universität wien

DIPLOMARBEIT

Titel der Diplomarbeit

"Anne of Green Gables – A representative of the Victorian woman?"

verfasst von

Veronika Hauer

Angestrebter akademischer Grad

Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, 2015

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:	A 190 482 344
Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:	Lehramtsstudium UF Bewegung und Sport UF Englisch
Betreuerin:	Assoz. Prof. Mag. Dr. Susanne Reichl

Eidesstattliche Erklärung

Ich erkläre hiermit an Eides Statt, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbständig und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe. Die aus fremden Quellen direkt oder indirekt übernommenen Gedanken sind als solche kenntlich gemacht. Die Arbeit wurde bisher in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form keiner anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegt und auch noch nicht veröffentlicht.

Wien, Mai 2015

Unterschrift

(Veronika Hauer)

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

Anne of Green Gables is probably the most famous Canadian children's book. It was published by Lucy Maud Montgomery in 1908. The story is about an orphan girl, eleven-year-old Anne, who is adopted by Marilla and Mathew Cuthbert and lives with them at Green Gables, Avonlea. The small town is inhabited by mostly conservative, but warm-hearted people, who have a strong Christian faith and postulate appropriate behaviour. Although the book series was published in the early twentieth century it seems like the story itself seems to rather take place in the late nineteenth century, the Victorian era. One has the impression that through her literary works Lucy Maud Montgomery looks back on that period in which she herself grew up. Her novels exhibit numerous Victorian features concerning story, characters and ethics. Therefore, at first sight, it seems only natural to assume that the female protagonist of the book series corresponds to the image of a Victorian woman herself. However, at closer inspection, it becomes evident that Anne's character defies quick and definite characterization. To some degree, Anne deviates from the average Avonlea citizen and stands out. At the beginning of the story, people, like Marilla, tend to disapprove of her unique qualities, such as her imagination and exuberant way of speaking. Although she gets into a lot of troubles, Anne wins many people's hearts. Most people she gets acquainted with come to appreciate her personality and admire her individuality. In the course of the novel and its sequels, *Anne of Avonlea* (1909) and *Anne of the Island* (1915), Anne develops into a young woman of twenty-two years at the end of the third book. Over time, influenced by expectations and bound by cultural traditions persistent during the Victorian times, Anne's personality and her views are altered to some degree. It is my aim to analyse whether the female protagonist can be considered a typical Victorian Canadian woman or whether she deviates from the Victorian norm. My main research question is: "Anne of Green Gables – A representative of the Victorian woman?".

To answer this question, some historical background knowledge is essential. My thesis is divided into three main parts, the first two comprising historical background. Firstly, I am going to concentrate on the representation of female characters in children's books published in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Not only Canadian but also British literary works are relevant for this chapter, so I will use

sources from different English-speaking countries. Some aspects of female identity seem to be especially relevant, such as romantic ideas, relationships and Victorian ideals. These topics are prominent in the Anne Shirley book series and I will provide information whether these issues occur in other children's books as well. As the story, the characters and the setting of the book series strongly suggest to be located in Victorian times, I will mainly compare the novels to literary works published during the said era. However, I will also mention some literary works which were written either shortly before or after the Victorian times as their influence on and similarity to literature published during the Victorian period are relevant for my analysis and findings.

The second part of my thesis will address the history and the situation of Canadian women in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Victorian era was an important historical period of time for the British Empire. The era is defined by the duration of Queen Victoria's reign from 1837 until her death in 1901. The following years from 1901 to 1914 are referred to as Edwardian England and Rooseveltian America respectively (Lerer 254). While I will mainly refer to the Victorian times in my discussion, aspects of the subsequent era sometimes have to be taken into consideration as well. This historic overview is required for the following analysis and can hopefully lead to valid results for my thesis statement. I aim to provide some insight into the working conditions, education, religious matters, and family life of Canadian women. As the author deals with all these aspects in her novels, I will try to analyse the differences between and similarities of real life Canadian women and their fictional, literary counterparts. Several secondary sources, both books and articles, will help me to provide sufficient information about the role of Canadian women in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The first chapter of the last part of my thesis will be devoted to the author of the Anne Shirley book series. Lucy Maud Montgomery, who was born in 1874 and died in 1942, serves as an example of the ambiguity of a woman's role during that time. Incorporating the author's biography will illustrate how and to which extent certain periods of her personal life influenced the characterization of the female protagonist. One of the reasons why Anne can be compared to women living in the late nineteenth century is that the author herself grew up during the Victorian times. It

seems like some of Montgomery's own experiences and aspects of her own upbringing have been transferred to Anne's characterization.

After discussing the life and personality of Lucy Maud Montgomery, I will analyse Anne's character and her representation and development in the first trilogy of the book series. In order to find out whether Anne can be seen as a typical example of a Canadian woman during the Victorian times or if she is different from this female prototype, I have decided to focus on seven essential aspects. These are imagination and communication skills, romantic ideas, ideas on love and marriage, work, religion, education and appearance. Each aspect will be discussed in detail and, in accordance with the main question of my thesis, give insight if Anne conforms to the image of a Victorian woman in Canada. As mentioned above, it seems like the setting of the Anne Shirley book series is not representative of the time during which it was published, namely the early twentieth century, but can rather be assigned to the Victorian times. According to this process of reasoning, I will analyse the story's main character on basis of the image of the ideal Victorian woman in Canada.

2 Women's representation in children's literature in the nineteenth century

2.1 Introduction

As Anne Shirley's character and her development in the first three parts of the book series are the major component of my thesis, it is essential to discuss the representation of women in children's books in the nineteenth and early twentieth century in general. In the following chapter, some of the texts applied do not focus on Canadian or American children's literature but rather on British literature written during this time. Although the series by Lucy Maud Montgomery was published in Canada, it is also relevant to consider British books for children when analysing women's representation. One reason is that the books available to Canadian children were not only written by Canadians but also by American and British authors (Galway 7). It should also be noted that there was not a broad range of literature available in late nineteenth-century Canada (Galway 3). Considerably more children's books were and probably are still published in Britain. Furthermore, Canada was certainly influenced by various aspects of British life and society and "British literary tradition was a powerful force in Canadian culture" (Galway 10). This insight supports my decision of using British literature next to Canadian and American literature. Thus, the following chapter will concern the portrayal of female characters in nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century children's books, published by authors from different English-speaking countries.

2.2 Romantic ideas

In British literary works intended for the youth Victorian adolescence tends to be clearly separated from both childhood and adulthood. Ferrall and Jackson (70) point out that "[n]o longer a child, but not yet married, the adolescent girl is represented as being motherly, without being a mother; romantic, without being engaged." On the one hand, adolescence is marked by activity and ambition. On the other hand, girls are expected to know how to behave as a mother and how to look after a younger child, such as a sibling. Girls' ideas of romance are not dependent on the relationship

to a man but mainly on nature. Their situation at home and their relationship with female friends are often displayed in a romantic way as well (Ferrall and Jackson 70-71). Referring to Montgomery's literary works, "[e]ach heroine pursues romance – whether through love of nature or home or person or code – all her life" (Epperly 11).

Most girls in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century children's literature are usually characterized as being romantic, embodying individual ideas of romanticism. Female characters rarely seek the love of a man and marriage, but they are illustrated to enjoy different kinds of romances, such as female friendship (Waterston 110). According to Ferrall and Jackson (101) "[t]he heroine of a Victorian novel is romantic not because she dreams of love but because she rejects the materialism that sees marriage as a business arrangement and friendship in terms of social climbing." Being innocent enables the young female characters to concern themselves with individual romantic ideas and it prevents them from any sophisticated perceptions of romance, such as marriage (Ferrall and Jackson 76). Adolescence is often depicted as an imaginative time, free from any kind of sorrows or duties. However, some children's stories also tend to embrace and romanticize adulthood and coming of age. *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) or *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, an American children's book published by Kate Douglas Wiggin (1903), for example, both entail imaginative girls growing into beautiful, young women (Townsend 84).

Nature and its celebration is a central theme in Canadian children's literature published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Because the nation identified itself with the natural environment, authors frequently included descriptions of the landscape into their stories (Galway 11). Generally speaking, two quite opposite portrayals of nature can be found in Canadian literary works for young people. Some illustrate nature to be hostile and dangerous, ignoring its beauty and uniqueness (Galway 146, 152). Various characters in former literary works were exposed to the harsh wilderness and for them nature represented some sort of adventure or challenge to survival (Galway 152). Åhmansson (51) brings to mind that Canadian nature primarily entails difficult challenges to survive. People were faced with harsh weather conditions, especially during the long winters, and with an immensely large wilderness. Some characters in literary works from the nineteenth

and early twentieth century offered these truthful descriptions of nature and drew attention to the tough environmental conditions in Canada (Åhmansson 51).

