



PROJECT MUSE[®]

curiosity that is to be fostered rather than deplored, a view of Nature that separates it entirely from emotional affect, morality, and gender roles. This confluence of responses specifically to an activity not taught to but initiated by the unadulterated child suggests the myriad issues raised by Romantic pedagogies, many of which are addressed in the collection as a whole.

Works Cited

- McGavran, James Holt, Jr., ed. *Literature and the Child: Romantic Continuations, Postmodern Contestations*. Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1999.
- , ed. *Romanticism and Children's Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1991.

Anne's World: A New Century of Anne of Green Gables, edited by Irene Gammel and Benjamin Lefebvre. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2010.

Reviewed by Anne K. Phillips

Around the world, the 2008 centenary of *Anne of Green Gables* sparked popular celebrations as well as scholarly conclaves in honor of Montgomery's beloved novel. New assessments of Montgomery's life and work have appeared in response to those events, including *Anne's World*, a collection of eleven essays written by recognized as well as emerging Montgomery scholars. Co-editors Irene Gammel and Benjamin Lefebvre intend in this volume "to consolidate a vast amount of information, carefully tracing the previous scholarship and signalling extensions; and to establish new points of departure by locating *Anne of Green Gables* and its production in social, cultural, and historical contexts while also exploring the reception and cultural uses of the novel, thus providing new lines of argument and new domains of study for future research" (8–9). Occasionally the volume might provide more specific overviews of previous scholarship, but it should succeed in inspiring new additions to Montgomery studies.

The opening essay, Carole Gerson's "Seven Milestones: How *Anne of Green Gables* Became a Canadian Icon," touches on issues of "publication, adaptation, reconstruction, commodification, and commemoration" to show how Anne Shirley was transformed "from a fictional character to a national icon and a cultural industry" (19). In an otherwise

productive essay that touches on textual history, film and theatrical adaptations, government investment in the author, her works, and her legacy, international enthusiasm, and more, Gerson occasionally leaves gaps in her summary of previous scholarship. Readers unfamiliar with Sean Somers's discussion of the post–World War II translation of *Anne* in Japan, for example, would appreciate a few concrete examples of how the translators' choices align Montgomery's work with the "cultural sensibilities of Japanese readers" (Gerson 23).

Serving as an apt bookend to Gerson's essay is co-editor Benjamin Lefebvre's "What's in a Name? Towards a Theory of the Anne Brand," the collection's final essay, which extends the volume's attention to adaptation and commodification of Montgomery's works by asking, "How do images of Anne Shirley outside of the novel *Anne of Green Gables* contribute to or complicate the Anne brand?" (194). Lefebvre traces what Montgomery was and was not able to control in the process of her work's publication, distribution, and adaptation. He also examines the career trajectory of Dawn Paris, the actress who became "Anne Shirley" (literally renaming herself as she appeared in the 1934 film adaptation), concluding that Montgomery's and "Anne Shirley's" "inability to exert control over the name or the identity anticipated the contested ownership of the Anne brand in the twenty-first century" (194).

The contributors of many of the essays sandwiched between Gerson's and Lefebvre's contributions also are interested in publication, adaptation, and commodification, particularly as evidenced by international responses to *Anne*. Gammel joins Andrew O'Malley, Huifeng Hu, and Ranbir K. Banwait in writing "An Enchanting Girl: International Portraits of Anne's Cultural Transfer," noting that although "many prior critics have assumed that people of a certain country may find *Anne of Green Gables* so appealing precisely because they *lack* something in their own culture that they find in *Anne*," on the contrary, "several countries seem to like her because they have found ways to make the protagonist accord with their prior belief systems" (167; original emphasis). Addressing Anne's reception in brief, engaging, but not fully satisfying sections focusing on Iran, China, Japan, and Germany, the authors conclude—with a nod to Carol Singley's assessment of the term—that "adoption itself becomes a metaphor for the cross-cultural homing of Anne, as she is adopted into different familial and cultural structures" (188).

