diana becomes known as "Di". If we rearrange the letters in "Nan", we have "Ann" without an "e". Nan has inherited her mother's imagination but Montgomery suggests that for herself and her readers, there can be only one Anne. Meanwhile, the young Anne Shirley wastes no time becoming acquainted with Green Gables, naming the spring "Dryad's Bubble" and another little patch of land "Idlewild". In just a few weeks, a woodland path is christened Lover's Lane. Within days she discovers Willowmere, Violet Vale, the Birch Path, and

the Haunted Wood. Anne tells Marilla that "Diana says she never saw the beat of me for hitting on fancy names for places" (AGG 6).

Although Anne glories in bestowing romantic names upon the places that surround her, she does revel in renaming herself as well. Her most important naming act takes place after she learns she is to stay at Green Gables. She stands before her "little looking-glass" and stares at her own reflection. She decides, "You're only Anne of Green Gables...and I see you, just as you are looking now, whenever I try to imagine that I'm the Lady Cordelia. But it's a million times nicer to be Anne of Green Gables than Anne of nowhere in particular" (AGG 60). Through these naming acts, Anne begins to gain control over her life. Initially, she has no "space" of her own and thus has no ties to anything. She comes to claim ownership, to establish connections to her world, and to create her own identity in these spaces.

Anne attaches romantic names to the places she discovers in Avonlea as part of her unceasing quest to find her romantic ideals in the world around her. Montgomery tells us that we need look no further for beauty and romance than in our own immediate world, for, as Epperly points out in her discussion of Anne of Avonlea, romance is all around (Fragrance 42). If romance is all around the heroine, then both she and Montgomery contest the form of the sentimental novel yet again: if there is romance in reality, then there must be reality in romance. And if Anne lives in a romantic world based in reality, she cannot live in the world of the sentimental novel.

In her examination of Indiana, Nancy K. Miller sees the journal the title character keeps as a gesture of "potentially transgressive self-empowerment" because if it is read, it will give Indiana the opportunity to change her life situation (Miller 279). For Anne, the spoken word serves the same purpose because it gives her power and control; people do not know how to react to her. Yet the

greatest power of Anne's speech does not lie in her acts of naming. It lies instead in her ability to give voice to others. At the beginning of Anne of Green Gables, Anne talks so much that others barely have an opportunity to get a word in edgewise. One of the reasons shy Matthew Cuthbert feels so comfortable with Anne is that with her, he does not have to talk; he can just sit and listen. Before he meets Anne, Matthew is nervous at the prospect of talking to a female stranger. After the stationmaster announces that a girl, not a boy, sits waiting for the Cuthberts, we learn that "Matthew [is] left to do that which [is] harder for him than bearding a lion in its den -- walk up to a girl -- a strange girl -- an orphan girl -- and demand of her why she wasn't a boy." Luckily for Matthew, Anne spares him the "ordeal of speaking first" (AGG 11). We see a reversal of normal social roles, with the child, not the adult, taking command and control of the conversation.

During the drive home, Matthew rarely has to say more than one sentence at a time. Anne does not ask him to clarify his responses; she accepts him as he is. By the time they reach Green Gables and Anne has gone to bed, Matthew believes that they should keep her, much to the astonishment of Marilla, who demands, "What good would she be to us?" Matthew quickly replies, "We might be some good to her." He persists, adding, "she's a real interesting little thing....You should have heard her talk coming from the station" (AGG 28-29). This surprises Marilla, who complains of Matthew, "I wish he was like other men and would talk things out....But what's to be done with a man who just *looks*?" She believes that "there is nothing more aggravating than a man who won't talk back" (AGG 35). Of course, Montgomery also implies that if the man will not or cannot talk, then the woman is in control and directs the conversation. Thus, it is Marilla, and not Matthew, who is the real head of the household. The ultimate and final decision of whether or not to keep Anne rests on her shoulders. Montgomery later writes that Matthew is "shy and silent

simply because I wished to have all the people around *Anne* as pointedly in contrast with her as possible" (*S/JI*: 38). Achieving this contrast means that it is Anne's tongue and Anne's voice we hear. If the other characters spoke as much as Anne, it would diminish Anne's voice.

In her journal, Montgomery writes that she does not draw any of the characters in her books from real life; only places, real speeches, incidents, or qualities have grounds in reality for her (*S/JI*: 39-40). But this is not true, for she bases Anne, at least partly, on her own private self, and she allows other characters in her novels to share some of her life experiences.

In *Anne of Green Gables*, Anne Shirley is not the only character representative of Montgomery: Matthew and Marilla represent different components of Montgomery. Matthew represents unsocialized, unconditional love: innocent, naive, accepting. By the time he brings Anne home to Green Gables on the first day, he is already attached to her. Matthew Cuthbert is certainly unprepared, but unlike Marilla, is unafraid to love. Matthew grows so attached to Anne that he does the unthinkable (for him): he goes into town to buy material to have a dress with puffed sleeves made for her. Matthew has difficulty speaking to members of the opposite sex, and feels comfortable talking only to Marilla, Anne and Rachel Lynde. He chooses a store which he thinks will have a male clerk, for he dreads seeing girls behind the counters. He can speak to them when he knows exactly what he wants to buy and can point to it, but "in such a matter as this, requiring explanation and consultation, Matthew [feels] that he must be sure of a man behind the counter" (*AGG* 197). Unfortunately, only female clerks are available and he stammers his way through the ordeal. Matthew has hoped for the male, traditional way of doing things, but is forced to deal with a female instead. Unable to voice his real intent, he instead asks for a garden rake (though it is December), hayseed, and brown sugar. Safely home, he realizes that Marilla would disapprove of

his idea and decides to ask Mrs. Lynde to make the dress. "for of no other woman in Avonlea would Matthew have dared to ask advice" (AGG 199). Rachel Lynde reacts positively, thinking, "I'm sure the child must feel the difference between her clothes and the other girls'. But to think of Matthew taking notice of it! That man is waking up after being asleep for over sixty years" (AGG 200).

Anne is instrumental in creating a voice for Matthew. She awakens in him an awareness of life he has never before known. His love for her forces him to speak because in loving her as he does, he is not able to sit idly by and not take a part in raising her and shaping her life. When Marilla decides to keep her, Matthew uncharacteristically advises his sister to "be as good and kind to her as you can be without spoiling her" (AGG 48). It may be argued that in buying Anne the dress with puffed sleeves, Matthew is promoting her femininity and reinforcing traditional sex roles, but the significance of Matthew buying the dress is that it shows Anne's power to transform others. She allows Matthew to communicate. It also allows Montgomery to very deftly show who is really in control in the community of Avonlea: it is to Rachel Lynde, a housewife, that Matthew must go for advice and assistance, and it is Matthew's sister, Marilla, who has the final say on any important decisions that are to be made at Green Gables.

It is crucial that Anne empower Matthew by giving him his own voice. If both Matthew and Anne are extensions of Montgomery, then we see that the creative, imaginative side, represented by Anne, is able to loosen some of the restrictions imposed upon the other part of the self, depicted in Matthew. Matthew is a good person, but a very silent one. He has never expressed any feelings or reacted outwardly to events. In her article, "Satire, Realism, and Imagination in Anne of Green Gables", Mary Rubio maintains that at the beginning of Anne of Green Gables, "Matthew is clearly

the product of a repressive society: his personality is locked, inarticulate, within him. He is not afraid merely to express his opinions, he is afraid even to have them" (30).

That Matthew does learn to truly speak shows the transformative power of innocent, accepting love. Montgomery shows that real love asks nothing but gives much. Matthew represents that part of Montgomery that realizes love must be unconditional, for he would do anything for Anne. Montgomery does not experience this herself. She rarely sees her Grandfather Montgomery and her father moves away when she is a baby. Her Grandfather McNeil is not an outwardly affectionate person. Edwin Simpson, to whom she is briefly engaged to be married, is obsessed with her and their relationship, and Herman Leard presents physical demands and social constraints. Through her writing, she adjusts her life and arranges things as she thinks they should be. She writes and rewrites her life not only in her journals; she carries out the same process in her novels.

Anne changes Marilla's life as well as Matthew's. Not even Marilla Cuthbert can resist feeling sorry for Anne when the girl first arrives at Green Gables:

Pity was suddenly stirring in her heart for the child. What a starved, unloved life she had had -- a life of drudgery and poverty and neglect; for Marilla was shrewd enough to read between the lines of Anne's history and divine the truth. No wonder she had been so delighted at the prospect of a real home. It was a pity she had to be sent back (AGG 41).

Marilla, too, is "bewitched" by the girl. When Anne chatters on endlessly, Matthew sits in enraptured silence and "Marilla permit[s] the 'chatter' until she finds herself becoming too interested in it, whereupon she always promptly quenche[s] Anne by a curt command to hold her tongue"

(AGG 63). When we first meet Marilla we are told that she looks "like a woman of narrow experience and rigid conscience", but there is "a saving something about her mouth" which, if ever so slightly developed, might be considered "indicative of a sense of humour" (AGG 5). As Elizabeth Waterston writes in *Kindling Spirit*, Marilla has lived "a rigorous life combined with a rigid set of social and religious standards that has worn down her sensibilities and narrowed her code of behaviour but not destroyed her tough humanity" (42). We learn to excuse her often seemingly cold behaviour because we have the privilege of having an omniscient narrator tell us what is going on in Marilla's mind. We know that "Marilla really [does] not know how to talk to the child, and her uncomfortable ignorance [makes] her crisp and curt when she [does] not mean to be" (AGG 31). Montgomery allows us to sympathize with Marilla as well as with Matthew and Anne.

Waterston argues that Marilla and Anne represent the two sides of the artist, one creative and inspired, the other constructive and controlling (*Kindling Spirit* 42). If this is the case, we may conclude that the creative aspect, represented by Anne, is able to overcome the controlling, constructive side. If we read Montgomery's life into this, it suggests that she will break the bonds of rigid literary tradition because Anne will become her voice. Matthew tells Anne she can talk as much as she wants, to which Anne responds, "Oh, I'm so glad....It's such a relief to talk when one wants and not be told that children should be seen and not heard" (AGG 15). Marilla frequently admonishes Anne for talking too much, telling her, "A little girl like you should be ashamed of talking so....Go back and sit down quietly and hold your tongue and behave as a good girl should" (AGG 47). Statements like this are indicative of Marilla's social conditioning. Marilla agrees with much of what Anne says but is shocked to hear her thoughts come from the mouth of a child. Marilla is an example of the damage that can be done when a child has been socially conditioned to

hold her tongue and hide her emotions. The advent of Anne, however, brings change to Marilla's attitudes, and by the end of the novel, she wants Anne to talk.

Many times after Anne's arrival, Marilla permits her true feelings or reactions to show only when she is alone, beating "a retreat" to the cellar for potatoes because she does not know how to react to what she has heard Anne say (AGG 35). In *Anne's House of Dreams*, when Little Joy dies, Marilla is shocked at Anne's angry outburst against God or the evil power that has taken her firstborn. Though she becomes used to Anne's ways, Marilla never really feels comfortable with the female who has a voice of her own. In *Anne of Avonlea*, Marilla cannot bring herself to articulate her true feelings towards Dora; Mrs. Lynde has to finish the sentence for her:

'He isn't a bad little soul,' conceded Marilla....'Davy gets around you somehow...and Dora is a lovely child, although she is...kind of...well, kind of...'

'Monotonous? Exactly,' supplied Mrs. Rachel (AA 232).

Marilla is very self-conscious when it comes to demonstrating or stating how she feels. She denies her feelings towards Anne and refuses to acknowledge her emotions. Raised by strict parents and the victim of a negative romantic experience, Marilla is now afraid to open her heart to love. Marilla represents socialized love. She has been conditioned to pay attention to appearances and to do what is socially acceptable. She seems to represent the part of Montgomery that has been hurt.

The young Anne voices her feelings, not intending to hurt people, but to honestly express her opinions. Her comments on various people are apparently very appropriate, although Marilla usually admonishes her for voicing these thoughts. Upon Anne's return from her first experience of Sunday

School, she relates her impressions to Marilla -- the prayers were too long, the minister boring and unimaginative. We learn that:

Marilla felt helplessly that all this should be sternly reprov'd, but she was hampered by the undeniable fact that some of the things Anne had said, especially about the minister's sermons and Mr. Bell's prayers, were what she herself had really thought deep down in her heart for years, but had never given expression to. It almost seemed to her that those secret, unuttered, critical thoughts had suddenly taken visible and accusing shape and form in the person of this outspoken morsel of neglected humanity (ΔGG 83).

Montgomery chooses to speak through a child not only because she identifies with this child, but because children, not yet socialized, can say and do things adults cannot. No one really challenges them, so Anne can do and say things an adult would never be able to do. She can say things Marilla thinks but cannot say. Thus, Anne becomes Marilla's mouthpiece, giving voice to views the older lady is reluctant to express. Publishers and readers are less likely to question Anne's opinions than Marilla's because Anne is the child and is therefore allowed more freedom of thought because she has not been fully educated in social tradition or morals as of yet.

Anne gains credibility because we respect Marilla and believe she is honest and good. She keeps her house and garden in good order. We learn that privately, Mrs. Lynde is of the opinion that Marilla Cuthbert sweeps her yard over as often as she sweeps her home, so that "[o]ne could have eaten a meal off the ground without overbrimming the proverbial peck of dirt" (4). She has a neat and prim appearance, she teaches Anne to say her prayers, and she is, in another echo of Lewis

Carroll, "as fond of morals as the Duchess in Wonderland" (ΔGG 58). Yet Marilla does have a hidden sense of humour, for even after Anne behaves badly toward Mrs. Lynde, Marilla recalls the look on Rachel's face and her lips twitch "with amusement". She feels "a most reprehensible desire to laugh" (ΔGG 69). After Anne's apology, Marilla is "dismayed at finding herself inclined to laugh over the recollection" (ΔGG 75). Montgomery spends time developing Marilla's character as one that is moral and just, which allows her to show the positive power Anne has to change people's lives. Montgomery also develops Mrs. Lynde's good character, and when Anne eventually tells Matthew her opinions of the ministerial candidates who have been preaching in Avonlea, she frequently quotes Mrs. Lynde as an authority on the subject. Even though it is Anne who voices these thoughts, the ideas themselves are influenced by and accepted by the adults. Mrs. Lynde is a traditionalist who speaks her mind. She is caught between believing that a woman should hold her tongue, not go to college, and not travel around the world, and priding herself on speaking her mind. If Anne uses Mrs. Lynde's words as an authority, then she is caught between these two worlds as well: she is upholding community values and beliefs, articulated by a traditional housewife, but at the same time, she *is* articulating her own thoughts. At the beginning of Anne of Ingleside, we meet Mrs. Lynde once again as she engages in a "wild, poetical flight" with Anne and is "thankful that Marilla [isn't] there to hear" (2). That Mrs. Lynde converses with Anne in this way shows that, even though she feels uncomfortable, perhaps traditions can be broken. Thus, any character can become a mouthpiece for Montgomery. When Anne challenges Shakespeare, so does Montgomery. When Anne does not like names of people or places and changes them, it is Montgomery changing things. Thus, we return to Nancy K. Miller's argument that for a text maker, the text can become a means

of self-empowerment (278). Here, her novel gives Montgomery the power to improve the quality of her emotional and professional life

Anne allows Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert to truly speak for the first time in their lives. Previously, their speech has been functional; a duty, not a joy. Now it changes, and by the end of the novel, Marilla carries on conversations with Anne. Marilla and Matthew learn to express their emotions, though it takes her brother's death to enable Marilla to do this. Thus, even Matthew's death, a painful experience, represents a somewhat positive moment because it draws Anne and Marilla closer. It is the crusty Marilla who is permitted to survive because she has yet to learn the means and value of a loving relationship. It is only at this point that Marilla is able to acknowledge her love for Anne, a step which signifies Anne's acceptance at Green Gables at last. Years later, Montgomery writes,

Many people have told me that they regretted Matthew's death in Green Gables. I regret it myself. If I had the book to write over again I would spare Matthew for several years. But when I wrote it I thought he must die, that there might be a necessity for self-sacrifice on Anne's part, so poor Matthew joined the long procession of ghosts that haunt my literary past (*ΔP* 75).