Numerous other Canadian writers of children's literature, on the other hand, primarily valued the beauty of the landscape and highlighted a need to cherish and protect it (Galway 152). Careless (155) remarks that some authors from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were clearly concerned with nature's preservation and, therefore, recommended the reader to stay connected to their surrounding environment. According to Epperly (7), especially female characters, like Montgomery's heroines, frequently romanticize and appreciate the nature around them. As evident in the Anne Shirley book series, for instance, these heroines mainly describe natural environment in aesthetic terms. They do not only cherish and praise the beautiful, unique scenery but they develop a special bond with and sometimes even identify themselves through nature (Epperly 7, 11).

Galway (177) explains that natural objects occasionally offer a source of comfort and strength for young female figures. They embrace natural settings as a place where they can be free, independent and encouraged. Such overly romantic and idyllic descriptions of nature, found in many Canadian children's books, are frowned upon by various critics (Hammill 69). Although heroines, like Anne, might present nature in accordance with reality to some extent, they often tend to idealize and exaggerate it (Hammill 70). Montgomery's descriptions of nature, voiced by Anne, are thus sometimes criticized and judged to be unrealistic and unreliable (Åhmansson 51). These diverse descriptions of Canadian nature were present in children's books throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. "Whether seen as daunting or uplifting, as friend or foe, it is an inescapable aspect of the Canadian reality and a signifier of Canada's uniqueness" (Galway 177).

2.3 Relationships

2.3.1 Marriage and love

In Victorian novels women's affection towards a man are not displayed freely but female characters rather suppress their inner feelings and emotions. One of the few accepted signs of affection in this period is when the heroine is "kindling and glowing" (Green qtd. in Ferrall and Jackson 78), as Madge is in *Olive Roscoe*, published in 1896 by Evelyn Everett Green. Anything exceeding this sign would have been outrageous in Victorian society. In fact, romantic stories were always a delicate subject in the nineteenth century and people were opposed to the idea of girls reading about romantic relationships and love scenes between a man and a woman (Mitchell 164). Therefore, the female character remains innocent towards her feelings of love (Ferrall and Jackson 79). Her unawareness and her suppression continue even when other characters have already become aware of her affection for a man. Finding herself blushing or smiling, the heroine quickly attends to different matters and denies any emotions which are long obvious to other people (Ferrall and Jackson 79).

Mitchell (168) points out that the heroine in children's books published around the turn of the century often realizes her real feelings when the boy has been badly injured or when he is about to die. Similarly, Anne's understanding of her affection for Gilbert occurs towards the end of the third book, when he suffers from typhoid fever (Montgomery, *Island* 236). In romantic stories, "illness or injury provides an acceptable way to imagine a man in bed and a girl close by" (Mitchell 168). The female character often takes care of the boy and thus "can express love in the form she has learned acceptable" (Mitchell 168).

Adolescence in Victorian fiction often leans more towards childhood than adulthood and books illustrate that girls should stay unaware of sexual matters as long as possible. This innocence among females usually lasts until a man proposes to the girl. Thus, "[m]arriage at once puts an end to girlhood, […] because it puts an end to innocence" (Ferrall and Jackson 69). In various books matrimony is represented as

the transition from an innocent girl to a sexually aware woman (Ferrall and Jackson 69). Spinsters in nineteenth and early twentieth-century fiction are often constituted in a positive light and serve as role models for younger female characters (Åhmansson 134). Very often authors tried to delay their heroine's engagement with a man for as long as possible. However, society usually expected and postulated a conventional ending, most commonly a marriage. Therefore, writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were restricted and had to follow certain regulations if they wanted to be published. Often, however, the heroines in children's literary works from this time did not get married in the first book but only in a sequel, deferring the inevitable (Åhmansson 134). Gubar (48) acknowledges that Lucy Montgomery also tried to postpone marriage between Anne and Gilbert while rather concentrating on the joyfulness of female friendship and the bond to nature.

Åhmansson (69-70) elucidates that there has been some objection to the way authors living in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, such as Alcott and Wiggin, both North American writers, have portrayed young female characters in terms of sexuality. Critics argue that they do not present a realistic image of girls as they seem to have only asexual relationships and interests in their stories. Robinson (*Sex Matters* 172) points out that Montgomery, too, has been criticized for avoiding sexual scenes in her fiction. However, one has to consider that children's books during this time rarely contained any aspects of sexuality in general (Åhmansson 70). Usually girls' sexual awakening when growing up was omitted in fiction, but girls were illustrated to turn into grown-up women overnight (Åhmansson 70). Reading children's books from the nineteenth and early twentieth century, it becomes apparent that sexuality was most of the time replaced by girls' romances and marriages (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 172-173).

Ideally, girls in Victorian literary works should only have one proposal (Ferrall and Jackson 78). However, most female characters are confronted with two proposals by different men (Ferrall and Jackson 80). In many children's books the first proposal is quite abruptly and the heroine certainly does not expect it. She usually rejects the man who asks for the girl's hand either because she is simply not fond of him or because she has to support her family at home. Her experience of being proposed to enables her to expect and prepare herself for another proposal. Sometimes the male

character does not even voice this second proposal because the girl is already aware of his intention (Ferrall and Jackson 80).

Marriage or the reason to get married is presented in materialistic terms in various books written in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Ferrall and Jackson 76). Being faced with financial problems is often illustrated as the girl's awakening from her carefree childhood (Ferrall and Jackson 82). In order to overcome this financial crisis, the heroine feels obliged to marry and is portrayed as being dependent on her husband's financial income. Thus, many girls in Victorian children's books marry for money, not because they are in love (Ferrall and Jackson 76). Fest (49) adds that these marriages of convenience turn out to be unfortunate ones most of the time and the female characters realize that money alone cannot make them happy. While the first proposal is often related to financial matters, the second proposal serves a romantic purpose (Ferrall and Jackson 80). After the female protagonist is faced with the first proposal, which she usually does not accept, she gains more knowledge and thus moves into a new stage, namely adolescence. From then on, the female character is able to recognize love and is ready to engage in romantic activity (Ferrall and Jackson 101).

In general, children's books written during the Victorian era but also later on were supposed to have a happy ending, more precisely, to end with marriage (Waterston 112). At the beginning of *Anne of Green Gables*, love between a woman and a man is irrelevant. However, as the story progresses, it is clear that Anne and Gilbert's relationship edges toward a romantic relationship, suggesting a traditional fairy-tale ending. Montgomery initially did not want to include a marriage into her story but she had no other choice if she wanted her book to become known and appreciated by the public (Gerson 55). Therefore, in order to satisfy her readership, the author was forced to introduce scenes of romance and love between Anne and Gilbert into the novels (Waterston 110). Åhmansson (70) elucidates that during this time there were clear "conventions from which female writers could not very well free themselves if they wanted to be published." Waterston (112) points out that some authors dared to reject the idea of marriage as the only suitable ending for their story. Instead, they deconstruct the idea of marriage as a necessity and depict alternative relationships and pleasures in life (Waterston 112).

2.3.2 Female friends

As in the Anne Shirley book series, female friendships were often romanticized and one can find quite a passionate, unique attachment between girls in different stories (Mitchell 17-18). Around the turn of the century many authors focused on real problems experienced by girls from an authentic girl's perspective (Mitchell 14). Emotional confusion and intimate female friendships often functioned as the main themes and girls were sometimes depicted to "kiss, fondle, and climb into bed together" (Mitchell 14). This intimacy between girls was nothing abnormal in real-life Canada during that time and Smith-Rosenberg (qtd. in Robinson, *Sex Matters* 181) points out that "[g]irls routinely slept together, kissed and hugged one another." The development of a special relationship and to care a great deal for one another was highly valued by the female characters of books written in the late nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century (Mitchell 18). Intimate and passionate friendship scenes also appear in the book series dealt with, especially in *Anne of Green Gables*. These passages visualise the love between Anne and Diana who cannot live without the other one (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 181).

