Video: Seeing Female Readers, Reading Female Readers, Making Meta-Readers: Montgomery as Depictor and Creator of Scholars

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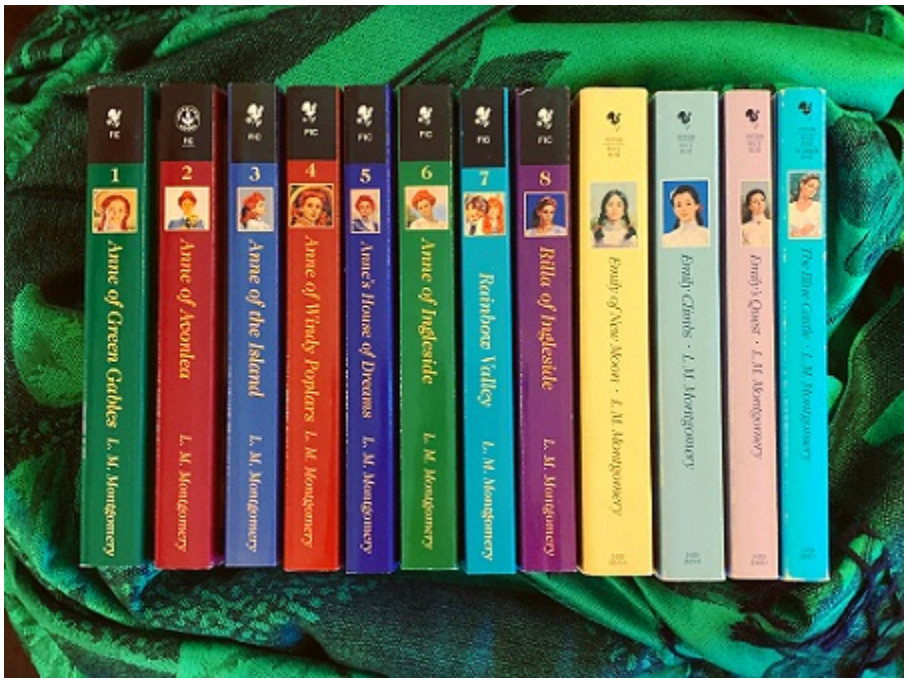
I get all my best ideas in my sleep.

Back in 2017, when I first saw the call for papers for the L.M. Montgomery and Reading conference, I knew I wanted to write about Montgomery's women readers (both in the books and of them), her women writers, and the transformation of one into the other. Then, one day during the writing process, I woke up with fragments of origin stories flickering through my mind: Mon-Daw-Min. A woman riding on the back of a great turtle. A whale materializing in a near-empty ocean. Also, Wonder Woman. Spider-Man. Professor X. That's when I started wondering: is there yet another type of origin story? Are the stories we tell about discovering an author or work that enlightens our lives ... are these origin stories, too? The origin of bookish love or writerly life?

Are we, in effect, reborn when we discover a work that changes our lives?

That’s what I explore in this essay on L.M. Montgomery, reading, and writing.



Spines of some of L.M. Montgomery's books.
Anne of Green Gables series by L.M. Montgomery, cover illustrations by Ben Stahl. Bantam, 1998.
Emily of New Moon trilogy by L.M. Montgomery, cover illustrations by Ben Stahl. Bantam, 1983.
The Blue Castle by L.M. Montgomery, cover illustration by Ben Stahl. Seal Books, 1988.

Because I couldn’t travel to present this essay in person (#endoissues #spoonielife), the organizers kindly let me record the talk at home and broadcast it at the conference. (And yes, I’m wearing pajama pants, and, yes, I collapsed in a gibbering heap for a full thirty minutes afterward).

Though I wasn’t there to see the reaction, people contacted me afterward, excited about the presentation and wanting to know if they could view it again, cite it in their work, and so on. So here it is at last! I’d love to be in your Works Cited page!

"Seeing Female Readers, Reading Female Readers, Making Meta-Readers: L.M. Montgomery as Depictor and Creator of Scholars," Feb. 24, 2020, created by Trinna S. Frever.

A more formal, printed version of this essay is under revision for the *Journal of L.M. Montgomery Studies*, so you can see my Works Cited page, too. Details coming soon!



Covers of two of L.M. Montgomery's books.
Anne of the Island by L.M. Montgomery, 1915. Arcturus, 2017.
Anne's House of Dreams by L.M. Montgomery, 1917. Arcturus, 2017.

Dr. Kate Scarth and I are also developing a survey to collect fans' L.M. Montgomery origin stories, with a website and book to follow, exploring Montgomery's enduring appeal through the lens of these stories. Please consider sharing the story of how you discovered L.M. Montgomery's world and what it means to you!



"Your LMM Story Logo." 2020. Trinna S. Frever & Kate Scarth.

More details forthcoming here:

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