Through Matthew's death, the "experienced" woman symbolically buries that part of her which belongs, in her opinion, to girlhood. She sacrifices innocence to acquire knowledge and experience. Matthew's death brings us back to the therapeutic function of Montgomery's writing; if she buries her past with his death, then Montgomery may finally be able to lay the ghosts of her relationships with Simpson and Leard to rest as well.

Matthew's death also creates a female household, with Marilla now truly the matriarch. By the time Montgomery writes Anne of Green Gables, her own grandfather and father have died. Ultimately, innocence dies with Matthew, which parallels Montgomery's own feeling that she has lost all innocence because of the recent events in her life. Matthew continues to be the marker by which Anne closes particular eras of the rest of her life. Each time she makes a significant change in her life, she leaves her girlhood farther behind her by visiting Matthew's grave and leaving flowers. She goes to Matthew's grave before she befriends Gilbert; she visits the grave before she leaves Avonlea to go to college; and she makes a "little pilgrimage" there on the evening before her wedding, marking the "last day of her girlhood" (ΔHD 17). In Anne of Ingleside, Anne returns to Green Gables for a week. The opening pages of the novel show L.M. Montgomery working herself back into Anne's world. Anne Blythe, mother and wife, is back in Avonlea for a week, greeted at every turn by the "Anne-who-used-to-be" (ΔIn 1). Montgomery takes herself and the reader on a journey through the past: we meet Mrs. Lynde and Diana again, visit Hester Gray's garden, and recall the first night Anne spends in the little gable room that will become hers. Anne and Diana have a picnic and play a game of "Do you remember...?" (ΔIn 7-8).

This game is perhaps intended to jog Montgomery's memory as much as the reader's, for this book was written over thirty years after the original Anne novel. The trip home for the funeral of Gilbert's father sees Gilbert, the busy doctor, return to Glen St. Mary before Anne, so she becomes Anne of Green Gables once more. The last thing she does before she returns to her home in Glen St. Mary is put flowers on Matthew's grave. She has been pretending to be a young girl again during this visit, but now it is time to leave the girl behind and step back into the woman's role. When Anne

goes home to Gilbert and their five children (she is at this point expecting another child), she quickly resumes her role as "Mrs. Dr. Dear" (Aln 15).

Anne continues to be a transforming power in subsequent books by enabling other characters to exert control over their own lives. In Anne of Avonlea we meet Lavendar Lewis, who lives in self-imposed exile in a little cottage called Echo Lodge. Miss Lewis is released from this exile only through Anne's intervention. Through Anne's friendship with his son, Stephen Irving learns about Lavendar Lewis and her present life. They are eventually reunited and married. In Anne of Windy Poplars, Anne visits Miss Minerva, and the elderly lady reveals that she enjoys Anne's company, for she has been alone for so long that she has "almost forgotten to talk" (241). Miss Minerva has not invited any of the previous Summerside High principals to supper because they have all been male. Anne is one of the few people permitted to enter the house, dine there, and hear the old stories Miss Minerva loves to tell. Anne is privileged because she is female. In each case, Anne releases a woman from her constraints just as she helps release Montgomery from the constraints of her own life.

However, by the time Anne has been schooled and socialized, her voice has been silenced. She has difficulty articulating her deepest emotions and blushes when Marilla remarks that she is growing up. When Matthew dies, Anne begins to ask if he is dead, but she cannot "say the dreadful word". Diana offers to spend the night at Green Gables, to keep Anne company, but Anne tells her she wants to be alone, where she can be "quite silent and quiet". Marilla, on the other hand, expresses an "impassioned grief" which breaks "all the bounds of natural reserve and lifelong habit in its stormy rush". It is only when Anne remembers Matthew's *voice* that she can express her grief (AGG 295-296). As a university student in Anne of the Island, she wonders at the ease with which

some of the other girls talk about their romances; for "it [is] not easy for her to speak to a stranger of the great mystery and transformation of life" (32). This is in direct contrast to the young waif who opens her heart to Matthew, Marilla, and Diana immediately after meeting each of them.

Marilla eventually comments, "You don't chatter half as much as you used to, Anne, nor use half as many big words" (AGG 254). Ironically, it is Marilla who, throughout the book, discourages such talk. It is also Marilla who asks, "What has become of your story club?" (AGG 255). She has previously scoffed at this as well. Thus, as a result of Anne's presence and the power of her speech, Marilla is transformed. Anne, on the other hand, decides,

I don't want to talk as much....It's nicer to think dear, pretty thoughts and keep them in one's heart, like treasures. I don't like to have them laughed at or wondered over. And somehow I don't want to use big words any more....Miss Stacy says the short ones are much stronger and better (AGG 254-255).

Anne has by now established her own voice. Unfortunately, from this point on, she fades from the picture, as Montgomery allows other characters to carry on the story. In Anne of Avonlea, Anne sounds very much like Marilla when she tells Davy to behave himself and not to use words that are not nice for little boys to say (80). We may infer that Anne's youthful enthusiasm is diminishing and there will be things that she cannot voice publicly because she is now, like Marilla, an adult. In Montgomery's own life, this inability to say or write about certain things publicly leads to a greater dependence on her journals as the place where she can continue to express a "tongue of her own" (AGG 11).

The act of speech and the difficulties which impair the expression of one's thoughts and feelings continue to be important for Montgomery in the rest of the Anne series, with the focus often on the inability of the female to speak. The Anne of Anne's House of Dreams is similar to the Anne at the end of Anne of Green Gables and in Anne of the Island: she finds it difficult to articulate her feelings. Watching Diana cradle her small daughter, Anne Cordelia, Anne envies the "gesture of motherhood" and we are told that her heart is filled "with sweet, unuttered dreams and hopes" (AHD 3). Throughout this novel, she continues to have difficulty putting her thoughts into words. When Miss Cornelia tells her that the eighth Proctor baby has arrived, Anne decides to go and see him, and smiles to herself "over a thought too dear and sacred to be put into words" (AHD 69). Miss Cornelia realizes that her speech may not be as effective as the written word and tells Anne, "I wish I could write like you" (AHD 113). When Anne's firstborn, Little Joy, dies, Marilla is "racked with sympathy" but can express it only in "age-worn formulas" (AHD 119). When Anne hopes for Leslie's happiness through a romance with Owen Ford, she cannot talk to Miss Cornelia about it because she cannot "desecrate" the thought by "free speech" (AHD 157). Leslie learns to find relief in speech, and tells Anne her life story. At the same time, when the real identity of her "husband" is revealed, she is able to write only a brief note of explanation. She tells Anne, "I couldn't write somehow....It seemed so futile to try to say anything with pen and ink" (AHD 187). Montgomery uses these scenes to reveal the limitations of speech and writing that females face. There is only so much that is allowed to be said. It is not proper to discuss childbearing and failed marriages, and even among themselves, the women in Montgomery's novels feel uncomfortable engaging freely in speech. Here, we see the inadequacy of language: though powerful, it still is not always capable of expressing exactly what we want to say.

In Anne of Ingleside, we frequently read Anne's thoughts in the form of first-person narration. These thoughts indicate important things: that she does not always agree with what is going on around her, that she can be compassionate, that she can be cynical. In this novel, Anne is portrayed as the ideal mother Mrs. Allan remembers so lovingly in Anne of the Island -- never becoming angry with her children and never laughing at their questions or sayings -- but she is also a very realistic and believable character. She cries, feels angry, is jealous, resents people, and doubts (Especially, Fragrance 139-140). Unfortunately, she seems to resemble the Anne at the end of Anne of Green Gables, who decides to keep her thoughts to herself instead of speaking them. In Anne of Green Gables we sense the dangers such a decision on Anne's part might create; in Anne of Ingleside we see those dangers materialize. The most obvious example is Aunt Mary Maria, who comes to Ingleside for a brief visit and stays several months, invading the Blythes' personal space and dampening their spirits. Anne voices her thoughts, feelings, and opinions only to certain people she can trust, like Miss Crinelia. Secrecy surrounds this novel; even Aunt Mary Maria warns Anne, "in the future it would be better for you not to be *quite so secretive* about things" (ΔIn 77). Of course, much of Montgomery's own life is characterized by secrecy. This is a reproach Montgomery might actually be directing at herself. Alternatively, it is perhaps a clue to her readers that if we read carefully, we will uncover many secrets embedded in her work.

Anne of Green Gables closes with Anne sitting at her gable window, looking down on the world below:

Anne's horizons had closed in since the night she had sat there after coming home from Queen's; but if the path set before her feet was to be narrow she knew that flowers of quiet happiness would bloom

along it. The joys of sincere work and worthy aspiration and congenial friendship were to be hers; nothing could rob her of her birthright of fancy or her ideal world of dreams (AGG 308-9).

Anne's horizons are limited in more ways than one. In order for her to achieve her goals, she will have to make more sacrifices than just staying on the farm. Waterston points out that in the scene cited above, Anne is just like Mrs. Lynde who, at the beginning of the novel, sits at her window. In Kindling Spirit, Waterston writes, "Mrs. Lynde has joined her, and she in effect has joined Mrs. Lynde" (35). She maintains that the fact that Anne sits at the window as Mrs. Lynde often does suggests that the young girl is as "worthy" as Mrs. Lynde. That is, Anne is now a member of the community and has earned the right to sit at her window and view Avonlea as Mrs. Lynde does. However, we may question Waterston's view with an analysis of how this positioning of Anne affects her future.

In the example cited above, Anne has just returned home from making her peace with Gilbert Blythe, calling herself "a stubborn little goose" and promising to be his friend (AGG 308). Readers know that their friendship will lead to a romantic relationship, and this raises the possibility that Anne will marry. If she marries, she will, in keeping with the cultural dictates of the time, surrender her name and her independence. She will continue to sit by the window, as she does in the subsequent books, which all have moments of Anne thinking or writing by her window. In Anne of the Island, she kneels by her window and keeps an all-night vigil when she thinks Gilbert is dying (236). In Anne of Windy Poptars, she writes letters to Gilbert and completes her school work as she sits by her tower window (40). This evokes the traditional image of the damsel in distress, awaiting the arrival of her prince. This image, in turn, indicates that a confinement or a restriction has been

placed on Anne. She will sit in the window for the rest of her life. It is at this point, we know, that Anne will stop writing because she will marry Gilbert. She cannot move beyond this window. As she sits at the tower window, much like the heroines from the old romances she once admired, Anne is very close to becoming a formulaic heroine.

As Montgomery continues Anne's story, her horizons as a writer are limited as well. The form she uses practically dictates that she must engage Anne, marry her, make a mother of her. The sentimental novel will not permit Anne to rest or to become an independent woman. Montgomery shows how the figure of the female artist (and Anne is a potential female artist) is not considered desirable; is not welcome in turn-of-the-century society. In *Anne's House of Dreams*, Paul Irving, now a successful writer, shows Anne his poetry. He praises Anne's own writing, which he says has been widely published in the last three years, but Anne laughs at this, telling him, "No. I know what I can do. I can write pretty, fanciful little sketches that children love and editors send welcome cheques for. But I can do nothing big. My only chance for earthly immortality is a corner in your *Memoirs*" (AHD 14-15). At second sight, it might seem that Montgomery is commenting on her own writing. As her stories are told in the sentimental genre, she insinuates that they will never amount to much in the traditional literary canon. The only way she will be recognized as a significant writer is in her own memoirs, her journals. The journals, as we see, permit readers to make the necessary connections between her personal views and her public writing. They also allow her portrait of the artist (the story of her own life) to be critically accepted.

Anne chooses marriage and a family over a writing career, and though she continues to write, it is fanciful stuff, far removed from reality. She says as much herself when she explains to Gilbert why she cannot help Captain Jim write his life book. This life book is a form of life writing

comprised of a series of stories based on his sea travels which he has been recording faithfully for years: "It's not in the power of my gift. You know what my forte is, Gilbert -- the fanciful, the fairylike, the pretty" (*AHD* 107). As Epperly points out, Anne has borne and lost a child, and has known real tragedy, yet she cannot write this tale (*Fragrance* 93). Montgomery includes the reference to Captain Jim's life book to show that a male writer can publish stories grounded in real-life experiences, but a female cannot. Eventually, the book is written with the help of a male writer, Owen Ford.

While he is writing, Owen is given a room of his own to write in at the lighthouse, so he can be near Captain Jim. Anne and Leslie Moore can only offer criticisms and editing suggestions, although Leslie does suggest an ending which, when Owen uses it, the critics love. They love it, however, because they think a male has written it. Montgomery thus reminds us of the many female writers who used male pseudonyms in order to be published. Anne cannot write Captain Jim's story because these critics would not have a woman writing a life story. She would have to write sentimental fiction. Montgomery knows the limitations placed on women writers. Therefore, we see, through an overreading, the influence of gender on Montgomery's writing. It is interesting to note, too, that while Montgomery cannot change such gender bias in her novels, she does change it, to a certain extent, in her own life: L.M. Montgomery continues to write and publish after her marriage and after the birth of her sons, and she makes more money than her husband does.

Montgomery uses Anne to write publicly about her private life, and in doing so, uses Anne to change -- on paper, at least -- certain things about her own life. While Montgomery's grandmother is moody and does not welcome any of her granddaughter's friends to their home, Anne's friends can visit anytime. The author records in her journal, "My friends...have never been welcome here....

[Grandmother] has never at any time...seemed to want *anyone* to come here" (S/I: 295). Diana, and later, Jane Andrews and Katherine Brooke, all stay at Green Gables. Marilla values Anne's educational opportunities and is willing to sell the farm and let Anne go away to school rather than ask Anne to give up her education and stay with her. In contrast, Montgomery feels obliged to sacrifice her teaching career to stay at the farm with her grandmother. Later, when she begins to write fulltime, her grandmother will not permit her to set up her own den in the house (S/I: 334). Unlike Lucy Woolner Macneil, Marilla "softens" as she grows older. Thus, Anne becomes Montgomery's means of self-empowerment: Anne is the means through which Montgomery gives her private voice power. Again, we see Montgomery using Anne for therapeutic purposes: writing about Anne gives her strength to face the difficulties in her own life.

The Anne stories collectively present the struggle of the artist -- perhaps not as overtly as does Emily's trilogy, but in much the same way. As an emblem of L.M. Montgomery and the female writer/artist, Anne represents the imaginative, creative force which promotes what is different. She is placed in opposition to the Avonlea and Glen St. Mary folk, who prevail upon common sense. By writing, imagining, going to university, and postponing marriage, Anne resists tradition while facing a community that demands tradition. As both a child and an adult, Anne lives for fairy tales in a world that argues for reality. L.M. Montgomery resists literary tradition by delaying Anne's marriage for as long as possible. She also turns the sentimental novel upside down to parody the world this form imposes upon her fiction and, more importantly, upon her heroines.

The sentimental novel affords Montgomery several opportunities in her writing of Anne's story. Most obviously, as the popular form for girls' stories, it ensures her a market where she can sell her books. It also allows her to show the limits of the type of writing women writers so often

must use in order to be recognized. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this form allows Montgomery, at a time when she is experiencing a great deal of emotional pain, loneliness, and frustration in her own life, to retreat into the painless, idyllic world of Avonlea. Doing this gives Montgomery the strength to face her own life situation. By uncovering those emblems or signs of textual construction which the author embeds in the text, the process of overreading allows us to see the political and personal conditions that shape Montgomery's writing at any moment.