In the first decades of the twentieth century, especially in the 1920s and 1930s, attitudes towards female friendships significantly changed. While intimacy and passion among women was nothing abnormal during the Victorian times, society came to disapprove of such relationships shortly after the turn of the century (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 172). By the 1920s women who revealed their love to their female friends were labelled as lesbians or they were regarded as abnormal and masculine (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 178). Robinson (*Sex Matters* 179) points out that these shifting ideologies in Canada and society's abusive remarks restricted women, like Montgomery, to express and admit their romantic feelings towards their friends. Intimate and intense same-sex relationships, once appreciated and encouraged by the public, came to be viewed as troublesome and abnormal (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 171-172).

Although female friendships in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century fiction are principally distinguished from heterosexual engagements, various occurrences or

interactions between the girls might remind us of a love relationship between a man and a woman. The heroine of a story often seems to adore her female friend and their sentimentality and enthusiasm could sometimes be compared to that of a first love. The girls seem to be inseparable from one another and their attachment illustrates their strong feelings (Ferrall and Jackson 85). In *Mona Maclean, Medical Student*, published by Margaret Georgiana Todd in 1894, Mona and Lucy have a very romantic friendship and the reader notices a special bond between them. At some point in the story the two girls "call each other pet names and stroke each other's hair" (Ferrall and Jackson 86), which is reminiscent of a romantic love relationship between adults.

Ferrall and Jackson (86) point out that in some literary works not female friends, but cousins or sisters are shown to have a very romantic and unique bond. "Goblin Market," for instance, published by Christina Rossetti in 1862, illustrates two sisters who have a passionate and quite intimate relationship. This literary work is one example which illustrates "how surprisingly explicit representations of intimacy between two women could be in the nineteenth century" (Ferrall and Jackson 86).

2.3.3 The road to independence

Sacrifice and independence are typical themes of juvenile fiction published during the Victorian times. These two key aspects are especially notable in working girl novels, celebrating work as part of the first wave of feminism. However, when creating their characters, female authors were often restricted by the moral values dominant in society. Character traits had to represent the values and manners accepted by the Victorian society (Ferrall, and Jackson 103-104). Although a liberating and new girl culture was evolving after the turn of the century, one cannot forget that most female protagonists of literary works still represented values of "old-style Victorian femininity" (Ferrall and Jackson 104). Particularly at the turn of the century the focus on independence is clearly noticeable in many books for young people. Heroines are depicted as being thoughtful without being dependent on men or male opinions and views. Many female characters do not worry about their appearance, in terms of being attractive to men, but they are concerned with feeling comfortable in their own

skin. Evidently, those women do not feel the need to impress men, neither with their looks nor with their conversational skills (Ferrall and Jackson 103).

Very often an older woman serves as the mentor figure for the younger heroine. These mentor figures often help the younger woman achieve her independence (Ferrall and Jackson 110). A distinction can be made between two separate mentor figures: “the pragmatic, worldly, and financially secure women who provide introductions, jobs, and advice; and the impoverished, idealistic, independent women who offer an example of romance and bravery that extends beyond adolescence” (Ferrall and Jackson 110). In *Anne of Green Gables*, for instance, Marilla is Anne’s mentor figure. At first, Marilla only adopts the girl because she believes it is her duty to teach her womanly manners and true values. Marilla represents reasonability and female domesticity, which she highly praises. Thus, Marilla serves as Anne’s mentor as well as model of how a woman should go about her duties (Devereux 124).

Various children’s books written by American authors celebrate girls’ independence by separating them from their home. The female character does not have to live up to her parents’ expectations and respect their decisions anymore; she herself is in control of her own life. In some stories girls experience this unlimited freedom when they are sent to boarding school (Waterston 113). Anne is also separated from Marilla, and thus also from domestic duties, for a certain period of time. In some British literary works published in the late nineteenth century, daughters try to gain independence without their parents’ support. These girls often have to work very hard in order to overcome financial anxiety or a lack of financial security. Overcoming these struggles on their own is essential to their coming of age (Ferrall and Jackson 112-113).

In various children’s books written around the turn of the century one can notice an absence of the mother figure. When the mother is present, she often serves as a dysfunctional ideal of femininity. Sometimes the maternal figure is opposed to studying, she acts irresponsibly or she is financially incompetent. Furthermore, it often seems like she only cares about looks and appearance (Mitchell 18). Later works published by Montgomery comprise difficult mother-daughter relationships and the mother is shown to be overly strict, stupid or even tyrannical (Åhmansson 94).

Such bad examples of mothers may be a result of a cultural gap between mother and daughter, which emerged shortly before the turn of the century (Mitchell 18). Daughters were no longer expected to live up to their mothers' ideals of womanhood. Instead, the new female culture encouraged girls to find their own way of becoming respectable women (Mitchell 18). Montgomery demonstrates that not all maternal figures in *Anne of Green Gables* are prototypes. "Mrs Lynde is gossipy and overbearing; Marilla is initially dour and repressed; Mrs Barry lacks insight and is stubborn" (Rothwell 135). In late nineteenth and early twentieth-century fiction for the youth, a tendency that friends held more influence over girls than their parents became apparent. Thus, the "cohesion, formation of a group, loyalty, and care of girls for one another" (Mitchell 18) was of great importance. In later novels girls are also shown to select a good education or a career over returning home. Over the course of time the image of girls in books also included athletic energy and being in motion. Some female characters even clarified that these features do not have to be relinquished upon coming of age. Such examples of women in literature are important since they show the readership that femininity is not lost by choosing modern values (Mitchell 21-22).

2.4 Victorian ideas of female identity

2.4.1 Boys vs. girls

Both Waterston (129) and Townsend (76) notice that most children's books published in the nineteenth century prescribe very different interests for girls and boys. Waterston (129) emphasizes that nowadays, this distinction may be increasingly diminished, but in former times each gender was assigned to a specific sphere in literature as well as in life. To the detriment of women, the Victorian time was characterized by a patriarchal society and male superiority, which was also present in many literary works for children. Literature intended for boys was always thrilling and exciting and male characters were illustrated in an active role, building or creating something (Townsend 76). Furthermore, Townsend (76) points out that boys were constantly presented to lead an action-packed life, whether on land or at sea. Exposed to the wilderness, boys were faced with all kinds of excitement, whether

fighting, hunting or exploring. The plot of many Victorian children's books featured a quest with obstacles which a brave male heroic figure would overcome. *The Settlers in Canada* (1844), for instance, published by Frederick Marryat, deals with two boys who have to fight and kill animals in order to survive and return home. Such thrilling stories convey and celebrate idealistic conceptions of masculinity to the male readership (Waterston 129-131).

In contrast to male protagonists, the female variety often tended to be silent and passive observers rather than participants. The typical setting in books intended for a female readership was the home, implying domestic duties and responsibilities. Furthermore, girls in main character roles were often occupied with romantic matters and sentimentality (Townsend 76). A lot of stories depicted women in an inferior position, having no power or determination. It may even seem as if they only cared about their appearance and presence in public (Lerer 229). It becomes obvious that novels intended for boys, including some kind of action, were quite different from girls' books, which frequently contained piety and submission (Townsend 76).

Female characters were seldom part of adventure stories, and, if so, they played a passive role and had to be saved or rescued by the male character, as in *The Coral Island* (1857) by R.M. Ballantyne, for example (Townsend 62). By illustrating that the female gender is easily lost or threatened, various literary works suggested that girls and women possess a weak and vulnerable disposition. Although girls became interested in and started to read adventure stories, "it remained the function of girls' books to glamorize, to make more acceptable and less narrow, the circumscribed life of the virtuous girl and woman" (Townsend 76).

Another interesting distinction is that girls are usually attached to the world around them while boys value being autonomous and separated from everything else. The female character of a story often appreciates people and the world around her, celebrating these special interrelationships as an essential part of her existence. Even though *Anne of Green Gables* was published in the first decade of the twentieth century the book series still exhibits several features of Victorian literature as described above. The main character, too, wants to get on well with everybody else and seeks to win the love of Avonlea's citizens. For a great number of male

characters, on the other hand, it seems to be of great importance to compete against each other and to be separated from their surroundings. They do not show any interest in making connections but they are illustrated as solitary individuals (Epperly 7).

During the nineteenth century more and more literary works focused on movement and the desire to leave one's country. These novels, which can be assigned to 'settler literature,' usually told the story of a male settler (Herlihy 407). Characters of American literary works in that genre often embody freedom and complete independence. Herlihy (408) points out that "this freedom is […] displayed through unbound character movement from place to place within the United States." In American settler literature characters tend to move west and start a new life in a new region. This liberty of travelling around and moving to different places became a popular genre and appeared in more and more literary works in the nineteenth and early twentieth century (Herlihy 409).