Margaret Steffler's "Anne in a 'Globalized' World: Nation, Nostalgia, and Postcolonial Perspectives of Home," uses a postcolonial lens

to examine how Montgomery's novel, especially in its treatment of nature and nostalgia, resonates with a range of readers internationally and domestically. Steffler is partially inspired to write as a result of her experiences as an instructor at a secondary school in Nigeria in the early 1980s. Reflecting on her own and others' responses to Montgomery's work, she acknowledges that "Anne mythologizes the homeless and unhomed figure who manages to participate in homing herself. Rather than losing its relevance, the narrative resonates clearly within the twenty-first century's breakdown of stable territory and settled citizenship" (161).

A number of the essays extend critical attention to the ways in which *Anne* has been regarded by different readers in professional and personal contexts over time. Leslie McGrath contributes "Reading with Blitheness: *Anne of Green Gables* in Toronto Public Library's Children's Collections," incorporating "daybooks, articles, interviews, and listings in major evaluative bibliographies to explore how children's librarians at the Toronto Public Library contributed to the novel's durability" (101). The author traces the description of Montgomery's novel in different editions of advisory materials such as *Books to Read* and *Books for Boys and Girls* prepared by the librarians over a period of decades. McGrath also identifies possible reasons why librarians especially might have appreciated Montgomery's work, among them the author's deviation from the traditional orphan novels of her youth, the allusive quality of her text, her infusion of humor throughout the novel, and her development of a female-centered "social survival" tale (108), in addition to the novel's consistent popularity with child patrons.

Other essays in the volume trace other readers' responses to the novel and to the cult of Anne in general. In "Reading to Heal: *Anne of Green Gables* as Bibliotherapy," Gammel acknowledges that "we know little about the cognitive processes involved when fans draw therapeutic benefits from Montgomery's fiction. Are there any textual signposts in *Anne* that invite such therapeutic readers?" (84). Drawing from her knowledge of Montgomery's own long-term battle with depression, including the 2008 revelation that she had ended her own life, Gammel argues that Montgomery was able to "embed strategies that allowed readers in need to decode her text for therapeutic benefits" (85). She assesses Montgomery's own reading habits as well as Anne's references to her favorite works of literature throughout the novel, concluding, "[w]riting for bibliotherapy was a task Montgomery excelled at. Operating on several levels for diverse groups of readers, she provided the

reassurance of happy endings, but also invited readers to decode at their own pace the more unsettling realities embedded in her satire" (96).

In "'Too Heedless and Impulsive': Re-reading *Anne of Green Gables* through a Clinical Approach," Helen Hoy's objective is "to challenge assumptions both about the novel and about the line between simply wild and irreverent behaviour and behaviour that has clinical implications," as well as to help "explain why people with disability find strength and encouragement in this particular novel" (66). Hoy identifies key characteristics of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) that align with the behaviors of Anne Shirley, compellingly supporting her assertions with specific passages and details from Montgomery's novel. She also provides some consideration of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) as she develops her interpretation. Her reading of the much-maligned conclusion to the novel provides additional insight: "Even as an adult, a person with FASD is likely to need external human supports, familiar structures, and a simplified environment, features of the future Anne chooses in selecting Avonlea and Marilla over Redmond" (76-77). While readers may resist Hoy's thesis, her approach might well inspire follow-up scholarship from someone well versed in current research on adolescent brain development.

Although it would benefit from more concrete evidence of actual readers' responses to Montgomery's works or their adaptations, Jason Nolan's "Learning with Anne: Early Childhood Education Looks at New Media for Young Girls," provides an introductory analysis of the pedagogy being fostered by such social networking Web sites as "Anne's Diary," intended for girls aged six to fourteen, and "New Moon Girls," which advertises itself as a resource to help girls "develop their full potential through self-discovery, creativity, and community in an environment designed to build self-esteem and promote positive body image in the important tween years" (qtd. in Nolan 118). Nolan also addresses Sullivan Entertainment's *Anne of Green Gables: The Animated Series*. Incorporating evidence of Montgomery's own interest in childhood education, Nolan acknowledges that more evidence is needed to "comprehend more fully how the values that Anne models in the novels work in unison with the technologies in constructing individual and communal identities in the name of Anne" (131).