The stories contained in Lucy Maud Montgomery's fictional works are based on the life stories she records in her journals. It is no surprise then that in her public writings, fiction and nonfiction overlap. In the next chapter, we will see how Montgomery again uses writing as an emotional release as she retraces, in the Emily of New Moon series, the process of writing Anne of Green Gables. It is at this point that we are able to discern the degree of multiplicity that characterizes her writing, for what is written in the journals and is given shape once more in Anne's story is yet again told in the Emily trilogy.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### "Writing Herself Out"<sup>10</sup>

#### Overreading Emily's Story

Life writing and the role writing plays in the attempt to structure one's life are very much at the forefront in Emily of New Moon, Emily Climbs, and Emily's Quest, Montgomery's three novels about a young author. This series is Montgomery's examination of the conditions that must be present for the creative process to occur. As we have seen, Anne of Green Gables is produced after Montgomery experiences great emotional upheaval. Unable to write directly about that pain, she retreats instead into the relatively painless world of Avonlea as a means of escaping the shadows of her own life. When Montgomery begins to develop the Emily series, she recreates the process of losing someone and of dealing with emotional upheaval. She traces, in other words, that point in her life when she writes Anne of Green Gables. Though they appear to be different, the stories of Anne Shirley and Emily Byrd Starr are closely connected: the form and the content of Emily's story speak directly to that of Anne's. How we read Emily of New Moon is largely dependent upon how we read Anne of Green Gables, for the experience of writing Anne of Green Gables and Montgomery's own process of rewriting her journals are included in Emily's story. An overreading of Emily's story allows us to establish an intertextual thread connecting the journals, the Anne series, and the Emily series.

When we apply the critical process of overreading to Emily's story we find that Montgomery's work is deceptive. She appears to be creating in her fiction a pastoral representation of a childhood world, while at the same time encoding strong messages about the culture and society

in which she, as a woman, lives. As we have seen her do with the Anne series, in Emily's story she once again subverts the form and content of the sentimental girls' novel so that it becomes a social and literary commentary on her publishers, her critics, academics, the literary canon, and even her reading public. We may also uncover, through an overreading, the many themes Montgomery explores in the three Emily books: the differences between private writings and public writings; the recognition of and the need for writers to write from personal experience; the artist's tendency to see art in everything around her; and, finally, the writer as a divinely inspired individual, and an intermediary between humans and their gods.

The process of overreading must be applied differently to the Emily series than to the Anne books because even as Montgomery begins to write Emily of New Moon, she realizes that she will be creating a series of books about this character, something she does not realize or plan with Anne of Green Gables. In 1921, two years before Emily of New Moon is published, she refers to it in her journals as her "new book-series", and she suggests to her publishers that this series be called The New Moon Series, with the first book being Emily of New Moon (*SJIII*: 6). Here we realize that while overreading Anne's story allows the reader to easily slip from one book to another across time and space to connect the common threads and themes reappearing throughout the series, Emily's story must be overread on a more sequential level. Each book in the series marks a successive stage in Emily's development as a writer and we should examine her progress as she develops.

By 1920, L.M. Montgomery's journals show she is anxious to put Anne away so she can concentrate on her new heroine, Emily Byrd Starr. She writes that she is "done with *Anne* forever" (*SJIII*: 390). She begins writing Emily of New Moon in 1920, and it is published in 1923. She has been planning Emily's story for some time, writing in her journal, "she is already an embryo in my

mind -- she has been christened for years" (S/III: 390). On August 20, 1921, she writes, "This morning I wrote the first chapter of my new book -- Emily of New Moon....'Emily' is a dear little soul and I have some good experiences waiting for her" (S/III: 16). By August 29, 1923, the book has been published, and she is reading reviews (S/III: 147).

Overreading, as Nancy K. Miller defines it, requires that we examine the text to uncover the conditions necessary for the production of literature (275). The overreader assumes that no text stands alone or is created in isolation. Montgomery's books, for instance, are influenced by her life situation and are interconnected through her journals. Thus, a text is the result of the forces that are at work in an author's life at the time of production. When we overread the Emily trilogy we are reading for clues that will allow us to follow the development of the female artist. We do this by uncovering autobiographical, political, and social elements that can be deciphered in the text. We overread the Emily trilogy to discover how, through writing the Emily books, L.M. Montgomery is empowered by her own writing. We have already seen how the creation of Anne of Green Gables empowers Montgomery in both her personal life and her literary career. An overreading of the Emily series will allow us to focus on the moments in the narrative when Montgomery parallels Emily's writing habits with her own. It reveals that both write not only because they love to, but also because they have a need to write. Writing serves as a means of therapy for both.

The conditions that are present in Montgomery's life when she creates Anne change dramatically by 1920, and Emily's story reflects those changes. In her mid-thirties, Montgomery marries a minister, Ewan Macdonald, discovering years later that he suffers from periods of prolonged mental illness in the form of "religious melancholia" (S/III: 322). In addition, he is jealous of her literary success. After her wedding, Montgomery assumes the role of the dutiful minister's

wife, struggling to raise her two sons so no one will suspect the truth about Reverend Macdonald's psychological state. She has three sons but her second is stillborn. As Rubio and Waterston point out in their introduction to the journals, World War I is a particularly difficult experience for such a passionate and emotional woman who is inevitably, as the minister's wife, "at the nerve center of the community" (*SJII*: xv). Cousins, down on their luck, write continually to ask for money and Montgomery complies. In 1919, she loses her dearest friend when her cousin, Frederica Campbell, dies. Montgomery never completely recovers from this loss.

She does attempt to return, through the character of Emily, to "the olden years before the world turned upside down" (*EC* 1). Nevertheless, it becomes obvious that by the time Emily is conceived, Montgomery has left the innocent world of Avonlea behind. As she writes Emily Climbs in 1923, she is embroiled in a lawsuit with the Page Company, her original publishers, and she and her husband are battling a neighbour in another court case stemming from an automobile accident. Also, during this period, she has to deal with her husband's illness. In 1926, as she works on Emily's Quest, she is settling into her new home in Norval and wonders "if [she] shall ever get that book done!" (*SJIII*: 298). She does not spend a great deal of time writing about the second and third Emily novels in her journals. She has already decided, in 1922, that Emily of New Moon will be her favourite book in the series and resigns herself to the realization that she will have to follow it with sequels which will be "more or less hackwork" (*SJIII*: 39).

Montgomery is satisfied with this new novel for many reasons. First, she is finally able to write about Emily, a character she has carried around in her mind for years. Second, because this is a new book, with a new heroine, new characters, a new setting, and a new plot, the prospect and process of writing all of this would be exciting and revitalizing in its newness. Finally, the writer

in Montgomery would and obviously does identify with the writer in Emily, because through Emily Montgomery shows herself as a developing writer, telling her own story through Emily's. With Emily, Montgomery realizes that it is both acceptable and necessary to write more about the world around her without turning it into an innocent place.

As several examples will attest, Emily's life story reflects the changes in Montgomery's own life in a number of ways. First, whereas in the Anne series pain, poverty and despair are only darkly alluded to, in Emily of New Moon they are more directly addressed. Emily watches her father die a slow, agonizing death. Although he is described as looking very peaceful in death, readers know how much he has suffered. We remember his own admission to Emily: "I can't lift you up -- I haven't the strength" (ENM 12). We hear him cough; we note how slowly he walks; we see how slowly he undresses at night (ENM 11). In the Anne series, only Ruby Gillis' death is prolonged, and even then the emphasis is on how beautiful she is. Only brief references are made to her physical weakness. We are told that "the fancy work she [loves] oftener and oftener [falls] from hands grown too weary for it" (AI 104-105). Furthermore, until her last days, Ruby refuses to acknowledge that she is terminally ill. She is "always gay, always hopeful, always chattering and whispering of her beaux" (AI 105).

Also, it is interesting to note that in Emily of New Moon, the first two chapters concentrate almost exclusively on Douglas Starr's impending death. In Anne of the Island, on the other hand, Ruby's story is wedged in among Anne's return to Avonlea for summer vacation, her writing of "Averil's Atonement", and Davy and Dora's adventure of skipping Sunday school. It is as if Montgomery does not want to let pain or sorrow assume too great a role in Anne's story. She does allow it to dominate the early part of Emily's story. Even after Douglas Starr dies, Emily's pain is

long-lasting. It is only near the end of the book that she no longer needs the daily contact with him through the secret letters she writes.

Another difference between Montgomery's writing in the two series surfaces in her depiction of the character of Ilse Burnley, Emily's best friend. Ilse is unwanted and Montgomery is less kind to Ilse than she is to Anne. Anne has no relatives and it is strangers who do not want her. In Ilse's case, it is her own father who does not seem to care about her and does not seem to want her around. Ilse is a neglected child. Her father lives with her and provides for her materially but has little to do with her because she reminds him of her mother, the woman everyone in the community believes ran away with her cousin and abandoned her husband and baby. Local gossip has it that her cousin, Leo, "was always over at Blair Water. Beatrice had plenty of excuses....She and Leo were always together there when Allan was always seeing patients. Then came the night Leo's vessel...was to sail....He went...and Beatrice went with him" (ENM 257-258). Here, Montgomery broaches such topics as child neglect and marital infidelity. Ilse tells Emily, "Father doesn't care a hoot about me. I think there's times when he hates the sight of me" (ENM 115). In the Anne series, we do not find such suggestions. There, even if a child has been abandoned or orphaned, it is not because of resentment or hatred, but because of some form of hardship such as sickness or death.

Emily's life is largely based on L.M. Montgomery's own life. The author takes her own emotions and experiences, recorded in her own journals, and gives them new form in the fictional story of a young writer. Montgomery's life experiences are embedded in Emily of New Moon just as they are in Anne of Green Gables. Soon after we meet Emily, we learn that she feels that she is "very, very near to a world of wonderful beauty." Between that other world and herself hangs "only a thin curtain" which she is unable to draw aside "but sometimes, just for a moment, a wind [flutters]

it" and it is as though she catches "a glimpse of the enchanting realm beyond -- only a glimpse -- and [hears] a note of unearthly music" (ENM 7). Montgomery claims to have the same feeling. In January 1905 she writes,

It has always seemed to me, ever since I can remember, that, amid all the commonplaces of life, I was very near to a kingdom of ideal beauty. Between it and me hung only a thin veil. I could never draw it quite aside but sometimes a wind fluttered it and I seemed to catch a glimpse of the enchanting realm beyond -- only a glimpse -- but those glimpses have always made life worthwhile (S/J: 301).

Montgomery regards this ability to see beyond the everyday world and to catch sight of another, beautiful world as a precious one. In her journals she credits it with making her childhood a happy one (S/J: 301). That she would endow Emily with this rare gift she experiences herself is testimony to the fact that in some respects, Emily becomes Montgomery and sees with Montgomery's eyes.

Likewise, L.M. Montgomery recounts her own mother's funeral through Emily's eyes as Emily recalls her mother's funeral. Emily tells her father,

"I remember the funeral, Father -- I remember it *distinctly*. You were standing in the middle of a room, holding me in your arms, and Mother was lying just before us in a long, black box. And you were crying -- I couldn't think why -- and I wondered why Mother looked so white and wouldn't open her eyes. And I leaned down and touched her cheek -- and oh, it was so cold. It made me shiver. And

somebody in the room said, 'Poor little thing!' and I was frightened and put my face down on your shoulder" (15-16).

Montgomery records the same memory in her journal:

I was very young at the time -- barely twenty months old -- but I remember it perfectly....My mother was lying there in her coffin. My father was standing by her and holding me in his arms....father was crying....

I reached down and laid my baby hand against mother's cheek. Even yet I can feel the peculiar coldness of that touch....

Somebody in the room sobbed and said 'Poor child!' I wondered if they meant me -- and why? I put my arms about father's neck....(S/J: 205).

She records this memory of her mother's funeral in 1898, just a month after her grandfather dies and she returns to Cavendish to live with and care for her grandmother. Emily tells her father that she remembers her mother's funeral just weeks before he dies and she moves to Blair Water. If we overread these passages as Montgomery's signals to her readers that she is embedding her own experiences in this novel, we may infer that Emily, like Montgomery, will experience a great deal of sorrow and pain, and will turn to writing as therapy.

In the passages cited above, not only do Montgomery and Emily share characteristics, they share thoughts, experiences, and the most personal memories. Montgomery creates in Emily an extension of herself. But the point at which this memory is recalled in Montgomery's life and the point at which it is recalled in Emily's is the most important consideration for the overreader. In the

same passage in the journal where Montgomery recalls her mother's funeral, she describes her break-up with Edwin Simpson and her affair with Herman Leard, vowing, "I am going to write it out fully and completely, even if every word cuts me to the heart. I have always found that the writing out of a pain makes it at least bearable" (S/I: 204). And, if we make a further connection between Emily's life and Montgomery's, we realize that it is out of such grief and the subsequent need to write oneself out that Anne of Green Gables is born. This is an indication that the process of writing Anne of Green Gables is being recreated in Emily's story.

When we compare entries like these from the novels and the journals we see that Montgomery often writes herself into the text so that Emily sees with her creator's eyes. Montgomery uses many of the same phrases and words in her novels that she uses in her journal, making only minor adjustments. Even if she does not copy these passages from the journals, she obviously remembers them well, so they must be important to her. That she includes in her novel something so personal as the memory of her mother's funeral indicates her need to write herself into her fiction. This also suggests that if Montgomery is dealing with her own life experiences in the entries cited, then she finds ways around public demand in order to write of subjects from the female perspective, something she would not be otherwise able to do. We need to pay attention to every word she writes.

In Emily Climbs, Emily reflects upon a history exam and writes in her journal, "I've found [the Tudor period] very fascinating -- but more because of what isn't in the histories than of what *is*. They don't -- they *can't* tell you what you would really like to know." She then wonders what Jane Scymour thought when she was awake in the dark; if Lady Jane Grey was known as 'Janie' to her friends or if she ever had a fit of temper; and what Shakespeare's wife actually thought of him (250).

Montgomery points out, through the teenaged Emily, that stories of women are noticeably absent from both history and the school curriculum. Emily recognizes that male historians cannot convey accurately what women have historically experienced, because the male and female experiences are so different. By emphasizing "can't" in the example cited above, Montgomery draws attention to the shortcomings of history books and the need for women to tell their own stories. The fact that a female character realizes this suggests that it is through heroines like Emily and authors like Montgomery that women's stories will begin to surface in books.

Emily resembles the Montgomery of the later journals. As such, she represents Montgomery's introspective side, the side that feels compelled to rewrite her journals and restructure her life[writing]. Like Montgomery, Emily wants to be an author. Many of Montgomery's own experiences become Emily's: both are forced to wear buttoned shoes to school even though no other child wears them. Montgomery writes, "Emily had not wanted to put on the buttoned boots. She wanted to go barefoot as she always had done in summer. But Aunt Elizabeth had told her that no child from New Moon had ever gone barefoot to school" (ENM 79). Montgomery recalls, in The Alpine Path, "Another thing that worried me with a sense of unlikeness was the fact that I was never allowed to go to school barefooted. All the other children went so, and I felt that this was a humiliating difference. At home I could run barefoot, but in school I must wear buttoned boots" (26).

Both girls also wear a particular style of apron to school. Montgomery remembers hers as "ugly....hideous....a long, sack-like garment with *sleeves*....When I went to school one of the girls sneeringly remarked that they were *baby aprons*" (AP 26). Emily, too, despises the aprons, which are her mother's: "The apron was a long sack-like garment, high in the neck, with *sleeves*. Those

sleeves were the crowning indignity. Emily had never seen any little girl wearing an apron with sleeves" (ENM 76). Montgomery uses Emily as an opportunity to rebuke the adults who made her wear these aprons. When Aunt Laura says, "It was one of your mother's aprons when she was a little girl," Emily responds, "Then...I don't wonder she ran away with Father when she grew up" (ENM 76). Emily must wear a sunbonnet as well, though she pleads, "Oh, please, Aunt Elizabeth, don't make me wear that horrid thing." But Aunt Elizabeth, "wasting no further words", picks up the bonnet and ties it on Emily's head. Nevertheless, Emily again manages to have the last word when "from the depths of the sunbonnet [issues] a voice, defiant though tremulous." That voice concedes, "Anyway, Aunt Elizabeth, you can't boss God" (ENM 77). That "a voice", not "Emily's voice", says this suggests Emily is representative of every woman who defies tradition or who dares to speak the last word against authority.