Earlier stories usually tend to portray female characters in a suffering role, being pitied. Very few literary works contradicted these stereotypical distributions of gender roles and feature female adventurers. The novel *St. Ursula's Convent or The Nun of Canada* (1824), published by the Canadian author Julia Catherine Beckwith, for instance, already brought to mind that girls can certainly be part of exciting and thrilling stories. Furthermore, this novel, among others, presented an ending distinct from the traditional marriage solution. In the course of time, more and more books intended for girls became action-packed. Most notably after the turn of the century, numerous books illustrated girls being part of lively adventure stories, exposed to some kind of danger. In the Canadian book *A Daughter of the Ranges: A Story of Western Canada* (1906) by Bessie Marchant, it is a female heroine who saves other people and successfully leads them to victory (Waterston 112-114). British literary works published around the turn of the century, too, portray female protagonists who have to support themselves and cope with autonomy after being left on their own (Mitchell 15). In several stories young women take on a more active role and demonstrate their strength and fearfulness which was called for by the female readership. The novel *A Sister of the Red Cross* (1900) by L. T. Meade, for instance,

praises the female nurse as an independent heroine who treats and rescues soldiers during the war (Mitchell 19-21).

Although a lot of girls longed to read adventure stories, most of them still cherished sentimentality and emotionality in books as well. The wider variety of female interests can be exemplified by Mary Bennett's novel, *The Canadian Girl or the Pirate's Daughter,* published in 1838. The title of the book suggests dangerous plots and tough characters. The subtitle, *A Story of the Affections*, however, stresses sentimental behaviour and intense emotions (Waterston 112). Although this literary work was published in the first half of the century, it already comprises the two essential factors which were popular throughout the nineteenth but also early twentieth century. Townsend (76) points out that stories were most loved by female readers, if they were both, romantic and exciting. In order to be successful, authors had to include sentimental elements but also some kind of action, such as rivalries, fatalities or intrigues between the characters (Townsend 77).

2.4.2 'Angel in the House' vs. the 'New Woman'

Femininity in late nineteenth-century books from England was portrayed in two different ways. The reader may encounter the concept of the 'Angel in the House' or the juxtaposed 'New Woman.' While the first term refers to the "conservative, self-sacrificing Victorian wife," the 'New Woman' points to "feminist, self-realising women at the turn of the century" (Ferrall and Jackson 114). According to Fest (55), a woman's sphere in Victorian fiction and her only source of happiness was usually limited to the home. Ferrall and Jackson (115) add that by means of self-sacrifice and appreciating the private sphere, female characters could become the ideal 'Angel in the House.' It was taken for granted that authors usually linked the two female ideals, being self-sacrificial and being connected with domesticity and marriage (Ferrall and Jackson 115). The concept of the 'New Woman' may have been established before the turn of the century and some authors came to advance different kinds of female fulfilments. However, mainly traditional Victorian values and concepts continued to be applied in literary works and passed on to a young readership (Ferrall and Jackson 115).

As the term ‘Angel in the House’ is inseparable from the home, domestic matters played a crucial role in the majority of children’s books published in different English-speaking countries in the nineteenth century (Åhmansson 131). Perry Nodelman (qtd. in Åhmansson 131) compares boys’ with girls’ representation in consideration of the home. He elucidates that male characters in Victorian novels usually left home and were faced with challenges in unfamiliar surroundings. As opposed to this, girls were rather shown to find a loving home and grow up in a safe and guarded environment. Female characters tend to embrace the home as a comfortable place, free from worry or anxieties (Nodelman qtd. in Åhmansson 131-132). However, this emphasis on domesticity might also reveal that the sense of belonging and having a place to identify with was of great importance to female characters. In *Anne of Green Gables*, it becomes obvious that the protagonist would do anything to belong to Green Gables. In fact it seems like the Cuthberts’ home and family life has top priority for Anne and her happiness (Robinson, *A Born Canadian* 27).

In contrast to the concept of ‘The Angel in the House,’ ‘The New Woman’ offered a wide range of possibilities for fictional girls in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century children’s books (Ferrall and Jackson 122). While conventional female characters were bound to the warm, comfortable home, the ‘New Woman’ moved beyond the private sphere into the public, competitive, male-dominated world (Fest 50). The concept of the ‘New Woman’ is elucidated as “a figure that challenged society’s norms and values by questioning Victorian strongholds like marriage and addressing taboos like sexuality” (Fest 55). Heroines who were portrayed as ‘New Women,’ developed new values and ideals, distinct from the old, conventional ones (Mitchell 3). The new concept of womanhood sometimes entailed negative prejudices, but female protagonists in literary works usually aimed to develop into a ‘New Woman’ as she embodied high education and perceived life as a wonderful gift (Ferrall and Jackson 122). In addition to advanced priorities and new ways of living, the appearance of female characters significantly changed in British novels published around the turn of the century. In earlier Victorian books, girls were portrayed as immature and insecure. Novels published later on presented tall, strong and conspicuous heroines who had self-confidence and ambitions (Ferrall and Jackson 123).

Fest (60) brings to mind that many literary works written in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century intended for the youth offer an opportunity for the heroine to choose between traditional values of domesticity and new, advanced ideals and ways of living. As an example, Devereux (122-123) points out that Anne, in *Anne of Green Gables,* has to decide whether she wants to reconcile herself to duties and tasks at home or if she wants to accept new challenges and move beyond the conventional female sphere. The heroine is given the great opportunity to go to college and be independent but she turns down the scholarship as a sacrifice for Marilla to care for her and the farmhouse. Although receiving a higher education was what she had always dreamed of, Anne is immediately willing to adjust her priorities and to reject college. Because of choosing hard work and duties at home over values of education and independence, the female character might not be regarded as a 'New Woman.' To some degree the girl fulfils the description of an ideal Victorian woman, who finds happiness in domesticity (Devereux 123). At a later point in the story, however, Anne meets her ambitious educational and professional goals. Watson (39) observes that several scenes reveal that the female protagonist is conflicted between two different worlds, "the traditional 19th-century female domain of house and family, and the more modern sphere shaped by the claims of individualism, where personal fulfilment in other terms is envisaged and encouraged." By observing the overall picture of Anne's character, one may realize that she is neither a typical example of a traditional, limited female identity, nor a solely representative of the concept of new womanhood. Anne is rather positioned between these two separated notions, encouraged to count on her individual values and ideas (Watson 39).

Although the new concept of female adolescence was already established in late nineteenth-century English literature, it is important to stress that most girls during that time continued to bear their traditional roles in the family and still had to live up to familial expectations (Mitchell 3). Nonetheless, girls were at least aware of advanced opportunities and prospects embodied by 'The New Woman.' With the help of literary works, which portrayed these new ideas, girls could at least have faith in the slightest possibilities of an altered life. They often presumed or pictured that they could be a 'New Woman' for a short period of time before taking on the role of a traditional Victorian wife. Even though the new, fictive concept of adolescence was only reality

for a few, it succeeded in supplying girls with inner power, self-confidence and strength. If young woman were bound to certain limits, various literary works published around the turn of the century offered them a way out (Mitchell 3-4).

2.4.3 Power of imagination

British, but also American and Canadian children's literature written in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century often portrayed girls as very imaginative, who sometimes pictured themselves in an invented world. In some Victorian children's books, by Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, female characters play imaginative games, such as having a tea party, mainly to imitate adult behaviour. In other books, such as in *The Cuckoo Clock* (1877), written by Mary Louisa Molesworth, the female character starts talking to objects and finds herself in an exciting fantasy world. In *Anne of Green Gables*, for instance, the protagonist gives names to places and objects, imagining them to be her friends. In the novel *The Secret Garden* (1911) by Frances Hodgson Burnett, children's imagination is associated with the garden, where things grow and can be created (Lerer 253). *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* published by Lewis Carroll in 1865, is probably the most famous book for children which deals with imaginative powers and a fantasy world. In this novel the female protagonist is in a world of her own fantasy, talking to animals and discovering animate objects (Townsend 94). It is important to emphasize that the examples mentioned above are all written by authors of different nationalities. This variety of literary works shows that imagination in children's books played an important role throughout the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century in different English-speaking countries.