While not particularly adhering to the strains of global interest or reader response evident elsewhere in the volume, a few of the essays address aspects of *Anne of Green Gables* that have provoked readers' reactions to the author and her bestselling novel over the decades.

Like Gerson, Alexander Macleod is interested in Canadian national investment in the Prince Edward Island Montgomery sites. He also considers the literary spaces within Montgomery's novel, arguing that "[j]ust as Anne, the character, rewrites Avonlea to make the landscape correspond with her pre-existing romantic ideals, so her story initiates an identical and equally problematic cycle of geographical transformations that continue, literally, to 'take place' in the real world of contemporary Cavendish" (138). In "'Matthew Insists on Puffed Sleeves': Ambivalence towards Fashion in *Anne of Green Gables*," Alison Matthews David and Kimberly Wahl identify as a central tension within the novel "opposing beauty ideals available to young women at the turn of the century: one of modern fashionability drawing on the most up-to-date fashion magazines of the era, and the other of artistic expressiveness drawing on the legacy of the dress reform movements of the late nineteenth century" (36). Dealing with a topic that begs for additional development, the authors suggest that "the changing materials of Anne's wardrobe tell a more elusive story about class and consumption in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canada." They focus particularly on, and provide intriguing background explanation and context for, Anne's rough, skimpy wincey dress and her ensuing Christmas present from Matthew, with the assistance of Mrs. Lynde—the glossy brown gloria. Finally, in "'I'll Never Be Angelically Good': Feminist Narrative Ethics in *Anne of Green Gables*," Mary Jeanette Moran argues that "the novel offers valuation for ethical choices that preserve or nurture relationships while at the same time challenging essentialist assumptions that women *naturally* care for others and that they alone bear this responsibility. Montgomery's view of feminist ethical care is by no means one-dimensional, however, as she also makes her readers aware of the darker sides of story-telling—which occasionally appear to threaten rather than enhance community" (51; original emphasis). Focusing on the stories Anne tells and how she responds to others' stories, Moran shows that "the novel moves away from a model of angelic, passive, self-sacrificing morality, instead offering its readers across gender boundaries a model of ethical acting, being, and living that ultimately anticipates more recent feminist ethical thought" (52).

The editors should be commended for including such wide-ranging yet generally well-synced essays in their post-centenary volume. They also have included colorful, full-page illustrations; unfortunately, the images they have chosen aren't always as productive as they might be. Gerson alludes in her essay to a range of images of *Anne*, and it would

be helpful for twenty-first-century readers and emerging scholars to have access to these images, either among the illustrations included in the volume or through a link to a separate Web site. Some of the images that are included may seem tangential or less than substantive enhancements to the essays in the collection. Additionally, readers of *Anne's World* will recognize that the quality of the essays varies. Nonetheless, many of them will intrigue and entertain both experienced and emerging scholars, and they certainly will inspire twenty-first-century continuations of the study of all things Montgomery.

The Oxford Handbook of Children's Literature, edited by Julia Mickenberg and Lynn Vallone. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011.

Reviewed by Jacqueline Reid-Walsh and Laura D'Aveta

The merit of this volume is made obvious by Oxford University Press's decision to publish a second edition in paperback.¹ Since the hardcover version has been favorably reviewed by several children's literature journals, the impressive quality of this edition is self-evident as well. Accordingly, in our review process we have approached the task in a somewhat different way, examining the critical apparatus of the volume—such as chapter abstracts, reference lists, and the index—in addition to its content. We read the essays in light of our different positions in the academy, Laura as an emerging scholar and Jacqui as a more established one in the field of children's literature and culture.

In the *Handbook's* introduction, the editors state their aim of providing a new resource among the growing number of encyclopedias, companions, and other research volumes in children's literature. As a handbook, it is intended to be a course companion for different levels of students; at the same time, it seeks to push the boundaries of what is considered children's literature, including "film, children's writing, comics, and musical recordings" (5), so that children's culture may be examined more fully. While the organizing principles are canons, contexts, and classrooms, the editors state that the rubrics and four-part organization of the volume emerged organically from the contributors' interests, resulting in divisions that contain critical interrogation at the core. The first division is "adults and children's literature," in which fundamental questions about children, childhood, and children's lit-