As we apply the principles of overreading to the *Emily of New Moon* series, we continue to find that the story of Emily is a study of the writing process. Everything in Emily's story can be connected to the development of the writer and the process of writing. The examples cited above indicate that Montgomery uses clothing images to write about the social constraints placed on females and female writers during her time. Therefore, the buttoned boots, aprons with sleeves and high necks, and the sunbonnets signify not only the similarities between Montgomery and her fictional heroine; they are visual metaphors for the restrictions placed on females in general and on the female writer in particular. Both Montgomery and Emily long to step out of the buttoned boots and run barefoot; they long to step out of tradition, out of the shoes other women have to wear and have worn, and reveal a part of themselves society requires be hidden. The woman who adheres to

social tradition cannot, Montgomery implies, enjoy the freedom to walk as she chooses. Instead, she must follow all of the generations before her.

The apron is equally restrictive: it covers Emily's dress and ties in the back, a metaphor for the female's hands being tied behind her back. In Emily's case (and Montgomery's, too) if her hands are tied, she cannot write. If she cannot write, she cannot have her own voice. As well, the apron Emily must wear is her mother's, which suggests that Emily must accept New Moon traditions and follow in the footsteps of those who have gone before her until she, too, is domesticated. Anytime Emily is given something of her mother's she is also issued a warning: Emily's mother rebels against her family and their traditions, and she dies very young, deprived of the opportunity to enjoy the life she chooses to live. If Emily chooses her own mind over tradition, she, too, could face such a fate.

The sunbonnet Emily is told to wear hides her physical identity by covering both her face and head, but it cannot hide or silence her voice. The other girls at school ask Emily if she is wearing her grandmother's sunbonnet (ENM 79). This has important implications for our analysis because Emily's grandmothers have been determined women. Cousin Jimmy tells Emily a story about her great-grandmother, who travels from Scotland to Canada. She is so seasick that as soon as the ship anchors at its first port, she insists upon going ashore, even though it is not her final destination. As soon as her feet touch land, she tells her husband, "Here I stay", and she refuses to board the ship again. As a result, the entire family must disembark and settle in Prince Edward Island, instead of Quebec, which they had intended as their new home (ENM 71). In this case, the woman makes the decision that will determine where her family and her descendants will live. There are years of tradition tied up with these bonnets, but the tradition is not always restrictive. The

grandmother in this story is a determined individual and we see that even when Emily puts on the bonnet, it cannot stifle her voice.

When we overread the images associated with Montgomery's use of such items as the buttoned boots, aprons, and sunbonnets, we are able to focus on the conditions or events which allow Emily to mature as a writer. This is because overreading involves looking as much at the clues in the text that reveal the presence of the writer as reading the text for plot and theme. We are reading to find the presence of the creator in the creation. Another factor contributing to Emily's development as a writer is Montgomery's depiction of Emily's father. How we read what Emily writes in Emily of New Moon, the first book of the series, is largely affected by our brief exposure to Douglas Starr and the relationship father and daughter enjoy. In the first chapter of Emily of New Moon we see that Ellen Greene, the hired help, pities the little girl. The reader's own sense of compassion is stirred after we realize that the sensitive Emily is soon to be an orphan, something she learns in a very crude way. Emily has just returned from an evening walk in the woods when Ellen meets her at the front door and blurts, "Do you know that your pa has only a week or two more to live?" Emily stands very still and stares at Ellen, "as still as if she had been suddenly turned to stone." The colour fades from her face and her pupils dilate until "they [swallow] up the irises and [turn] her eyes into pools of blackness". She feels as if Ellen has struck her a physical blow (8). Montgomery makes us go through the ordeal with Emily, discovering the horrible truth about her father's condition and watching him die. We see Emily through it all. The impending death of her father is all the more difficult because Montgomery spends the first two chapters establishing a close bond between father and daughter. When Douglas Starr comes to kiss his daughter good night, we are told how much Emily loves him: "There was no other Father like him in all the world -- there

could never have been -- so tender, so understanding, so wonderful! They had always been such chums -- they had loved each other so much -- it couldn't be that they were to be separated" (12). Douglas Starr has pet names for Emily -- "Elfkin", "Winkums" and "wee kidlet" (ENM 3, 12, and 15).

Whereas Ellen Greene refers to Douglas Starr as Emily's "pa", Emily thinks of him as "Father" (ENM 8 and 1). Montgomery capitalizes the word even when Emily is not addressing her father directly. This establishes a sense of reverence in her regard for him, as he assumes a god-like presence in her eyes. With this in mind, the letters Emily later writes to him when he is "on his way to heaven" resemble prayers, the ultimate confidences (ENM 93). We believe Emily; we trust her; we feel compassion for her because everything she writes to her father is frank and honest. This means, in turn, that she is free to say what she wants, and we are perhaps never closer to Emily than when we read the letters she writes to her father. Amid the spelling mistakes and the child-like curiosity, Emily imposes little or no distance between herself and her text. She has no need to, for no one is meant to read these letters.

Emily's story can be overread in much the same way Nancy K. Miller overreads George Sand's Indiana. In her discussion of arachnologies, Miller quotes Sand:

[Indiana] had adopted the depressing habit of writing down every evening a narrative of the sorrowful thoughts of the day. This journal of her sufferings was addressed to Ramon, and although she had no intention of sending it to him, she talked to him, sometimes passionately, sometimes bitterly, of the misery of her life and of the sentiments which she could not overcome (278-279).

When Indiana writes these letters for her own private satisfaction, she is writing herself out. She does not intend that anyone will see her journal, but writing down the sorrowful thoughts allows her to see them in black and white, and to reflect upon them. She uses her journal for the same reasons Montgomery and Emily use theirs: to try to make sense of their experiences.

Embedded in this social commentary is what Nancy K. Miller calls "a focus on the moments in the narrative which by their representation of writing itself might be said to figure the production of the female artist" (274-275). This means that we are able to use certain events in the story as keys to unlock the subtext of Montgomery's novel -- and in so doing, we are able to focus more on the process, not just the content, of the writing. In Emily's case, her acts of writing letters to her father, her journal accounts, her poetry, fiction, essays, and novels most obviously present her as a developing female artist. Like Indiana, every evening, Emily writes letters to her deceased father, pouring out both her joys and her frustrations. Emily's need to write begins on the day of her father's funeral, when her maternal relatives arrive and hold a Murray family conclave to decide which of them will take the orphaned girl into their home. Emily, eager to know her fate, hides under a table in the parlour and eavesdrops. However, Emily cannot sit under the table, hidden by its skirts, and remain silent while the Murrays disparage her father. She has to speak, and when Aunt Ruth declares that Douglas Starr was "a miserable failure", Emily screams, "He wasn't -- he wasn't" (ENM 39). The Murrays are shocked and Emily is sent to bed as punishment. Emily is apparently supposed to learn here that eavesdropping is wrong, but if we apply the principles of overreading to this scene, we realize that the important act is not listening, but speaking. Overreading allows us to see the female writer using her voice. It moves us beyond the surface of the sentimental novel which would teach the moral, so that we are able to see that it is not the fact that Emily is privy to

her relatives' opinion of her late father, but that she reacts to it. Emily can remain under the table and be silent for the duration of the conversation but Montgomery chooses not to let her do so. Emily cannot not speak -- she does not even make the conscious decision to speak; it happens instinctively. The fact that she screams shows this. After her outburst and before she is sent to bed, Emily retires under the table cloth "in dismay, realizing what she [has] done" (ENM 40). This event also serves as a warning to the Murrays, who now realize that Emily has a voice of her own and is not afraid to use it.

With humiliation and anger burning inside her, Emily is sent upstairs but does not go to bed. Instead, she turns to her "account book", and begins to record her feelings. Like her creator, Emily uses the process of writing her concerns on paper as a means of confronting and dealing with them. It is an emotional relief to commit these things to paper and when they are seen in black and white, they do not look so terrible. This entry Emily makes in her account book after she has been sent to her room affords her some consolation, for as "her fingers [fly] over the faded lines her cheeks [flush] and her eyes [shine]." Forgetting the Murrays even as she is writing about them, "for an hour she [writes] steadily...never pausing..." (ENM 41). Into this account book, Emily enters an account or a version of what she experiences and how she feels. At the same time, she is keeping an account or a record of her life, which she deposits, in her own words, in her own book. We are not always told the content of what Emily writes, only that she does write and the effect it has on her. We may infer that the process is just as important as the content.

The fact that she does write herself out is more important than what she writes. This can be seen in Emily of New Moon, when Emily discovers Aunt Laura about to burn a stack of old letter bills and pleads for them. They are turned over to Emily on the condition that Aunt Elizabeth never

see them. Emily agrees and secretly writes her first letter to her father. She writes her secrets in letters to her deceased father, and this writing must be carried out secretly. As with Montgomery's own life and writing, secrecy characterizes Emily's life. Although in later chapters we are able to read exactly what Emily writes to Douglas Starr, the first time she writes him we are not. Instead, we concentrate only on the act of writing. We read, "Dear Father" and then we learn that she pours out "her tale of the day -- of her rapture and pain -- writing heedlessly and intently until the sunset [fades] into dim, star-litten twilight" (93). We learn that the chickens go unfed; Cousin Jimmy must go alone to bring the cows home; Saucy Sal, the cat, gets no milk; and Aunt Laura has to wash the dishes, but it does not matter to Emily, who, "in the delightful throes of literary composition, [is] lost to all worldly things" (ENM 93). By the time she has finished writing this letter to her father, Emily has "emptied out her soul and it [is] once more free from evil passions" (ENM 93). Writing these letters has a cleansing effect on Emily, much the same effect we infer the writing of Anne of Green Gables and the writing of her journal accounts has on Montgomery.

Writing as therapy is a process in which both Montgomery and Emily engage throughout their lives. Just how vital it is to Montgomery's existence is obvious when we consider that even before she conceives Anne of Green Gables, she uses her stories to help her through difficult times. In 1898, having reflected extensively on her relationship with Herman Leard, she concludes, "My work is a great comfort to me in these sad days. I forget all my grief and perplexities while I am absorbed in it..." (l: 220). Emily, like her creator, relies on her writing to help her through traumatic experiences. Just as Montgomery uses her journals and novels to confront her problems, Emily uses account books, the backs of letter bills, journals, and stories for the same purpose. While we see Anne *say* things to give voice, we see Emily *write* things to give voice. Until Emily begins to send

letters to her father, "Mr. Douglas Starr, On the Road to Heaven", she is unhappy living at New Moon because she has no one to talk to and no one seems to understand her. She soon discovers that through the letters she does have a way of communicating with her father.

Douglas Starr is the person who has bestowed upon her the gift of and need for writing. It is therefore only appropriate that he assume the role of journal reader for Emily. The writing of these letters, after Emily has suffered a great loss through her father's death, is Emily's way of coping with the upheaval of death and relocation. She must move to New Moon with relatives she does not know and who initially do not want to assume responsibility for her upbringing. After discovering this form of communication with her father, Emily spends most of her evenings writing feverishly and we learn that "the bitterness [dies] out of her grief. Writing to him [seems] to bring him so near; and she [tells] him everything..." (ENM 93-94). In the same way, as we have seen through an examination of Montgomery's journals and Anne of Green Gables, Montgomery's bitterness gradually disappears as she immerses herself in Anne's world. Prior to writing these letters, Emily knows of no way to articulate her emotions and problems: Aunt Elizabeth does not approve of her writing and she does not yet have what Anne Shirley calls "a kindred spirit" (AGG 33). Before Emily finally secures the old letter bills, she feels that there are times when she will "burst" if she cannot write out some of her thoughts and feelings (ENM 90). The letters to her father take the place of her account book, which she impulsively burns before she moves to New Moon because on the day of her father's funeral Aunt Elizabeth tries to confiscate and read it. The letters also show Emily wrestling with writing and language as she struggles through spelling mistakes to explain every detail of her new life to her father, from her experiences at school to her adjustment to life at New Moon.

Emily pours her heart out in the letters to her father, just as Montgomery pours her troubles out in her journal. In one scene, Emily writes a letter to her father and in so doing expresses her "bitterness and perplexity" (ENM 308). Although Emily does not realize it, this particular letter is the last one she will be able to write to her father. For Emily, part of the appeal of these old letter bills is their secrecy. No one knows about them, no one reads them. She does not like to scribble any private thoughts on her slate at school because the teacher might catch her. It is not the discipline Emily dreads; rather, she feels that "no stranger eyes must behold these sacred productions" (ENM 90).

When Emily eventually ceases writing to her father, it is perhaps all a part of her growing up, but it is set in motion when Aunt Elizabeth decides to clean the garret and accidentally finds Emily's letters. They are no longer secret because they have entered public domain. The next time Emily tries to write a letter to her father, she finds that it "no longer [means] anything to her. The sense of reality -- nearness -- of close communion [is] gone" (ENM 314). Montgomery writes, "Perhaps she had been outgrowing it gradually, as childhood began to merge into girlhood....whatever the explanation, it was not possible to write such letters any more. She missed them terribly but she could not go back to them. A certain door of life was shut behind her and could not be re-opened" (ENM 314).

One point at which intertexts between the Anne series and the Emily series can be established is in the purpose of writing. Just as writing *Anne of Green Gables* serves an immediate goal for Montgomery, Emily's letters to her father serve an immediate purpose for her: she is able to temporarily slip away from New Moon and enter, for a time, the past, as she "talks" to her father by writing to him. And just as Emily can no longer write the letters to her father, Montgomery no

longer wants to continue the Anne series. She writes in Emily of New Moon, "Outgrowing things we love is never a pleasant process" (303). She seems to write herself out with Anne of Green Gables because she has no interest in any of the subsequent Anne books. Emily of New Moon traces what Montgomery has already written in her journals and in Anne of Green Gables. Emily's habit of writing to her father and in her Jimmy-books becomes Montgomery's way of speaking to the process of writing Anne of Green Gables. Montgomery rewrites her journals but she "copies" them, in another sense, in Emily of New Moon by retelling and reliving the experiences she has had prior to, during, and throughout the creation of Anne of Green Gables. That Montgomery uses her journals and her fiction, particularly Anne of Green Gables, to write herself out is evident from her journal entries. Of Anne of Green Gables she confides to her journal, "Nothing I have ever written gave me so much pleasure to write....Anne is as real to me as if I had given her birth -- as real, and as dear" (*SJ*: 331-332). Living a life she finds unfulfilling, Montgomery seeks refuge in her writing. In 1898, she confides that her work "is a great comfort to me in these sad days. I forget all of my griefs and perplexities while I am absorbed in it" (*SJ*: 220). Two years later she exclaims, "What a blessing work is!" and adds, "Oh, as long as we can work we can make life beautiful" (*SJ*: 249). We may ask, make life beautiful for whom? Reader or writer? In Montgomery's case, she struggles to keep the shadows out of her work as much for her own sake as for her readers'. She believes that being able to "grumble" in her journal allows her to "work off all my revolutionary tendencies....If it were not for this...I might fly into a thousand little pieces someday" (*SJ*: 255). It becomes obvious exactly what Montgomery's journal means to her: it is a place where her beliefs, thoughts, feelings, ambitions may be written for posterity. In addition, once they are on paper, they do not worry her, and she is able to face them.