Imagination was considered a special gift in various children's books and those characters who acquired it set themselves apart from other people. Thus, authors living in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century often seemed to praise these extraordinary qualities as they illustrated fantasy mainly in advantageous terms (Åhmansson 103). Primarily for female protagonists in literary works published around this time, imagination revealed itself to have various positive functions. Hammill (71) illustrates that heroines in novels of that time often appreciate

imagination because it helped them to overcome miserable and unfortunate memories in their lives. Exemplifying the feature of imaginative powers, she quotes that “Anne uses fantasy and play to escape from the experiences of bereavement, injustice, disappointment, poverty and loneliness” (Hammill 72). Åhmansson (104) reinforces this conception, arguing that particularly vulnerable, sensitive girls in fiction were strengthened and encouraged by applying their skills of imagination.

In children’s literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, female characters were frequently put under scrutiny with respect to their appearance and eloquence. Girls were often perceived as very romantic and highly dramatic beings (Lerer 229). Many female protagonists were constantly being observed and judged by their families and social authorities (Lerer 235). This constant act of performance is also visible in *Anne of Green Gables*. Throughout the whole book Anne Shirley is the subject of others’ observations, and her actions are constantly watched, ridiculed or admired by other people. Because of her exuberant way of talking and her dramatic appearance, she seems to be made for the theatre. Anne even acts out a scene from Tennyson’s “Lancelot and Elaine,” exaggerating and dramatizing the poem (Lerer 235-236). This passage in the book shows us again that it was in girls’ nature to be observed and to constantly behave in a respectable way. Another example of stage performance can be found in the aforementioned book *The Secret Garden*. In this story nature becomes a stage set, the garden acting as the stage of performance, and the girl Mary is the director of this drama (Lerer 244).

3 The role of women in Canada in the nineteenth century

3.1 Introduction

Before being able to analyse Anne Shirley's development in the book series, it is important to deal with women's history and women's role in Canadian society during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. During this time, it was not a general assumption "that men and women were equal and should share rights and responsibilities equally" (Merritt 93). Women were considered to be different from men and, thus, they were supposed to fulfil different roles in society. Furthermore, clear separations existed between male and female duties, emphasizing their difference (Prentice et al. 157-158). While the public sphere was assigned to the male gender, the female gender was situated in the domestic, private sphere (Stallcup 122).

3.2 Women's work

3.2.1 Domestic work

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century it was generally assumed that the husband, earning money outside the home, supported the family with his salary (Prentice et al. 126). Due to the fact that wives usually worked inside their home, it was almost impossible for them to contribute to the family income (Darroch 434). Working at home during that time was certainly not easy but entailed strenuous tasks and duties. In former times women could not rely on any household devices, such as washing machines, vacuum cleaners or dishwashers. Thus, they had to run the household all by themselves without any mechanical assistance (Rubio and Waterston 63-64). Furthermore, wives could not depend on their husbands' support and they were usually exploited and mistreated in their own home. Taking for granted that women were the homekeepers, men hardly ever contributed anything to the household situation (Spender 185). Therefore, female family members had nobody to reckon on but they had to fulfil all the household chores on their own. Apart from

being unhelpful in the house, most husbands did not value or even acknowledge the strenuous work their wives put up with every day (Spender 187). Not even the government appreciated the importance of women's contribution to a good and healthy family life. Female tasks at home, such as raising children and housekeeping, was at least as time-consuming and exhausting as external employment, but did not earn any respect or reputation (Prentice et al. 126).

According to Prentice et al. (127) women's working conditions, at least in urban areas, changed mainly due to mechanization at the end of the nineteenth century. Newly developed technology was intended to help women at home and initially aimed to change the household situation for the better. Advertisements portrayed servants working in a woman's home, using the latest equipment, such as a carpet sweeper or a washing machine. Women were illustrated as being freed from domestic duties, enjoying a comfortable life. The only problem was that in reality one could hardly find that sort of carefree women, as most did not have the money to employ a servant or to buy new technological devices. In spite of that, women were expected to have perfect households. Due to the new ideals of a sterile home, women felt pressured to work even more to fulfil these expectations. If a woman wanted to be respected by society, she had to do household chores more vigorously in order to meet the standards that were promised with the use of the new machines. Additionally, people no longer favoured handmade products, such as soap, bread and clothes but preferred buying these items in a shop instead. It can be said that the new technology and the new consumer habits decreased the variety of women's tasks, however, by no means the intensity (Prentice et al. 127).

Apart from working in their own home, more and more women from the working class sought the job of a domestic servant. They fulfilled household chores of mostly rich families and in contrast to working at home, they received income from their employer. Due to these fairly high salaries, at least for the standards of that time, being employed as a domestic servant was highly popular (Prentice et al. 119). In fact, domestic service was the most common job sought by Canadian women during the Victorian times (Prentice et al. 118). Prentice et al. (128) highlight that in 1891 "41 percent of all working women were employed in this type of work." Other reasons why young women preferred domestic service to other jobs were that it prepared

them for their future lives as proper wives and mothers. Apart from earning a fair amount of money, domestic service included board and lodging as the workforce moved into her employer's house (Prentice et al. 128).

Living in their employer's home, however, also entailed various drawbacks. Firstly, domestic servants did not have any privacy and often had very little free time as their employer constantly kept them busy. On the other hand, this kind of job could also be quite lonesome, as hardly any family would hire more than one servant. Furthermore, as the servant usually came from a different class or race, the mistress of the house usually did not bond with her staff but rather ignored her. Therefore, domestic servants often felt quite lonely and longed for friends whom they could talk to (Prentice et al. 128). Prentice et al. (129) mention that probably the biggest problem women were confronted with in this field of work was sexual exploitation. If being sexually abused by their employer, women had next to no chance of blaming the man for this act of cruelty. Instead of being fired, the best solution for the female employees was to quit their position in order to maintain their reputation and to find another job. Leaving the job also meant leaving their home, which put the servants in a very difficult position. Several regions only provided few working opportunities and, therefore, women had difficulties finding a new job. For quite a number of former servants prostitution was the only option which guaranteed them enough money to make a decent living (Prentice et al. 129-130).

3.2.2 Farm life

Traditional farming in late nineteenth-century Canada meant hard work. While male farmers were generally in control, their wives were often disadvantaged (Cormier 209-210). Living on a farm, women usually did not have a real job but they were committed to work as a farmer's daughter, wife or sister. Thus, they were paid very little or nothing for the intensive work they performed (Prentice et al. 121-122). While men's work received societal credit, the duties of the female family members were not acknowledged but rather taken for granted. The only compensation a wife received was her family's safety and health (Prentice et al. 125).

Most Canadian families in the nineteenth century lived in rural areas because buying or building a property was less expensive on the countryside than settling down in urban areas (Darroch 432). However, working on a farm in the outlands often meant isolation and loneliness. Extremely long working hours and little free time prevented women from seeing their friends and relatives. In rural areas in Canada, at worst in prairies, neighbours lived far away and it was impossible for women to maintain friendships. Social contact was of great importance, especially to women, and some could hardly bear this isolation. Thus, farmwomen sometimes tried to suppress their loneliness by working even more energetically (Prentice et al. 125).

Most tasks on a farm were pre-assigned to the male or to the female gender and clearly separated from one another (Prentice et al. 121). Dillon (477) highlights that "[n]ineteenth-century social norms in Canada […] prescribed a set of duties to husbands and wives." While men worked outside the house, women's duties consisted of scrubbing clothes, fetching water from the creek, cooking, and sewing clothes for the whole family. They were also responsible for growing vegetables, gathering fruit, baking, and caring for the children (Prentice et al. 121-122). These traditional household skills were highly important and necessary to maintain a farm in the late nineteenth century. Before various household devices were introduced on the market, women's work and their practical experience and knowledge were of great benefit (Cormier 208).

Although a wife was said to be highly relevant in the organisation of farm life, the women responsible rarely received proper recognition for it. As the husband was in control of the financial situation, he would often decide to spend money on the barn, while refusing to purchase anything his wife needed (Prentice et al. 123). Working on a farm entailed strenuous tasks for men as well as for women. However, the government did not recognize female labour and classified farmwives as unemployed (Sager 226).

Single women were hardly ever allowed to be in sole charge of a farm. The general policy in Victorian times and the Victorian legislation disapproved of independent women farmers, perpetuating a one-sided patriarchal system (Prentice et al. 124). Cormier (201), however, illustrates that this decisive superiority was altered, mainly

due to a significant enhancement in dairying. These developments offered women the chance to be the head of a farm without any male interference (Cormier 201).

Around the mid-1800s, due to the evolving industrialisation in Canada, a farmwoman's tasks decreased. For example, butter and cheese, initially handmade, began to be produced in creameries and cheese factories. Thus, women could no longer earn as much money and were no longer validated as being an essential part in farm life (Prentice et al. 123). Some women made the brave decision to leave the farm and seek employment in towns. Around the turn of the century more and more girls decided to move away from rural areas and start a new life in a city, either for educational or professional reasons. This trend created problems for small farms as they lacked necessary workforce (Cormier 202).