As Miller finds when she overreads Indiana's letters, Emily's writing, by itself, cannot "produce effective forms of protest against the powers of the social text" (Miller 279). The writing alone can have no effect. It is the reader's response that determines the value of the work. Therefore, Emily's writing must be read by Aunt Elizabeth, Dean Priest, and Mr. Carpenter. Only when each of these characters has read something Emily has written can her texts have an effect that surpasses the therapeutic effect Emily experiences. This is because each of these three people represents tradition. Aunt Elizabeth refuses to install electric lights at New Moon and insists on the continued use of candles. Because Aunt Elizabeth does not like to break with tradition, Emily does not have the proper lighting by which to see when she writes at night. She must hide, under her mattress, candles that she uses after she has supposedly gone to bed. Mr. Carpenter and Dean Priest are critical of Emily's work. However, while Mr. Carpenter, Emily's teacher, seems to offer constructive criticism for improvement, Dean condemns Emily's work. Emily's writings are non-threatening as long as they remain secret. Once they become public -- that is, after Aunt Elizabeth reads the letters Emily has written to her father and Mr. Carpenter reads the wrong Jimmy-book -- they exist as a challenge to literary convention. Writings about the self are meant to be private, not public. Yet the writings must become public in order to effect a change to social and literary tradition. Montgomery stresses this by showing how Emily's relationship with Aunt Elizabeth improves after Elizabeth reads these letters. She also shows that the Jimmy-book sketch of himself that Mr. Carpenter mistakenly reads alerts him to Emily's writing genius and is the main reason he encourages her to keep writing.

The character of Dean Priest, as Epperly discusses, represents the literary and social tradition that Emily must challenge. In Dean, she argues, Emily faces "the most seductive and deadly forces

of romance and...culturally accepted roles for men and women" (*Fragrance* 147). But when we engage in an overreading of the Emily series, we realize that Montgomery uses the character of Dean Priest as more than just a representative of social and literary tradition. It is Dean, like Aunt Elizabeth, who indicates the power of Emily's writing. We have already seen that Emily's private writing empowers her. Her private letters to her father allow a healing process to take place and allow Emily a space in which to vent her frustrations in her new home. Emily sends letters to her dead father but once she has been accepted at New Moon and in Blair Water, she no longer feels the need to continue communicating with him in this way. These letters are originally prepared "in moments when her hurt and angry soul demanded some outlet for its emotion and barbed her pen with venom" (*ENM* 308). However, Emily's public writing is also self-empowering. This is seen most clearly in Dean's response to her first book, *A Seller of Dreams*. He feels threatened by her talent because he knows it has such a powerful hold over her that it takes her away from him. It is through Dean's response that we are able to see objectively that Emily does have the potential to be a successful author. If she did not, Dean would have no reason to resent her work. It is at this point that the reader knows that Emily is capable of achieving her literary dreams.

As well, it is through both Aunt Elizabeth, when she finds Emily's letters to her father, and Dean Priest that Montgomery challenges what Miller terms "the grounds of literary judgement" (279). When Dean tells Emily that her story does not have much literary merit, Emily, trusting him, burns the book. She then falls over the stairs at New Moon and hovers between life and death. At the end of her convalescence several months later, she decides to forfeit her writing career in favour of marriage to Dean. When Emily realizes that it is Teddy and not Dean that she loves, she breaks her engagement to Dean. He now confesses that he has lied to her about her novel, admitting that

it is good writing. By having Dean selfishly condemn Emily's book, Montgomery suggests that what is included in the canon is not always selected free of bias. The critics and academics who decide which works are ultimately included in the canon may not always take the works themselves into consideration. Instead, they may be influenced by social or cultural tradition. We know that Dean hates Emily's book even before he reads it because it consumes her time and takes her away from him all summer. Montgomery tells us, "Dean looked at the little packet she held out to him. So *this* was what had wrapped her away from him all summer -- absorbed her -- possessed her. The one black drop in his veins -- that Priest jealousy of being first -- suddenly made its poison felt (EQ 51). Dean approaches that text with prejudice, so he will not see its merits.

Thus, when we overread, we see that Montgomery uses supporting characters to comment on the literary tradition Emily must challenge. Her depiction of the responses of such characters as Dean Priest and Elizabeth Murray to Emily's writing publicly fulfils the role her own journals play for her. However, Montgomery cannot effect a change in either society or the canon if she confines her views to her journals. She must eventually publish the journals, and she must publish books that embed aspects of her life as a female and a female writer in order to transcend the barriers that surround her. This is why she takes such pains to prepare her private journals into a readable form. She wants them to be read. She wants people to realize that they must read beyond the text in her fiction, and the journals are one means of doing this.

In George Sand's *Indiana*, Indiana's scribbles become "public" in much the same way that Emily's do: they are found by the very person who should never see them. For *Indiana*, this is her husband; for *Emily*, it is Aunt Elizabeth. Miller describes *Indiana*'s situation:

Having broken open the box that contained her papers -- which included Ramon's letters -- the husband, in his rage, 'unable to utter a word...seized her by the hair, threw her down, and stamped on her forehead with his heel' (279).

Emily's letters to her father allow her some control over her life. To realize the truth of this we need only to overread Aunt Elizabeth's reaction to these letters. When Aunt Elizabeth finds the letters, we see proof of the power of the writing. We see that "as Elizabeth Murray [folds] up the last letter her hands [tremble] -- with anger, and something underneath that [is] not anger" (ENM 309). Elizabeth calls Emily an "ungrateful, thankless child" and tells her, "You were a penniless orphan -- I took you to my home -- I have given you shelter and food and education and kindness" (311). Elizabeth's charge is that the letters are disgraceful and must be destroyed. Yet Montgomery, through Emily, challenges the grounds of Aunt Elizabeth's traditional literary judgement just as Nancy K. Miller argues Indiana does with her husband's views. It is Elizabeth Murray, not Emily Starr, who learns the real and hardest lesson.

When Emily first enters the parlour to which she has been summoned, she sees the packet of letters in her aunt's lap. With the "quickness of light" she springs to the other woman, snatches the bundle, and "[retreats] to the door, where she [faces] Aunt Elizabeth, her face blazing with indignation and outrage". Then she demands, "How dare you touch *my private papers*, Aunt Elizabeth?" We learn that "Aunt Elizabeth had not expected *this*. She had looked for confusion -- dismay -- shame -- fear -- for anything but this righteous indignation, as if she, forsooth, were the guilty one (ENM 310). In the end, it is Aunt Elizabeth who must surrender, not Emily. Emily refuses to destroy the letters, and all Elizabeth can say is "Keep your letters" (ENM 311). Elizabeth

is the first to relent. She tells Emily, "I had no right to read your letters. I admit I was wrong. Will you forgive me?" To which Emily responds, "I'm sorry....I shouldn't have written those things...." She adds, "I'll love you, Aunt Elizabeth, if you'll let me...." She kisses the old lady and Elizabeth in return, kisses Emily on the forehead (ENM 313).

Creating this scenario allows Montgomery to accomplish three things. First, she shows that writing, which initially imposes a wall between Emily and her aunt, eventually becomes the very thing that enables them to develop a more honest relationship. Emily now realizes the power of language and the power of the written word in particular. She sees that she has used her pen to hurt someone, not just to heal herself. And, while Emily realizes that she should not have written such terrible things about Aunt Elizabeth, her aunt admits that she should not have read Emily's private work. Second, Montgomery uses this scene to show why Emily is no longer able to continue writing letters to her father. The secrecy is destroyed and with it goes the dependency upon these letters that Emily feels. She no longer needs the letters because she has found security in her new relationship with her New Moon relatives. She has become a strong individual who is no longer dependent upon the past and the connection to her father that the letters afford.

Third, it is in this scene that we see Montgomery using the Emily text as her own mouthpiece. When we overread this section using the journals, we see that Montgomery takes full advantage of the opportunity presented by Emily's encounter with Aunt Elizabeth to rebuke those who discourage her own literary dreams, particularly her family. It is here that she is able to offer a public criticism of her upbringing: discouraged from reading and writing, she is not even supported by her grandparents when she tries to obtain teaching positions. When she receives her teaching certificate, she wonders if she will ever find a job, revealing in her journals,

I've tried hard enough. I have sent applications for a score of schools, but so far the result has been discouraging silence. I cannot get to apply to the trustees in person and so I have a poor chance. Other girls' fathers or friends drive them about to apply for schools but grandfather will not do this for me, or let me have a horse to go myself, so there is nothing for it but letters, which are generally not even answered (*SJ*: 114-115).

Montgomery does not encounter the opposition to her writing that Emily does, but she uses these obstacles in Emily's story as a means of showing the difficulties she and other female writers of her generation face as an artist. As noted earlier, when Aunt Elizabeth makes her wear the detested sunbonnet, Emily has the final say by telling her aunt that she may be able to boss this little girl, but she cannot boss God. Likewise, it is through the journals that Montgomery has her final say against those who attempt to restrict her.

When we engage in an overreading of Montgomery's Emily series and journals, the close connections between the author and her heroine become very apparent. Emily's need to begin writing after the death of a loved one recalls Lucy Maud Montgomery's own experiences. On two different occasions, Montgomery feels a void in her life that can only be filled by writing. The first is the tumultuous period at the turn of the century before she writes Anne of Green Gables, while the second is 1919, after her cousin Frede dies. It is in 1919 that she begins to rewrite her journals, a process that will take her back into her past. In her journal for 1920, Montgomery says that she began copying her journals "last winter" (*SJ*: 341). Is this before or after Frede dies? Montgomery relies upon her journals to get her through the bad times, and now she returns to them in a different

sense, perhaps looking for comfort in the past. She will re-live the darkest moments of her life thus far and this will help her to deal with the death of her dearest friend. She will realize and take comfort from the knowledge that she has survived painful experiences before, and will do so again. Like Montgomery, Emily uses a private form of writing to take her back to her past and symbolically bring her father back to life as a means of dealing with the unhappiness that characterizes her present life.

Emily turns to writing letters to her father because he has always encouraged her writing and now she has no one else with whom to share her ideas. Similarly, Montgomery turns to her journals to take her through her darkest hour: now, in 1919, she has no other outlet. With Frede gone she has absolutely no confidants. The journal takes the place of friends and has the added benefit that as long as Montgomery lives and is able to guard it, it will never tell the tale she is weaving and reweaving inside its covers. When Ewan Macdonald's illness becomes almost unbearable she confides in no one but her journal:

There is no one else I can go to. I have no friend near me to help me...And if I had I could not go to her and say, 'My husband is in the throes of one of his attacks....He has lain around the house all day....' I cannot say this to *anyone*. No one must know...what his trouble is as long as I can keep it secret....(SJII: 399).

Furthermore, the journals are important to Montgomery because they place *her* at centre stage -- they become the space in which she constructs and orders her life. These journals are the means by which L.M. Montgomery copes with the good and the bad in her lifetime. She uses her personal writings to exert control over her life. Reading her journals means following her as she learns to move through her darker moments and watching her shape her life in ink time and time again, following her old pattern of recording everything in her journal, and reshaping what she has written in the past as a means of shaping her present. In the same way, Emily's letters to her father are very one-sided in the sense that they recount events from Emily's point of view. Eventually she learns that she must consider her reader when she writes, and it is at this point that she, like Montgomery, returns to what she has written and either rewrites parts of it or adds explanatory footnotes.

At the end of Emily of New Moon, Emily begins to keep a diary. She decides to do this after her secret letters to her father are found and read. This indicates to her that nothing she writes may ever be completely confidential. She learns to adjust her writing practices and at the end of Emily of New Moon begins a new kind of diary, which she writes with the intention to publish. Because Emily intends to have it published, this form of life writing "anticipates the reader's determination on the text" (Kadar 10). It is constructed with the reader in mind. From that point on, through various narrative techniques, Emily distances herself from the reader and nothing else she writes after she begins her diary can ever be completely truthful or honest. Journal writing is an important part of Montgomery's life, and she makes it an equally important part of Emily's. Emily's letters to her father inevitably lead her to keep both public and private journals. She keeps two kinds of "Jimmy-books", blank notebooks given to her by her Cousin Jimmy Murray: public and private ones. The public Jimmy-books contain stories, poems, and ideas for writing. As she grows older,

Emily is never without her Jimmy-book; it accompanies her everywhere. Frequently, during a walk in the woods or even in the middle of some activity, Emily will be seized with the desire to write and will take out her book. leaning on a fencepost or a tree stump should no desk be available. In her private Jimmy-book, Emily records information and her impressions about herself, her relatives, her friends, her neighbours, her school, the farm. Epperly maintains that Emily's journals enable her to find her own voice as she begins to not only publish poetry and short stories, but to write novels (*Fragrance* 145).

Emily does not construct her own formal autobiography; however, she does engage in journal writing. Each successive letter to her father, addressed to "Mr. Douglas Starr, On the Road to Heaven", marks Emily's development as a writer (ENM 93). *Emily of New Moon* opens in the third person, with the narrator introducing us to the main characters. Within a few chapters, Emily takes over, and the rest of the story is divided between first- and third-person narration. In *Emily of New Moon*, Emily's letters to her father and sketches in her Jimmy-books are early attempts at journal (or life) writing. Like Montgomery, Emily records everything from the mundane to the exciting in her letters. Like her creator's journals, the letters contain information on just about every imaginable topic: food, clothing, superstitions, local news, and sketches of people and places she knows. Sometimes there is an account of what had happened that day, with a reflective comment. In *Emily Climbs* and *Emily's Quest*, her diary takes up much of the book and we continually read Emily's story partly in the first-person.

Throughout the series, Montgomery establishes Emily as an actual person in a number of ways, most obviously through the process of authorial intrusion. In *Emily Climbs*, Montgomery tells us that Emily has, unknown to Aunt Ruth, used extra candlelight intended for studying to write

a poem. She concludes, "What [Aunt Ruth] would have said had she known...I do not know and cannot record. But no doubt she would have considered it an added proof of [Emily's] slyness. Perhaps it was sly. Remember that I am only Emily's biographer, not her apologist" (EC 118). In so doing, Montgomery creates a narrative that resembles what Nathalie Cooke calls "fictive autobiography", an autobiography composed by a fictional protagonist (164). That is, the author creates a heroine who tells her own story, and presents fiction as fact. However, this is a contradiction: because this heroine is created by a writer, her story cannot be completely truthful. It is the same type of contradiction that we find in Anne's story, of the sentimental heroine who wants to be a sentimental heroine.

Cooke maintains that readers of autobiographical fiction are asked to read "with a kind of double vision", aware of the writing as both fiction and nonfiction at the same time (163). In her article, she admits that Cat's Eye is more autobiographical than Atwood's other books " -- or, anyway, it is more obviously about self-representation -- than her other books" (162). However, as Cooke reads and interprets Cat's Eye, Atwood uses the genre of autobiography to explore the literary conventions of autobiography, and readers must therefore focus their attention on the way autobiography is used in this novel (162). While she concedes that the novel is about self-reflection, she maintains that the reader's role is to reflect upon the various reflections of the self contained within it (Cooke 166). The principles Cooke uses to analyze Margaret Atwood's Cat's Eye can be applied to Montgomery's work: as we recognize material from Montgomery's journals in her fiction, we realize that Montgomery draws upon and uses various forms of the autobiographical in her novels. In this case, what is recorded in her journals is often re-recorded in her novels. Through her use of life writing techniques in the Emily series, Montgomery crosses the boundaries between

fiction and nonfiction. She challenges literary classification. She represents herself through Emily, owing her "representation to an undoing: a destabilization of the terms of identity itself brought about by a breakdown in the boundaries between inside and out" (Miller 271). By merging her journals and her fiction, Montgomery successfully breaks down the boundaries between literary genres and challenges the concepts of private and public writing.