3.2.3 Teaching

Apart from domestic service, the profession of a teacher was a favoured job by women in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It was available to many young women and more and more girls became attracted to and interested in this field of work (Gammel and Dutton 108). Harrigan (491) illustrates that women made up 61 percent of all teachers in Canada in 1870. This number increased further and in 1915, 83 percent of all teachers were female (Harrigan 491).

In the 1800s, and even in the early 1900s, a teacher's salary, particularly for women, was far from high (Gates 168). Although the job of a teacher promised financial security, the average annual salary for female teachers was only $220 to $400 (Prentice et al. 135). According to Sager (228), a woman teacher in Canada was paid only half of what a male teacher was paid, doing exactly the same job and having the same qualifications. On top of that, promotions were non-existent for female teachers and only a small percentage got incorporated in administrative positions (Prentice et al. 135). Usually, only men were offered promotions and could seek the position of principal or school superintendent (Gammel and Dutton 108-109). Sager (228), however, declares that "[c]ompared to other occupations for women, teaching was relatively rewarding." In spite of some unequal conditions, teaching was still

significantly better paid than being employed in domestic service or manufacturing (Sager 227).

Young women who lived in the late nineteenth century embraced the profession of a teacher because neither a college degree nor graduating from high school was required (Gates 168). Another advantage worth mentioning is that teaching was one of the few officially stated and recorded jobs available to women in the late nineteenth century (Sager 226). The profession of a teacher was acknowledged and respected by the public (Gates 168). On top of that, teachers were the only female workers who got paid regular salaries (Sager 226). This entails that being a teacher was one of the few opportunities which enabled women to support themselves and have an independent life.

According to Sager (209), married women in the second half of the nineteenth century were not considered suitable teachers and people claimed that they were not fit for the classroom. Therefore, only a small percentage of female teachers were married, mainly in regions where the number of teachers was insufficient (Sager 209). In most cases, girls and women virtually had to choose between a teaching career and wedded life. Laws in late nineteenth-century Canada prohibited employment for married women and, thus, “women teachers lost their jobs if they married” (Prentice et al. 136). Therefore, most women only taught for a few years until they had saved up enough money for their marriage (Gates 168). Sager (223) also points out that the number of teachers depended very much on the marital rate. Fewer marriages resulted in more female teachers, and regions with a higher percentage of marriages proved to have fewer female teachers (Sager 223).

Around the turn of the century, teaching conditions slightly improved and female teachers were promised higher, constant salaries (Åhmansson 119). Still, teaching was considered a demanding profession which required endurance and assertiveness. In late nineteenth-century Canada, particularly in rural areas, “[t]he entire town was served by a one-room school-house wherein first through twelfth grades were taught by one person with no assistance or supervision” (Gates 166). In addition to that, teachers from small towns were exposed to the public and their behaviour was closely monitored by society. This brings to mind that teaching in a

school during the late nineteenth century was not easy at all, but demanded a great deal from the people doing this kind of job (Gates 166-167). Although it was widely believed that female workforces could not endure as much as working men could, it seems many women were strong enough to bear these difficult conditions and do their job properly.

3.2.4 Further job opportunities for women

In the second half of the nineteenth century more and more employment opportunities opened to working-class women. There was a notable development in the variety of female professions and women got employed as nurses and clerks, mentioning only some of those opportunities (Prentice et al. 118). Many of these jobs entailed advantages as well as disadvantages. Nursing, for instance, was a respectable job and a lot of women wanted to find employment in this field of work. However, young nurses were often exploited as cheap labour forces and paid low wages (Prentice et al. 136). Dillon (475) points out that towards the turn of the century, most North American women who had a regular salary were employed as farmers, sewers, domestic servants, or teachers. She adds that only a few women were self-employed and opened up their own businesses, such as hotels or boarding houses (Dillon 475).

Developing industrialisation at the turn of the century offered job opportunities for women in factories. This meant the granting of paid employment for many women in manufacturing enterprises (Prentice et al. 118). Girls and women were keen on getting employed in a factory because it was considered to be more exciting than the traditional work as a domestic servant. Furthermore, it enabled women to make friends and establish relationships with both female and male colleagues (Prentice et al. 132). Increasing numbers of women applied for a position in this field of work. After the turn of the century, one quarter of the Canadian population employed at factories or enterprises was listed as being female (Prentice et al. 130).

However, jobs in factories also implied strenuous work and long hours. To improve these hard working conditions, a law was passed in 1884 to lower the working age

and reduce the hours women had to work. From then on, girls and women were allowed to work up to ten hours per day or sixty hours per week, although there were several exceptions (Prentice et al. 130-131). As in many other professions, women's wages were only half of men's wages. Due to this low income, female employees were often faced with financial problems and could hardly pay their bills (Prentice et al. 132-133). Furthermore, female stereotypes were strongly persistent in this field of work. Women were not regarded to have valuable skills; men were esteemed for being good with machines (Prentice et al. 133). Although women had to face various disadvantages, they were still keen on gaining employment in factories (Prentice et al. 132).

Even though new job opportunities opened for women, domestic service remained the most popular one (Prentice et al. 128). Among the women who stayed in the domestic working field, some moved from inside the home to the outside world. They began their careers as waitresses, as cooks or as employees in public laundries (Prentice et al. 133). This extension of their working field was a positive development, since women got away from the lonely housework. However, these strenuous jobs were rewarded with only one third of the wages of men in the same position (Prentice et al. 133).

As illustrated above, more and more jobs became available to women, especially after mid-century. However, gender inequality was still persistent and the female sex was clearly disadvantaged. Unfortunately, they were neither entitled to demand better working conditions, nor could they complain about the way they were treated. Instead, they had to fulfil requirements and accept their subordinated role in the professional world (Prentice et al. 140). Only in the 1920s several laws were introduced and measures were taken which improved women's working conditions in Canada (Prentice et al. 228).

3.3 Female education

The educational system in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada was dependent on geographical features and other aspects. In the first decades of the

nineteenth century, education on Prince Edward Island, the setting of the Anne Shirley book series, ranged from outstanding schools to being taught irregularly at home. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the territory enforced considerable improvements and introduced 'The Free Education Act.' After mid-century, the educational system and its quality improved all across the country (Gammel and Dutton 108). Knoepflmacher (25) illustrates that girls, however, were clearly disadvantaged and restricted by societal traditions and conventions. While boys left their homes and were sent off to school, Victorian girls were bound to family life. Tutors or older family members usually taught them at home (Knoepflmacher 25). According to Sager (222), most schools in Canada reported more male than female students even in the late nineteenth century. It took some time until girls' education gained importance and parents insisted on a proper schooling for their daughters as well. Towards the turn of the century more and more girls had the chance to attend school and to be introduced to the academic world (Sager 222). Shortly after the turn of the century school attendance was finally mandatory for all children in almost all the provinces in Canada (Gammel and Dutton 108).

While boys could attend handicraft lessons in school, domestic science was considered an appropriate educational subject for girls. These classes involved needlework, knitting, sewing, cooking, and nutrition. Domestic science mainly wanted to reinforce the pleasures of domestic work and prepare young girls for their eventual duties and tasks as wives and mothers. The school system wanted to promote the profession of a domestic servant and tried to persuade young women to seek jobs in the domestic field. Although these classes taught young girls how to be good housekeepers, they did not offer any intellectual content. Moreover, domestic education neglected the manifold duties and tasks assigned to women and put emphasis on their mistakes rather than on their achievements. Instead of praising their work, women's knowledge and experience was frequently undermined and overlooked (Prentice et al. 171-172).

With regard to higher education, women were discriminated against and excluded by universities in North America. "Nineteenth-century Canada was, after all, still a place where it was unusual for women to pursue higher education" (Galway 9). In the early decades of the nineteenth century, girls and women were prohibited to attend

courses at universities without exception. As they were not able to go to college, women's job opportunities were limited. Thus, the only academic job open to women was teaching (Merritt 94). By the end of the nineteenth century the situation for women seeking academic education had only changed slightly. While some universities denied access to female students completely, others offered entry, albeit limited to certain faculties. Therefore, girls and women often felt excluded and mistreated. They had to struggle to gain recognition for their intelligence, interests and skills (Prentice et al. 175).

Most women longed to go to university, ambitious and willing to learn. However, only a few had the chance to attend college and gain a higher education, while the majority had to reconcile themselves to their homes and families. Girls' ambitions were considered to be pointless because they were expected to stay at home anyway; their ambitions were regarded as an abnormality and girls were discouraged from being proud of their achievements (Åhmansson 115-116). Brennan (251) indicates that female sacrifices were taken for granted. Women sacrificed aspiring after their own goals, neglecting their intellectual talents. Instead of taking chances to further their education, women were traditionally expected to support members of their family and stay at home. Also in *Anne of Green Gables*, people expect Anne to care for Marilla and the house instead of choosing to go to Redmond College (Brennan 251).

Many people disapproved of female higher education and the common perception was that women were academically incompetent and that "higher education for girls [was] a waste of time" (Åhmansson 115). They considered female intelligence to be inferior, not even worth mentioning, in comparison to that of the male gender. Women were regarded to be overly emotional and submissive and, hence, unsuited for an academic career. Their sole purpose in life was to serve their husbands and fulfil duties in the house (Zipes 90). The idea of women acquiring a higher education was often ridiculed and not taken seriously. Some people even claimed that female students who were very smart could not be beautiful at the same time because they had something manly and therefore unfeminine in them (Prentice et al. 173).

In the course of time, the majority of Canadian citizens approved of female higher education, as long as it remained separated from male education. Some believed that it was a dangerous practice and disadvantageous to teach both sexes in the same training room. Therefore, institutions generally separated boys and girls from one another and the female gender was often neglected, being of secondary importance (Prentice et al. 173). In addition to that, the quality of education for girls was often inferior to male education. In spite of this obvious inequality, universities in Canada separated female from male students for as long as it was possible. While men had a freedom of choice, women only attended courses that were perceived to be suitable for them, such as art, music, literature, and domestic science, etc. (Prentice et al. 174).

Some Canadian women can be regarded as the pioneers of female academics. One outstanding example is Dr. Emily Jennings Stowe, who was the first woman to graduate from medical college in Canada. E.J. Stowe did a lot to promote the rights and the educational careers of Canadian women. She was very much in favour of gender equality concerning studies at universities and her contributions significantly improved the situation of female academics and women's professional and educational possibilities in Canada. Born in 1831, in a small village of Norwich, Canada, Emily Jennings Stowe was encouraged by her family to have faith in her abilities and skills. Even though society did not approve of women attending medical schools, Emily Stowe was eager to become a doctor (Merritt 93-95). Eventually, in 1867, after a long-lasting struggle, she was celebrated as the first female doctor in Canada (Gray 176). In 1877, Emily Stowe founded the Women's Suffrage Association which fought for women's rights and aimed at changing Canadian laws in favour of gender equality. This organisation significantly improved working conditions for women and enabled more and more of them to study medicine. The first medical school for women was established in Toronto in 1883. Finally, still during Stowe's lifetime, it was possible for women to be admitted to universities in Canada (Merritt 99-100).

However, it took a long time until all universities finally opened up to women and guaranteed equal education for both sexes (Åhmansson 117). One of the first female colleges in America, Vassar College, was founded in 1865, "offering women a broad

education in full intellectual equality with men" (Townsend 82). After being permitted to attend institutions of higher education, evermore girls started to attend college and they proved to be just as intellectual and ambitious as male students (Åhmansson 117). Nevertheless, even in the early twentieth century, the overall numbers of women attending universities was still relatively low; by 1919 only 13.9 percent of the students in Canada were listed to be female. However, these few women and their achievements illustrated that the female gender was as competent and qualified for higher education as men. On top of that, some female students demonstrated that they could both acquire higher education and have a family at the same time (Prentice et al. 175).

3.4 Marriage and family life

In nineteenth-century Canada most adult female citizens were married, which might indicate that marriage was considered to have a high status in society (Dillon 453). However, the marriage and family situation for women changed in the second half of the nineteenth century. After mid-century the number of women who entered into matrimony significantly declined. In addition to that, most women got married at a later age which, in turn, lead to a decline of the birth rate in Canada (Darroch 435). Prentice et al. (176) point out that in 1851 the average age of women getting married for the first time was 23 and had risen to 26 in 1891.

In the late nineteenth century, being a mother and wife was often perceived as the main or even only duty women had to fulfil. Therefore, the female gender was essentially responsible for giving birth to and raising children (Devereux 127). Rubio and Waterston (12) reinforce this common perception, illustrating that the nineteenth century in Canada was "a time when few people questioned the idea that the main job for a woman […] was to get married and raise children" (Rubio and Waterston 12). James Snell (qtd. in Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174) indicates that women were commonly responsible for the establishment of a happy marriage. Being in charge of the private sphere, it was up to the wife to sustain the relationship to her husband. It was usually the woman who was blamed if a marriage failed or if it was an unfortunate one (Strong-Boag qtd. in Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174). With reference to

motherhood, women were held responsible for their children's development and it was their fault if their children misbehaved or made mistakes (Prentice et al. 158). Even in case of their children's illness or death, doctors found the mothers guilty (Prentice et al. 127).

As already mentioned, in late nineteenth-century Canada, it was the woman's obligation to raise a family. Should a woman be unable to have children, she would no longer be esteemed by society (Prentice et al. 180). The social norm was that all sane women should have the wish of giving birth to children. This conception put pressure on the female citizens, who even tended to blame themselves if they were unable to bear children and were therefore not acknowledged as proper Victorian women (Prentice et al. 163). Due to their assigned role of suitable wives and mothers, women faced many disadvantages, mainly concerning their professional lives. Employers did not want married women to be part of their business and so they usually dismissed them. In fact, women were expected to give up their working positions voluntarily in order to become proper wives and mothers (Merritt 94).

During the second half of the nineteenth century women were often forced to raise their children as single parents, either because their husband had left them or because he had died (Prentice et al. 180). In the case of a divorce, women were sometimes not entitled to keep their own children but it was the men who usually received custody (Firestone 25). After a husband's death, the widow was usually supposed to remarry one of his family members. The case of a widower was different because he did not have any obligations to a second marriage (Prentice et al. 180).

Åhmansson (147) elucidates that for many women "choosing one's husband […] used to be the only vital choice they would make during their life-time." However, a marriage partner was often chosen not out of love but for more practical reasons, such as wealth and prosperity (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174). James Snell (qtd. in Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174) argues that "marriage, of course, was fundamentally a source of economic security for women" in Canada in the late nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century. Women did not expect that their marriage would entail feelings of love or sensuality; they rather married out of convenience. One of the main reasons why marriage was important in the Victorian era but also in the early

twentieth century was reproduction. Thus, some women living during this time only married to bear children afterwards. These solely practical circumstances frequently resulted in unfortunate relationships (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174).

Marriage of convenience was mainly a characteristic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Lucy Maud Montgomery, for example, neglected her passionate love and chose to marry another man, who appeared to be more suitable and responsible as a husband. Their marriage, however, was not a joyful one and Montgomery often felt miserable and discontent (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174). She confessed that she never truly loved her husband but only wished for company and children in her life (Prentice et al. 167). Snell (qtd. in Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174) elucidates that "in the first few decades of the twentieth century marriage itself changes." This modification resulted in a significant change in the role allocation of a married couple; wives were no longer seen as being submissive to their husbands. Instead, men and women came to be rather equivalent in relationships. Furthermore, more focus was put on romance and love than on practical aspects (Snell qtd. in Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174).

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, gender inequality was prevalent in the laws concerning ownership of properties as well. Solely men were entitled to own land, and thus were responsible for all decisions regarding their land. Women, on the contrary, had no ownership rights at all, and were not entitled to the management of the property, such as renting it (Prentice et al. 123). When their husbands died, it was usually not the widows who inherited the properties, nor were they entitled to purchase them in most cases (Dillon 478). Instead, according to the husband's will, it was often the son or other male relatives who should take over the property. Widows were forced to move out of the house without having the right to complain about it (Prentice et al. 124). Backhouse (213) indicates that husbands did not just have the land but also their wives' money at their disposal. Women, having no rights in any of these matters, had no choice but to accept their husbands' decisions (Backhouse 213). Montgomery's grandmother, Lucy Woolner Macneill serves as a concrete example of the injustice of land ownership in Canada during the late nineteenth century. After the death of her husband in 1898, she was supposed to leave the house. According to her dead husband's will, she had no business staying in the

house, but her son was entitled to the property. Many other widows suffered from similar unfair situations in the late nineteenth century and were undermined by patriarchal society (Merritt 96).