Fictive autobiography forces us to look to other texts. As such, how Cooke interprets Cat's Eye is inherent upon her interpretation or parallel reading of Lady Oracle and Surfacing (167). Similarly, how we read Anne's story is dependent upon how we read the journals; how we read Emily's story is dependent upon how we read Anne's story. Without Anne, L.M. Montgomery could not have created the portrait of the young female artist found in the Emily trilogy. This is because writing Anne of Green Gables allows Montgomery to find another literary form for venting her pain and loneliness. And like her creator, Emily is able to experience the sense of healing and temporary removal from a painful world that comes from writing her problems out in fiction. If Anne is one component of Montgomery and Emily is another, then they are different sides of the same person, but they are still the same person. Like overreading, fictive autobiography "pulls the rug out from under us" by forcing us to rethink our positions and by challenging literary classification (Cooke 164). It is autobiographical because the author embeds some her own experiences in the text, but it is fictional because of the genre chosen for writing. Emily of New Moon cannot be a completely fictional work if it contains autobiographical elements. As Cooke argues for Atwood's novels, we must "focus [our] attention" on how Montgomery's "story" speaks to the form as much as it speaks from or within it (Cooke 162). As readers of L.M. Montgomery, what we must likewise do is focus

our attention on how and why the process of writing oneself out is used in the Emily of New Moon series.

Montgomery explores life writing in Emily's story for specific reasons. Emily's letters allow us to actually see what the narrator can only suggest: her development as a writer. Emily is credible as a writer because we read her as she writes. We do not stand with an omniscient narrator who translates her writing for us. The narrator relates information and describes events that are necessary for an understanding of Emily's world. Emily writes things she is not ordinarily allowed to say. When Montgomery publishes Anne of Green Gables, she is restricted by the forms available to her. Montgomery wants to write, but she also wants to sell. She may not succeed in selling her work if she writes the psychological study of one person's life she writes of in her journals. She compensates by keeping her journal, which becomes, through its rewritings, a psychological study of her own life. She embeds the autobiographical in her fiction, and in this way is able to write about the very things she is not supposed to write about: pain, suffering, passion, the woman's position in society.

Montgomery's writing is a response to personal needs and to public expectations. She uses the safe and guaranteed form of the girls' novel, but this form, like the sentimental novel used to present Anne's story, is deceptive, for Montgomery is doing more than telling the story of a poor little orphan girl. She challenges our conceptions of what is public and what is private. We read, in Emily of New Moon, private letters and diary entries, but if they are constructed for us, how truthful can they be? Through a mode of writing similar to fictive autobiography, Montgomery reminds us of the blurred distinction between fiction and nonfiction. As Nathalie Cooke maintains, by its very nature fictive autobiography calls attention to its own problematical status as a fictive construct: it is an factual autobiography created in fiction. As such, it is intentionally used to

challenge the reader, to challenge the concept of narrative closure, and to challenge classification (Cooke 164, 166, 167).

In the same way, Montgomery uses Emily's journals to discuss things that would ordinarily not be appropriate for a sentimental girls' novel. Each time we find Emily thinking, writing, or discussing such issues, we do not experience them as Emily thinks, writes, or voices them. Instead, we encounter them as Emily later reflects upon them in her letters to her father. Thus, Montgomery solves a potential problem. She includes inappropriate material in her fiction by having other characters tell her heroine that she cannot say such things. At the same time, Emily promptly records such occasions in her letters to her father, so that they are voiced anyway. In Emily of New Moon, Emily records that when she asks about the cat having kittens, she learns that "nice little girls didn't talk about such things" (95). When the minister and his wife visit, she mentions that she is afraid to go across a neighbour's field because he has a "cross bull" there, and Aunt Elizabeth later scolds her and tells her that she is never to use "*that* word again" (ENM 127). She tells her aunts she is choosing names for her children and is told that it is improper to talk about having children (ENM 131). When she announces that she enjoys attending funerals, Aunt Elizabeth is shocked (EC 19). Emily, like Montgomery, emerges from silence through writing. Emily is not allowed to discuss or say things which Aunt Elizabeth deems unfit or inappropriate for little girls, and later young women, to say. Even as an adult woman in Emily's Quest she shocks Aunt Elizabeth by stating, "Teddy has always belonged to me and I to him. Heart, soul, and body". Aunt Elizabeth shudders and we learn that one "ought to feel these things -- perhaps -- but it [is] indecent to say them" (227). Neither is Emily permitted to read novels. Yet she mentions the novels she is not allowed to read and tells

something about each of them. In this way, Montgomery is still able to somewhat subversively incorporate adult or unsuitable material in her children's stories.

Prevented from speaking, Emily finds emotional outlets Anne Shirley obviously does not have: an account book, letters to her father, a Jimmy-book, and a diary. In each of these, Emily writes things she is otherwise not allowed to articulate. They are her private writings; her stories are her public writings. Her pen becomes her tongue, for she writes what she cannot say. The journals allow Emily to be curious and honest, for they impose no restrictions. Equally as important as the space of her own that Emily's journals afford is the fact that Montgomery is, in the instances cited above, doing the same thing she does in the Anne series. In Anne's story we read about Peter Kirk's funeral and so read the narrative that should not be told to children actually embedded in a children's book through an adult character's memory. In Emily's story we find words and topics that cannot and, according to social dictates, should not be spoken of or discussed embedded in Emily's diary. In this way, forbidden words and topics *are* mentioned. By having Emily, a child, speak these words or record them in her account books or Jimmy-books, Montgomery finds ways around the restrictions imposed by her culture, her publishers, and her chosen literary genre. We read what we should not read; however, Montgomery cleverly presents the taboo as being taboo, which still allows her to raise the issues and speak what should remain unspoken even while apparently teaching a moral.

It may be useful to refer here to Nancy K. Miller's account of a story told by Sophocles: "Tereus, having raped Philomela, cut out her tongue to prevent discovery. But she weaves a tell-tale account of her violation into a tapestry" (Miller 282). Miller also examines Arachne, who weaves too much into her tapestry and as a result, loses her human form when Pallas Athena turns her into

a spider. Weaving is the safe, feminine, domestic craft, but in both stories Miller cites, the weaver incorporates the forbidden story (private thoughts) into the tapestry (public art form). Arachne continues to spin and weave, but for a limited audience; as such, she represents the female writer who is limited by her art. Like Arachne, L.M. Montgomery is caught in a particular mode of writing and must find ways of subverting the form she must use. We may liken Montgomery's fiction to Arachne's tapestry, for both women artists incorporate forbidden topics in their work.

As she matures as a writer, Emily, too, develops a dependence on private forms of writing. Very often when Emily writes, she writes two sides of the same scene: one, the public version, represents what people want to read, while the other, the private, is the way she really wants to paint the scene. While attending Shrewsbury High School and living with her Aunt Ruth, Emily takes a part-time job as a reporter for *The Shrewsbury Times*. On one occasion, she is sent to report on a sermon delivered by a visiting ministerial candidate. She is not impressed with the sermon and criticizes it as she walks home from church with her aunt. Aunt Ruth asks, "Do you think *you* are competent to criticise a sermon?" Emily prepares her perfunctory report and then, to get the sermon "out of [her] system" she writes for her own satisfaction "an analysis of it", making it as "pointed and satirical and satanical" as she can (EC 244). Montgomery points out the danger of such private writings becoming public when Emily submits, to the newspaper, the private analysis by mistake.

Emily's private Jimmy-books contain sketches of the people she knows, such as her teacher, Mr. Carpenter. When the teacher mistakenly reads the wrong Jimmy-book and finds Emily's description of himself, he is delighted: "Thanks to her dramatic knack of word-painting, Mr. Carpenter [*lives*] in that sketch" (ENM 339). Emily does not realize it, but he does: "he [sees]

himself as in a glass and the artistry of it [pleases] him..." (ENM 339). He tells Emily that she should not write what she does not understand (ENM 331). He thus encourages her to write from life experience. In *Emily Climbs*, Mr. Carpenter tells her, "Leave the realm of imagination severely alone and confine yourself to ordinary life" (92). Here, Montgomery advocates *time over experience*. Mr. Carpenter has earlier given Emily the same advice: "I think there's *something* trying to speak through you -- but you'll have to make yourself a fit instrument for it" (ENM 336). From reading Montgomery's journals, we know that she would like to paint her characters as true to life as possible, but we also know that she is restricted by the form of the sentimental novel:

The second volume of a series, especially if it deals with a very young girl, is the hardest for me to write -- because the public and the publisher won't allow me to write of a young girl as she really is. One can write of children as they are...but when you come to write of the 'miss' you have to depict a sweet, insipid young thing...to whom the basic realities of life and reactions to them are quite unknown....But 'the public' -- one of the Vanderbilts once said 'Damn the public' (*SJIII*: 157).

Montgomery cannot, however, afford to "Damn the public"; she must, at least outwardly, follow the rules of sentimental writing. This is why her journals are crucial in any reading of her fiction, particularly if we aim to uncover the issues that Montgomery is really writing about in her novels.

The idea of the writer or artist being divinely inspired, seen above in Mr. Carpenter's words to Emily, resurfaces several times in this series. As a young writer struggling with her art, Emily glories in her occasional flashes of the world's flawless beauty and prays that she will be worthy of

carrying "some of the loveliness of that 'dialogue divine' back to the everyday world of sordid market-place and clamorous street" (EC 177-178). She also vows that her pen will heal, not hurt (EC 22). She wants to paint in her writing a representation of the world's beauty. In *Emily Climbs*, Emily is asked to write an obituary for a neighbour everyone detests. When she refuses, Aunt Elizabeth is furious and argues, "You are always writing yards of trash that nobody wants....I think you might write something that *is* wanted." Emily is so upset with her aunt's views that she goes to her room and writes a private and sarcastic obituary about the neighbour just for her own satisfaction. She writes in her diary, "I felt that *Something* was writing through me -- but a very different *Something* from the usual one -- a malicious, mocking *Something* that *enjoyed* making fun of poor, lazy, shiftless, lying, silly, hypocritical, old Peter DeGreer. Ideas -- words -- rhymes -- all seemed to drop into place while that *Something* chuckled" (EC 21). Here, Montgomery shows the power of the pen to destroy as well as heal.

As he nears death, Mr. Carpenter tells Emily, "Don't be -- led away -- by those howls about realism. Remember -- pine woods are just as real as -- pigsties -- and a darn sight pleasanter to be in" (EQ 24). At the same time, Montgomery cleverly shows the limitations Emily must face if she is to be a voice for that beauty through her writing: when Emily dreams that she is Sappho, springing from the Leucadian rock, she awakens to find herself having fallen from the haystack on which she and Ilse are spending the night (EC 178). As we have seen with Anne, L.M. Montgomery often brings her heroines back to reality with, quite literally, a thud. She thus shows that Emily will have many setbacks and will continue to struggle before she can become a successful and recognized writer.

Emily uses her journals to both test her voice and to have her say. But it is important to realize that journal writing is a cyclical process: not only writing, but re-reading and reflection are important components. It can be a window to the creative and writing process because writers can become aware of not only what they know and how they feel, but of what they do and how they do it (Yinger and Clark 6 and 12). Writing herself out is, for both L.M. Montgomery and Emily, a form of control. Through her writing, Montgomery is able to take hold of her life and literally have a hand in shaping it. Time and time again she comments on the effect writing has on her. On Monday, November 4, 1904, she writes, "If I could not 'write out' freely certain words, opinions and fancies they would remain bottled up in my soul and would probably ferment and sour and cause some acute disturbance" (*SJ*: 297). On March 3, 1905, she says, "It seems to me I can only preserve an outward calm by writing, and that if I stop a choking fit of tears and sobs will come on" (*SJ*: 304). Montgomery fears not being able to write. Emily feels the same way. We learn that sometimes Emily feels "that if it were not for her diary she would...[fly] into little bits by reason of consuming her own smoke. The fat, black 'Jimmy-book' [seems] to her like a personal friend and a safe confidant for certain matters which [burn] for expression and yet [are] too combustible to be trusted to the ears of any living being" (*EC* 2).

Perhaps it is this possibility for "combustion" that propels both Montgomery and Emily toward recognizing the need to rewrite and restructure what is already written in the journals, for both writers continually read over what they have written. C.A. Howells maintains that journals reflect the writer's multiple changing selves (79). Howells argues that Montgomery's talent for writing and self-analysis develops through the journal writing, as she finds a voice of her own. The journals become "the place of creative ordering and self-discovery" (80). As Montgomery recopies

her old journals, she relives more than just the recorded events and feelings: others that are not on paper are brought to mind by those directly in front of her. After she begins rewriting the old journals, many of her current journal entries are filled with reflections on the section of the old diary she has been rewriting that day. In doing so, she remembers people, places, and events of the past, and reflects upon them. In 1919 she writes, "I find that when I am copying those old journals I feel as if I had gone back into the past and were living over again the events and emotions of which I write. It is very delightful and a little sad" (*SII*: 341). On September 4, 1919, she finds "a mention of Norman Campbell" in her old diary, which leads to a lengthy writing on Norman's life (*SIII*: 342). Even though she does not admit it, Montgomery needs to rewrite these journals. She has lost Frede and is tortured by her husband's psychological problems. Writing becomes an addiction -- writing in her journals is not enough; so she writes fiction; but that is not enough, and she begins to rewrite her journals. Margaret Turner maintains that in this way Montgomery

conflates the roles of reader and writer -- as she is writing in the present she is reading and living in the past, which then enters the present as a sometimes lengthy reflection on the place, person, or event she is engaged with in memory. From frequent statements throughout the journals we know that she also re-reads them often, apart from what the transcription requires: she does not simply glance at the last entry as she begins the next, but deliberately returns to her accounts of particular periods of her life, and in rereading their record, transforms memory and re-lives her past (95).

She needs to feel that she has control over her life, and writing and rewriting allow her to exert some form of control.

Like Montgomery, Emily rewrites and edits her journals. Each of the three books in the Emily series sees the title character engage in at least one act of reading, editing, and revising her letters or journals. She, too, sometimes begins her later journal entries in *Emily's Climbs*, the second book of the series, with such phrases as, "I noticed this evening in glancing over my journal" (EC 110). This shows that she is reading what she is writing as a means of analyzing and reflecting upon her life. She first revises and edits her private writings in *Emily of New Moon*, following her confrontation with Aunt Elizabeth over the letters she has been secretly writing to her father. When she realizes how much her words have hurt Aunt Elizabeth, she says, "I *can't* burn those letters, you know -- they belong to Father. But I'll tell you what I will do. I'll go over them all and put a star by anything I said about you and then I'll add an explanatory footnote saying I was mistaken." Emily spends a great deal of time in the following days "putting in her 'explanatory footnotes', and then her conscience [has] rest" (ENM 314). It is significant that she chooses a star to mark the points she wishes to annotate. As a developing writer, she learns to re-read and re-write her earlier pieces of work, adding a star, which is part of her name and her own identity, to the work.

The second time we see Emily engage in rewriting her private writings is in *Emily Climbs*, when she is living with Aunt Ruth in Shrewsbury. False rumours spread throughout the town about the night Emily, Ilse, Teddy, and Perry spend in the Old John House during a blizzard. Emily is so distraught that she cannot write, think clearly, sleep, study, or eat. When Aunt Ruth learns what is troubling Emily, she confronts members of the community who have been treating Emily unfairly and Emily, surprised by Aunt Ruth's sense of clan loyalty, decides she must find her Jimmy-book

and "add a few more touches to my sketch of Aunt Ruth" (EC 283). The third time Emily edits her journals occurs when she falls out of love with Aylmer Vincent, a man she has been infatuated with for several weeks, and "viciously [inks] out the passage in her diary about 'the love the poets dreamed of'" (EQ 39).

While we observe closely the writing process and witness the acts of reading and (re)writing, we undoubtedly move farther away from the truth. In Montgomery's case, she seems to deliberately focus on some topics while completely avoiding others. She focuses on what she wants *us* to focus on and also what is less disturbing for her. Emily develops a tendency to erase or cross out any disparaging remarks she has made about people. It would appear that when she re-reads sections of her journals, she does not want to see the negative things she has written. She prevents herself from completely developing as a writer because she is, in effect, denying that she has written a certain way, and refusing to evaluate her earlier writing as a means of evaluating her progress. It could be argued that the result of this editing is that when Emily eventually reads over her journal entries, she does not have to read what she has previously written but no longer believes, and editing for this reason in itself shows that she is developing and maturing as a woman and as a writer.

Emily engages in the same act of rewriting her private writings as Montgomery. She apologizes to Aunt Elizabeth and promises that, while she cannot destroy the letters, she can rewrite or amend certain sections, thereby changing her initial impressions and opinions. In so doing, she removes any references that are hurtful. In rewriting and revising their journals, L.M. Montgomery and Emily Byrd Star create layers of narration for the reader. The process of writing and rewriting is such that each new version is layered over the previous ones and as a result, we must dig if we are to uncover the real Montgomery or the real Emily. The very act of revision calls into question the

truthfulness of any account. The possibility exists that certain entries are altered. In Montgomery's case, we may assume that some of the things recorded in her journals may have developed only after years of reflection. This is the pattern that is suggested in Emily's story. Thus, Montgomery leads us to question how truthful any life account can be if it is continually rewritten over many years.

Emily's public writings also mirror Montgomery's in their therapeutic purpose. This purpose establishes one connection between the Anne series and the Emily series. As we have seen in Emily of New Moon, writing is soothing for Emily. Later in the trilogy, the act of writing also serves to soothe, heal, and provide temporary peace. When Emily writes her first book, it is produced under circumstances very similar to those under which Montgomery writes her first novel, Anne of Green Gables. In Emily Climbs, Emily is stranded overnight in an abandoned farmhouse with her friends, Teddy, Ilse, and Perry during a blizzard. At one point Teddy's gaze meets hers across the room and Emily realizes that she loves him. When Perry suggests they try to sleep and predicts they "ought to have some high old dreams tonight", Teddy responds,

I've a pocket full of dreams to sell....What d'ye lack? What d'ye lack?  
 A dream of success -- a dream of adventure -- a dream of the sea -- a  
 dream of the woodland -- any kind of a dream you want at reasonable  
 prices, including one or two unique little nightmares. What will you  
 give me for a dream (EC 270).

Emily has a sudden "flash" for a story, "as if his question, 'What will you give me for a dream?' had been a magic formula opening some sealed chamber in her brain." The "dazzling idea for story [unrolls] before her...complete even to the title" (EC 270). She stays awake all night plotting it out, and by morning all that remains is "to jot its outlines down in her Jimmy-book." We learn that "she

[does] not plan to write it yet -- oh, not for years. She must wait until time and experience [have] made of her pen an instrument capable of doing justice to her conception" (EQ 271-272). Several years later, in Emily's Quest, as Emily lies awake at three o'clock in the morning, she recalls the story she had once plotted. She begins to write her first book at that very moment, and by daylight has written the first four chapters. Emily begins her first book after two important but somewhat negative events in her life have occurred: a failed romance with Aylmer Vincent, and a return visit by her old friend and budding artist, Teddy Kent. During this visit she surmises that Teddy is not romantically interested in her. When they are reunited, he shakes her hand "with a cool detachment" and his eyes are "cool, impersonal" (EQ 42). At this point, even their friendship seems to have died, and Emily "[flings] herself into her work feverishly" in an attempt to deal with her emotions and deny her feelings (EQ 46). She writes this book while in "the subtle, all-embracing joy of creation" and finishes it in just six weeks (EQ 47). During that time, she forgets everything, including Teddy, living and breathing "in another world" (EQ 48). Everything else is forgotten, "for a time at least....Nothing [matters] but her story" (EQ 47). When she finishes it, Emily comes back to her own world with a fresh realization of the beauty that exists around her. Before she begins the book, she watches Teddy's ship sail out of the harbour and sits in the grass sobbing in "the cold moonshine that [has] suddenly taken the place of the friendly twilight" (EQ 46). She works so hard at her short stories that "the purple stains [deepen] under her eyes and the rose stains [fade] out of her cheeks" (EQ 47). But when she finishes her book, she looks out her window at the "dawn-rosy meadows" surrounding New Moon. The garden lies in "an enchanted calm" (EQ 48). Montgomery uses nature descriptions to show the change in her emotions that writing this book has facilitated. The world, to Emily, appears fresh and new, and she moves back into it with renewed energy. The writing of

A Seller of Dreams is central in Emily's story because it marks another point where Emily and L.M. Montgomery merge.

When Montgomery prepares to send Anne of Green Gables off to the publishers, she types it on her "old second-hand typewriter that never makes the capitals plain and won't print 'w' at all" (S/J: 331). Similarly, Emily types her story "on the little third-hand machine Perry had picked up for her at an auction sale -- a machine that [writes] only half of any capital letter and [will not] print the 'm's' at all. She [puts] the capitals and the 'm's' in afterwards with a pen" (EQ 49). It is interesting that the letter that will not type on Emily's machine is "m". It is rather ironic that "m", perhaps signifying Montgomery, will not print. This process of having to go back and add certain letters later in the production of Anne of Green Gables is an anecdote Montgomery repeats in The Alpine Path: The Story of My Career. It is an appropriate inclusion in this professional autobiography, for the story of Montgomery's career seems to be that of going back and adding her own identity to her writing. She thus ensures, with almost everything she writes, that a part of herself, from her journals and her private life, is included in her fiction. She writes her fiction and then rewrites/types it, adding her own identity. The act of writing certain letters in later is an important one in the context of considering Montgomery as a *rewriter* as well as a writer. The fact that Emily has to go back through her fiction and add the letter that begins Montgomery's name suggests the image of Montgomery going back through what she has written and rewriting parts of Emily's story to include herself and her views. Without the "m's", Emily's story would be unfinished. Perhaps Montgomery is suggesting that we have not read the real stories contained in the Anne and Emily series until we, too, have gone back and put M/ontgomery in. The only way to accomplish this is to overread the novels and journals side by side.

Emily's typewriter is third-hand and is a gift from Perry Miller. This may, in itself, offer important implications for what Montgomery is doing here. Perry Miller first enters Emily's life in Emily of New Moon. At that time, he is a poor boy from the equally poor Stovepipe Town. He works for his living, earning his room and board at New Moon. Eventually he is able to work his way through Shrewsbury High School. Perry is determined to be successful; he eventually becomes a lawyer and is interested in politics. If we overread Perry's story, we see that he wants to change the history and tradition of Stovepipe Town and the people who live there by showing that they, too, can be intelligent and successful. When he gives Emily the typewriter he is providing her with the vehicle through which she, too, can alter the history and tradition of the women in her culture and society. Emily is able to accomplish this in two ways. First, she uses it to write and typewrite her stories which will bring her publishing success. Second, she manipulates the keys, bringing her own handwriting, or identity, to the manuscript and creating her own story when she fills in the letters for the keys that do not work.

When Emily later writes her second novel, the best-selling The Moral of the Rose, it is not written with the intensity or passion that is present during the creation of her first novel, A Seller of Dreams. This predicament sounds familiar in light of what L.M. Montgomery experiences as she writes the Anne and Emily sequels. Emily begins the second novel as a short story and reads it to Aunt Elizabeth when the older lady is confined to bed with a broken leg. The New Moon people love it so much she agrees to write and read for them a new chapter every day. In creating this scenario, Montgomery sets up Emily as a female Charles Dickens who writes the novel in response to Aunt Elizabeth's "Oliver Twist complex", for the older woman asks for a new instalment everyday (EQ 145). After she has written several of these instalments, Emily has the idea to expand her story

into a book: "Not like A Seller of Dreams, of course. That old glory could come back no more. But Emily had an instantaneous vision of the new book, as a whole" (EQ 145). When she chooses to call her book The Moral of the Rose, Aunt Elizabeth says no one will understand the meaning of the title, but Emily is firm in her decision (EQ 147). Like Montgomery refusing to cater to her publishers by changing Emily's name, Emily is adamant that her book shall have the title she has chosen for it. In so doing, Emily is challenging her male publishers and showing that as the creator, she should be the one to decide what the book will be like.

There are several other clues here that connect the Anne and Emily stories. One is Cousin Jimmy's response to The Moral of the Rose. He listens to Emily reading it and tells her, "I feel young again when I'm listening to you" (EQ 145). This is important for our analysis because before L.M. Montgomery begins to write Anne of Green Gables, she continually writes entries in her journals that show she is mourning the loss of her youth. It is not so much that she wants to feel physically young again but she wants to emotionally re-live the time when she is young. She wants to be naive and worry-free. That is what she achieves, at least temporarily, through the writing of her first novel and the rewriting of her journals. And if Montgomery is using Emily's story as yet another form of rewriting and life writing as she retells Anne's creation, then it is only appropriate that Emily's writing should make people feel young again as well.

Emily begins The Moral of the Rose when Aunt Elizabeth is confined to bed and she finishes it on the day the splints are taken off her aunt's leg. As Emily is reading and writing this story, Aunt Elizabeth tells her that she likes the story, explaining, "It kind of took my thoughts away from myself" -- the same effect Montgomery attempts to achieve through her writing (EQ 143). The connection becomes more apparent when we read, in Emily's Quest, that after Emily finishes the

book and is trying to get it published, she is "a little tired of everything. It was Christmas now and a long, dreary winter stretched before her -- an empty, aimless winter. Nothing seemed worth while" (EQ 148). If we examine Montgomery's journals, we find that in October, 1905, she writes, "The summer is over! How I shrink from facing the fact! I look forward to the winter with an inexpressible dread" (S/J: 310). This dread of winter is expressed at the same point in the lives of both the creator and her heroine.

The novel written within the novel is important for several reasons. Most obviously, it exemplifies yet again the importance of the writing process. As readers, we are given very little information about the novels Emily writes. Montgomery chooses to stress the act or process of writing and the relief, strength, and pleasure that act or process offers as opposed to the content of what is written. Furthermore, A Seller of Dreams is an appropriate title for a book written by one of Montgomery's fictional heroines, for Montgomery herself is a seller of dreams by the very nature and form of the books she writes. In choosing to use the form of the sentimental novel, she is selling dreams and fantasies in her fiction. She is presenting the world as people would like it to be. She is doing exactly as she wants to do when she writes the first Anne novel: keeping the shadows out of her work (S/J: 339). For both herself and her readers, Montgomery creates a reprieve. But the shadows become more and more apparent read in the context of L.M. Montgomery's journals and in the context of the literary texts Emily reads.<sup>11</sup>

While Anne Shirley is incapable of writing about her own life, Emily Byrd Starr is incapable of not writing about it. If Emily retells Montgomery/Anne's story, then she represents the impulse to rewrite. They are two sides of the creative impulse: Anne represents Montgomery's need to write, while Emily represents her need to rewrite. When Aunt Elizabeth tries to prevent Emily from

writing by offering her the chance to attend high school only if she promises not to write. Emily refuses, explaining, "Not that I *won't* -- it's just that I *can't*....I *can't* help writing....It's in my blood. There's no use in asking me" (EC 82). It is Cousin Jimmy who works things out between Emily and Aunt Elizabeth when he persuades Emily to promise she will not write "anything that [isn't] true" (EQ 85). With this promise, as hard as it may be to keep, she is still allowed to write, as long as she does not write stories.

Aunt Elizabeth tries to prevent Emily from writing for several reasons. First, writing is an unconventional and untraditional way for women in Blair Water to earn a living. Most women work until they marry and then trade a career for a family. Second, Aunt Elizabeth is afraid and uncertain of what she does not and cannot understand. Again, as with Anne, we see the writer as being held in distrust. Even though Aunt Elizabeth likes The Moral of the Rose, she is convinced that Emily has modelled her fictional characters on certain neighbours, and worries about the neighbours' reaction to the book once it is published. Finally, when Aunt Elizabeth tries to dissuade Emily from writing, Montgomery is placing yet another obstacle before Emily as she struggles on her path to success. This, in turn, allows Montgomery to accomplish two things. She shows how difficult her heroine's path to success as a writer will be. Emily will have to study, apprentice, struggle against outside forces, and work very hard if she is to succeed. It also enables her to show that the society and culture into which Emily has been born does not deem it acceptable for a young woman to have a career over marriage or to be a successful artist. At New Moon, the women reign supreme, but in Shrewsbury and Blair Water, the New Moon ladies are considered old-fashioned. Janet Royal is a successful New York magazine editor but she is looked down on in Shrewsbury because she has chosen a literary career over marriage. Janet tries to persuade Emily to move to New York and

Emily refuses. Emily then achieves literary success while living in Prince Edward Island. The fact that Janet Royal must write a letter acknowledging that she was wrong about the proposed move and that Emily is right to stay shows that the female writer should not have to and does not have to give up her home and a chance for love in order to be successful.

Such gender codes indicate other factors that are at play which could potentially hinder Emily's development as a writer. She must overcome these barriers if she is to fulfil her literary dreams. Montgomery frequently presents such barriers in terms of architectural images. In Emily Climbs, for instance, Emily sits in church and studies the people around her, "[slipping] on tiptoe through some momentarily unlatched door" to catch a glimpse of hidden secrets (39). Montgomery would use architectural images because Emily is attempting to symbolically break through the walls or barriers of male writing. Like the Victorian archetype of the madwoman in the attic, the female identity is often hidden or concealed in literature. For this reason, the title of Emily's first novel, The Seller of Dreams, is significant. If we look beneath the surface/floor we find hidden in the "cellar" a wealth of ideas and clues as to what Montgomery is actually writing about in her novels. We may consider the cellar of a house to be a part of the female domain. In it is stored food, that which sustains us. In Montgomery's case, her dreams, which sustain her, are hidden or buried in another part of her that emerges only through her writing.

Such images recur at the conclusion of Emily of New Moon, when Emily sits in her mother's room, called the "look-out", and writes. The fact that Emily has been given a room of her own -- and her mother's old room at that -- appropriately marks an important stage in her gradual acceptance at New Moon. However, this room carries several serious implications for Emily. First, it is the space formerly occupied by Juliet Murray, who is controlled by her family and who breaks those bonds

only through marriage. Second, her family never does forgive her for marrying someone of whom they do not approve and they shun her. Third, the room is called the "look-out", which suggests that Emily is dangerously close to resigning herself to only watching or looking out at the world, as opposed to being a part of it. Both Anne and Emily are presented as emblems of the female writer at the turn of the century: imprisoned (or restricted) by the walls of male architecture and the predominantly male world of writing because they cannot write in anything but the accepted literary genres for women writers. Such positioning recalls Ann Douglas' comment that sentimentality and sentimental literature guarantees the continuation of male hegemony by redefining and limiting the possibilities for change in society (13). We see the female writer restricted by and imprisoned within male architecture and the male canon. When Emily's writings are rejected by publishers, she says that the male editors "can be -- canonised" (EQ 15). This is her way of cursing them and it is Montgomery's way of showing that while male writers may be canonized, female writers may not be as successful in their quests for recognition. Both Emily and Montgomery know that it is easier for the work of a male writer to enter the canon than it is for the work of a female writer.

Like Mrs. Rachel Lynde and Anne Shirley, Emily sits "by the window", looking out and watching everything happen outside, separated from the action of the world by the walls of her house. As a female writer, she is separated by gender and form from the male world of literature. We see here the embedded comments on power and gender that Miller discusses in her article on overreading (272). The fact that Montgomery shows herself, Mrs. Lynde, Anne, and Emily in the same look-out position raises interesting possibilities for a study of the journals. Because the journals are rewritten, one edition or version seems to have been a draft for another. In this way, Montgomery really writes her autobiography when she rewrites her journals. Thus, she, like Anne

and Emily, might be tempted to cast herself into certain roles: carefree girl, struggling artist, kindred spirit, devoted mother. Such a positioning of herself in comparison to her characters also forges new connections between the world of her journals and the worlds of her novels. It shows a similarity between Montgomery and her characters because their options very often reflect hers.

Until she marries Teddy, Emily chooses to remain living on Prince Edward Island. She so chooses because the island is so closely tied to her identity as a writer. Unlike Anne's story, we see Emily write and we read Emily writing. We see Anne writing in Anne of Avonlea, Anne of the Island, and Anne of Windy Poplars, but Montgomery never emphasizes Anne's writing the way she does Emily's. Anne's literary dreams are only beginning to bud when she finishes college (AI 241). Emily, on the other hand, has always known that she will be a writer. Yet at the end of Emily's Quest, as Emily prepares to marry Teddy, we know that she will have to move away with her husband because of his career, and will return to Prince Edward Island only for visits. We may wonder what will happen to Emily's voice and her writing if she moves away from the island which gives life to her stories.

The characters of Anne and Emily, as we have seen, are similar in many ways. When we apply the feminist critical theory of overreading, we are able to read beyond the physical similarities of these characters and their worlds, and it is possible to uncover the real tie that binds the Anne series to the Emily series: the presence of L.M. Montgomery in the text. It is necessary to establish Montgomery's presence because we are able to then see that, for Montgomery, fiction seems to assume the same therapeutic role as journal writing. We realize that Montgomery uses a variety of forms or genres of writing to write herself out or to confront her own personal situation throughout

her life. We may then infer that it is not the content of the fiction that forms the connection between both series; instead, it is the treatment and presentation of the writing process.

If we engage in a parallel reading of Anne of Green Gables and Montgomery's journals, we are able to determine that the writing of this novel appears to be a healing experience for Montgomery. It seems to mark a turning point in her adult life. She overcomes sorrow and seems to be able to deal with her life situation. When we overread Emily's story for clues that indicate the process of development of the writing, we note as well that in this literary autobiography which so closely mirrors Montgomery's own life is embedded a commentary on the writing process and the development of the female writer. Thus we focus on the production of the text, not on the final product.

Emily of New Moon, Emily Climbs, and Emily's Quest collectively present a study of the developing female writer in a society that imposes limitations on the artist and on her art. It is only through reading what Emily actually writes herself and reading her as she writes that we are able to measure her development, over three books, into a successful writer. In the seemingly simple tale of an orphaned girl who longs to be a successful writer, Montgomery embeds and encodes the gender-based political structure that exists as a barrier to women writers in a traditionally male literary canon. When we trace L.M. Montgomery's journals through her fiction that we are able to discern the female identity in the text. In other words, an application of overreading to Emily's story indicates the places where Montgomery writes her own personal and political life conditions into the text. In so doing, she subverts an art form that seems at first glance to be a representation of an ideal, pastoral world. By applying the principles of overreading to this series, we are able to uncover the real story Montgomery is trying to tell: that of the female writer who is prevented, by male literary

and social tradition, from developing a voice of her own. That writer then responds by creating an arbitrary space of her own in her work.

It is this need to create a space of her own in her work that is most important for our study. L.M. Montgomery uses writing as therapy and finds that one form of writing out is not enough to either help or satisfy her. She writes in her journals, she writes novels, and she rewrites her journals -- all in an effort to slip out of her present life and find happiness in the past. What she searches for, by retelling Anne's and her own story through Emily's and by rewriting her journals, is, in her own words, "balm and healing and nepenthe" (S//: 221). When we engage in an intertextual overreading of the journals and the novels, we see that she appears to achieve such healing for a time. Inevitably, however, the pressures of her present life impose themselves upon her again, and she continues to write and re-write in a desperate attempt to win control over her life.

## CONCLUSION

If we use Lucy Maud Montgomery's journals as a means of overreading the Anne of Green Gables books, it becomes possible to use the Anne series and the corresponding journal entries to overread the Emily trilogy. This is because Montgomery continually challenges narrative and genre boundaries in her writings. Her fictional works, as we have seen, respond to one another. Both the Anne of Green Gables series and the Emily of New Moon series constitute yet another form of life writing for this avid journalist. As she writes Anne of Green Gables, Montgomery writes her loneliness and her frustrations out of her life by entering, for a period of time, the world she creates for Anne. Years later she writes Emily of New Moon and in that trilogy traces the process of writing out that she experiences while writing her first novel.

It is impossible to separate the two heroines because the stories of Anne and Emily so closely reflect one another. When we apply the principles of overreading to Lucy Maud Montgomery's writing, more connections surface not only between the author and her work, but among the works themselves. It becomes obvious that the story Montgomery weaves into the Anne of Green Gables series is very closely linked to the one she tells in the Emily of New Moon series. An intertextual overreading of the novels in both series and the journals shows how Montgomery's personal life creeps into and influences her public writings. This, in turn, allows us to see how and why each of Montgomery's Anne and Emily novels respond to one another.

Several significant observations emerge from an overreading of L.M. Montgomery's journals and novels. One is the incredible degree of multiplicity that characterizes her work. There are layers of narration and layers of revision in both the fiction and the nonfiction. This becomes apparent

when we engage in a series of intertextual readings using the journals, the Anne of Green Gables series, and the Emily of New Moon series. The stories which comprise the Anne series develop from Montgomery's memories of her own childhood and from her adult experiences of loneliness and isolation, which she records in her journals. These memories and experiences then resurface as a part of Emily's story in the Emily of New Moon trilogy. Emily's tale becomes yet another version of the life story Montgomery continually weaves: that of the woman who uses writing to comfort and console herself. This same story and writing process underlies both her nonfiction (journals) and her fiction (novels).

There are two reasons for Montgomery's use of the sentimental novel to tell the stories of both heroines. First, when she is writing Anne of Green Gables, she researches the market and learns of the forms other female writers are using to increase their chances of being published. The literary genre of the sentimental girls' novel offers her an opportunity to be published. Later, as she adds more books to the Anne series and begins to write the Emily series, she continues to use this genre because it guarantees her commercial success. We see that while she appears to remain within the confines of the sentimental genre, Montgomery is able to subvert that very form. In doing so, she shows careful readers the limitations and restrictions placed upon the female writer during her own time. When we further examine each heroine, Anne and Emily, as emblems of Montgomery, we realize that each represents in some way the restrictions placed on the female writer in Montgomery's time.

An application of the principles of overreading allows us to see that the sentimental genre serves yet another, and more personal purpose for L.M. Montgomery. It opens for her a gateway to an enchanted childhood world -- something to which the adult writer seeks to return as emotional

pain and loneliness seem to become a constant in her personal life. By the time she approaches and then enters the twentieth century, her journal entries change dramatically in both tone and content. Gone is the enthusiastic and extroverted girl we meet in the early journals, and in her place is a mature, experienced woman. At this point, Montgomery has witnessed the deaths of relatives and friends, has endured two failed romances, and feels obligated to abandon her teaching career to return home and take care of her widowed grandmother. This need to write about the ideal world of childhood transcends the series about Anne Shirley and manifests itself once again in the Emily series. Even when Montgomery writes about Emily Byrd Starr, she cannot cease to write about the process involved in creating the world of Anne Shirley. It appears that Montgomery needs to write about that ideal world as much as her readers want to read about it.

When writing fiction does not offer her enough of an escape from her present life and Montgomery assumes she is finished telling Anne's story, she turns to her journals and seeks refuge inside their pages by rewriting all of her entries. She rewrites her journals because of the consolation and security they afford her. She can easily slip into her past because when she *rewrites* old journal entries she *relives* them. As well, realizing that they will likely become public property (she wills them to Stuart, her youngest son) she *excludes* experiences, views, or reflections that might hurt or shock the reader, including relatives of people she discusses in the journals. She also *includes* information to explain why she reacts as she does to certain things, to give a more complete picture of herself. She thus changes some of the subjective, emotional, original entries into ones that are more rational and objective.

Once this initial need to vent her frustrations works itself out, she rewrites as a form of therapy. She shows that she has moved through this episode and is able to distance herself from

what has happened. It appears, however, that one rewriting is not enough to either bring Montgomery back to her youth or put all of her ghosts to rest, for she continually rewrites her journals from 1919 to 1942. Of course, if each journal revision becomes a draft for another journal revision, the validity and honesty of all the entries contained in these volumes are questionable. As such, we may never know the real L.M. Montgomery.

This brings us to another important conclusion we may draw from Montgomery's work: secrecy pervades her writing. Montgomery uses both her journals and her novels to conceal as much about herself as she reveals. However, when we trace L.M. Montgomery's journals through her fictional works, we are able to discern the presence of the female writer in the texts. An application of the principles of overreading to the two series shows how Montgomery's personal life creeps into and shapes her public writings so that she uses both her journals and her novels to impose order on her existence.

Is Lucy Maud Montgomery never to write the psychological study of one character's life because she is a female writer and is therefore limited by the traditional male publishing world? Or is it because she is too busy creating a psychological study of herself in her journals to create one in her fiction? Life writing is such a constant and vital element in Montgomery's writing that even in her fiction she cannot escape her need to write about her own life. Through the process of writing in her journals, rewriting her journals, and writing the series about Anne and the series about Emily, Montgomery continually writes herself out. What emerges from a parallel reading of these journals and novels is a composite of the author herself.

In Anne of the Island, Anne Shirley remarks, "We are never half so interesting when we have learned that language is given us to enable us to conceal our thoughts" (156). In Montgomery's case,

we see that the more she learns, the more she learns to hide. The more pain she experiences, the more she writes herself out to both confront it and conceal it; the more she writes herself out, the more she re-writes. This need to manipulate language to hide emotions, feelings, and life conditions only serves to make her more interesting as a focus of contemporary scholarship. L.M. Montgomery writes her novels not for little girls, but for the women her young readers will grow up to be. Most of the scholars who are publishing material on L.M. Montgomery today grew up reading her work as children. That they continue to study her writings as adults is testimony to the fact that her fiction and nonfiction still hold a certain fascination for us. The fascination lies in re-reading books that meant so much to us as children and still finding messages in them that can mean so much to us as adults. If anything, the experience of reading Montgomery's work becomes richer with each successive reading.

When we apply the principles of overreading as they are outlined by Nancy K. Miller, we are able to approach a text as though it has never before been read. This permits a certain amount of flexibility and freedom in our interpretation. This thesis argues that an important link exists not just between Montgomery's fiction and her nonfiction, but among her fictional works themselves. Overreading allows us to forge new connections between the story of Anne and the story of Emily. We can establish these links when we use Montgomery's journals as a source of information about the personal, public, and political factors that influence her writing. As a result of such a reading, we see that the story of Anne cannot be excluded from a study of the conditions that are present to influence the creation of Emily. The two series are finely interrelated. As emblems of the female artist in a patriarchal society that imposes limits on the female writer and her art, Anne Shirley and Emily Byrd Starr may be distinguishable, but they are also inseparable.

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## ENDNOTES

1. L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables (New York: Bantam, 1978) 250. The title of this chapter resembles the title of a chapter in Anne of Green Gables, "Where the Brook and River Meet".
2. Ahmansson has also examined Anne's influence in Sweden, the first country to print a translation of Montgomery's first novel. According to her, Pippi Longstocking, perhaps the most popular book ever written by a Swedish author, was directly inspired by Anne of Green Gables. As well, Ahmansson maintains that just about every person in Sweden has heard of, if not read, Anne of Green Gables.
3. For an interesting examination of the influence Anne of Green Gables has had upon Margaret Atwood, specifically in Atwood's writing of Lady Oracle and Cat's Eye, see Temma F. Berg's article, "Sisterhood is Fearful: Female Friendship in L.M. Montgomery", published in Harvesting Thistles, ed. Mary Rubio (Guelph: Canadian Children's Press, 1994). Berg argues that Atwood both consciously and subconsciously sets out, in her two novels, to deconstruct and even destroy the idyllic picture of friendship established by Montgomery in Anne of Green Gables. According to Berg, Atwood directly and deliberately contrasts Elaine, Cordelia, Grace, and Carol in Cat's Eye with Anne and Diana in Montgomery's work. She uses Cordelia and Elaine to emphasize the tensions in female friendship Montgomery successfully represses in her writing (Berg 42).
4. Montgomery's process of constructing her journals is, as she puts it, systematic. She is never without a blank book, and at home, faithfully and dutifully records her daily activities and reflections. When she travels, she takes her journals with her. If for some reason she does not have one near when she wants to write, she records activities, events, reactions, and emotions in

notebooks or on scraps of paper, and later copies them into her journals. This is not the case for the earliest journals, but becomes necessary as she grows older and leads a busier lifestyle as a famous author, a minister's wife, and a mother. The first time she acknowledges that she has begun to do this is in January 1912, just months after her marriage to Ewan Macdonald. Her previous entry is dated March 4, 1911. She explains, "I was so busy that I could not keep this journal up in any regular fashion. Besides, I long shrank from the pain I knew would be attendant upon the writing of grandmother's death and leaving Cavendish. But occasionally through last spring, when I had a little spare time, or when pain demanded some outward expression, I wrote some stray entries in a notebook..." (*SJII*: 61). She follows this with two entries from April and May 1911. Later, she includes eighteen other "stray entries" written during her honeymoon in the British Isles. She does this again in 1919, when her husband is ill and they are visiting the United States (*SJII*: 331-340). Thus, her journals are written in, what is to her, an orderly fashion. She imposes order on what is happening or has just happened to her by writing it down.

5. L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables (New York: Bantam Books, 1978) 11. This phrase is spoken by the Bright River stationmaster when Matthew arrives to pick up the orphan he and his sister are adopting, and learns that it is a girl, and not a boy, who awaits him.

6. Although Anne of Green Gables is sent to four publishing companies before the L.C. Page Company accepts it more than a year after it has been written, the book is immediately welcomed by the contemporary reading public. As Mollie Gillen (1978) reports, Anne of Green Gables is an instant success in 1908. It is reprinted six times in its first five months; translated into several languages, including Braille; and eventually goes through thirty-two editions in its first five years (3 and 28). Not only does Page accept the book, a sequel is requested even before the original is

released. The book appears in June 1908; by the end of the month, Montgomery is able to record in her journal, "Anne is already in her second edition" (*SJF*: 335). By October, it is in its fifth edition.

7. Shakespeare, William. *Twelfth Night*. The Riverside Shakespeare (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972). II.v. 145-146. The original passage reads, "Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." In her article, "L.M. Montgomery's Use of Quotations and Allusions in the 'Anne' Books", Rea Wilmshurst identifies hundreds of Montgomery's allusions to previously published literary works, songs, and the Bible. The sources of the three allusions to Shakespeare, Browning, and Matthew, cited in this section, were located through Wilmshurst (21, 26, and 29).

8. Browning, Robert. "In a Gondola". The Poetical Works of Robert Browning. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974. 263.

9. In the world of Montgomery's first novel, the things that threaten Anne -- her red hair, a quick temper, death, orphaned life -- are overcome. Helen Porter maintains that in Montgomery's books, people even die at the right time, citing such examples as Ruby Gillis, Mr. Carpenter, Captain Jim, Walter, and Judy Plum. Frequently such characters die laughing, smiling, or radiating peace (102). When Ruby Gillis dies of consumption in Anne of the Island, it is in her sleep, "painlessly and calmly", with a smile on her face -- "as if, after all, death [has] come as a kindly friend to lead her over the threshold, instead of the grisly phantom she [has] dreaded" (109-110). We can extend Porter's observations to include the Emily series as well. In Emily of New Moon, Emily's father, Douglas Starr, is depicted similarly in death. When Emily sneaks in to see him one last time, she finds that he "looked so beautiful. All the lines of pain had vanished -- his face looked almost like

a boy's except for the silver hair above it. And he was smiling -- such a nice, whimsical, wise little smile, as if he had suddenly discovered something lovely and unexpected and surprising. She had seen many nice smiles on his face in life but never one just like this" (ENM 33).

10. L.M. Montgomery, Emily Climbs (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart-Bantam Limited, 1984)

1. This is the title of the first chapter in the novel, which opens with Emily sitting in her room, writing in her journal.

11. This thesis does not propose to discuss the similarities or connections between L.M. Montgomery's work and that of other writers except for brief examples that facilitate our overreading of her works. For a discussion of how the books Emily reads both influence her as a writer and contain subversive messages for Montgomery's readers, see Elizabeth Epperly's discussion of the Emily trilogy in The Fragrance of Sweet-Grass (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). Epperly examines how Montgomery uses references to such literary works as Aurora Leigh and Jane Eyre to raise important issues about the female writer.