In 1910 the Canadian legislation introduced the 'Married Women's Relief Act.' This new law "entitled a widow to receive through the courts something of her husband's estate if he had not adequately provided for her" (Prentice et al. 225). Thus, women of the twentieth century had the right to rent, sell or keep a property (Prentice et al. 225). Furthermore, husbands were prohibited to sell their joint property if their wives did not agree to this intention (Prentice et al. 226).

3.5 Religious matters

Religious matters were of vital concern for the majority of people living in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada. Religion influenced society and was at the centre of the population's daily life (Rubio 100). Howey (*Secular* 399) acknowledges that during that time religious practices were assumed to be necessary in order to attain adulthood. Clarke (262) declares that, already apparent before mid-century, a growing number of people conformed to religious laws and turned to Christianity. The increase of religious prominence was most notably reflected by the growing number and size of churches in many communities (Clarke 272). Religion continued to be dominant up to the first decades of the twentieth century (Howey, *Secular* 399). In fact, "[r]eligion was […] the strongest organizing force within local communities" (Rubio 97). Especially female citizens found comfort in and gained strength through their religion. Female emigrants, but also women who did not have many friends or relatives, constantly turned to religion for advice (Prentice et al. 163-164). For some women "faith gave meaning to their existence," which shows that they often identified with religious ethics (Prentice et al. 164).

Rubio (94) indicates that there were everlasting religious tensions perceptible in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Canada. While the majority of Canadians were Protestant, a large group of Catholics had also taken root, particularly in francophone regions. In the second half of the nineteenth century, four

main Protestant denominations were established; Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist (Clarke 262-263). Serious rivalries did not only exist between Protestants and Catholics but also between these individual denominations (Rubio 94). According to Clarke (263), most Protestants were Methodists and Presbyterians. As both Lucy Maud Montgomery and Anne Shirley grew up in Presbyterian surroundings, however, I will mainly focus on this specific denomination.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, religious beliefs were a matter of free choice, but around mid-century, all churches underwent a significant change. From then on, the state stopped providing financial support, and the churches became solely dependent on their member's funding (Clarke 266-267). Smaller church groups united with other groups of the same denomination, and together they worked on religious movements, such as the Sunday-school movement (Clarke 267). Clarke (267-268) illustrates that the Presbyterians were the first to achieve a unified national organisation resulting in the establishment of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. While several national denominations achieved unification, the overarching dichotomy remained: the Protestants and the English Catholics, with the former clearly outnumbering the latter (Clarke 269).

Both "[i]n Cavendish, and the fictional Avonlea, people believed – just as their strict Scottish forebears had – that humanity's chief goal on earth was to prepare for entrance into Heaven" (Rubio 100). Being one of the most dominant forces in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century communities, religion determined which behaviour patterns were sinful and what kind of pleasures people were permitted to have (Rubio 100). According to Åhmansson (97), religious ethics around the time *Anne of Green Gables* was written stated lying as the ultimate sin. As a rule, Canadians conformed to the strict religious regulations present during that time and, thus, acknowledged that "a liar was predestined for hell" (Åhmansson 97). Honesty had top priority in Victorian and early twentieth-century communities and children were supposed to tell their parents everything, most importantly their mistakes and misfortunes (Åhmansson 99). In *Anne of Green Gables* Marilla is appalled when she thinks that Anne tells lies without feeling remorse. Being honest is a priority to Marilla and she believes that it is dangerous to raise a child who is not trustworthy (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 84).

The significance of Sunday schools increased throughout the nineteenth century and an ever growing number of children applied for membership. Therefore, new Sunday schools, which offered religious education to children of all classes, needed to be built (Clarke 287). Religious education during the Victorian era followed certain conventions and norms. Instead of really understanding the doctrine, children were supposed to memorize religious texts and recite them in class. Around the turn of the century, some people started to criticize and question these religious teaching methods, promoting advanced, livelier religious education (Howey, *Secular* 408). Apart from the common lessons, Sunday school also offered various social events. Along with meetings and picnics, performances and informal discussions were hosted for the children. On account of this, social networks were formed not only among the pupils, but also among the staff members (Clarke 287). Female volunteers explicitly outnumbered male volunteers working in Sunday schools. However, it was always a man who acquired the position of the principal at a Sunday school. “This hierarchy of functions and responsibilities reflected – and, of course, reinforced – the prevailing stereotypes according to which women’s business was child care, while administration and finance were strictly male preserves” (Clarke 287).

Gender inequality during the second half of the nineteenth century in Canada is evident in various religious matters. Women were not granted to attain higher positions but men exclusively were in power, finalizing decisions within the church (Clarke 287-288). As there were significantly more female than male congregation members, women considered religion as a chance for active cooperation among each other (Prentice et al. 164). Feeling excluded by male superiority, women established groups and together they made considerable contributions to religious affairs (Clarke 287-288). Apart from taking a stand for the construction of local churches, female supporters advocated and promoted cultural and religious traditions (Prentice et al. 126). In the early stages, a male body took over leadership in these organizations until absolute independence for the female groups was achieved. The first solely female association was founded in 1870, soon followed by many others (Prentice et al. 191). These missionary societies fought for women’s right to participate in religious assemblies and conferences. Additionally, members frequently

raised funds and took a stand for the renovation of their local church (Clarke 288). They were also responsible for hosting picnics, teas and other events, which enriched women's social lives. These meetings were held outside the home and had, unlike the rest of their daily activities, a cheerful, jaunty character. Social contacts and opportunities to make and meet friends were extremely important factors for female citizens and significantly improved their lives (Clarke 288-289). Rubio (97) points out that social interaction was also one of the main reasons Lucy Montgomery attended church.

As illustrated above, female missionary societies were extremely important for the church, both in social and in financial terms. However, they rarely received any recognition for it. Instead, it was taken for granted that women gladly supported the church leadership consisting only of men (Clarke 287-288).

As a result of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), founded in the late nineteenth century, women's powers started to increase. This union attended to women's concerns and arising issues at home. Female Canadian citizens were taught how to improve their way of speaking in public and how to appear more self-confident (Prentice et al. 192). Prentice et al. (194) indicate that members of the club arranged various facilities mainly for women and their children, such as rooms where they could read and feel comfortable. According to conventional perceptions, persistent in the second half of the nineteenth century, women had no influential powers and were not given a political voice. Realizing this injustice, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union "forged a demand for women to have more practical power within both family and society" (Prentice et al. 194). After the turn of the century, women's organizations increased in number and were highly successful in their respective community (Prentice et al. 215). However, women were still discriminated in politics and various female societies advocated and fought for the right to vote. After a long-lasting battle women finally accomplished their goal and were granted the right to vote in 1916 (Prentice et al. 234).

Ministry was an eminently respectable profession in the second half of nineteenth-century Canada. People thought highly of their minister and considered him to be the head of their community. The functions and duties which had to be fulfilled by the

minister increased. Apart from conducting church service, he was also responsible for taking care of religious institutions and organizing social meetings (Clarke 273). Next to the minister, his wife was another person of authority society looked up to. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the wife of a minister was usually required to embody Christian faith and deeply religious manners, at least in public. Lucy Maud Montgomery, who married her husband in 1911, serves as an example of leading a difficult life as the minister's wife as she was constantly watched and judged by society and had to live up to its expectations (Howey, *Secular* 409).

It is also essential to mention typical American family life in the Victorian times. The situation at home was quite strict and the father was usually the head of the family whom everybody had to obey (Townsend 79-80). Especially the female members of the family embraced the father's authority and sometimes even encouraged his powers. In the late nineteenth century the father was put on a pedestal with God, and his word was always respected. In a typical Victorian family life "the Fifth Commandment came first and the earthly father was seen quite literally as the representative of the heavenly one" (Townsend 80). Therefore, particularly daughters never dared to disobey their father because this meant not being loyal to God. Taking male superiority for granted, female family members were obliged to fulfil their fathers' and God's wishes and expectations (Townsend 80). This truthfulness to God without questioning his power might reveal their strong connection to and identification with religion.

As in *Anne of Green Gables,* in Canada Sunday was considered the holy day of the week. This belief was persistent in the second half of the nineteenth but also in early years of the twentieth century, as people were expected to devote themselves only to religious matters. During this time Sunday was also referred to as the "Lord's Day" (Clarke 326), prescribing people to refrain from any sinful pleasures and temptations. Important members of the church did not approve of practices such as drinking or socializing in bars on this holy day (Clarke 326). In the first part of the book series, various characters disapprove of reading fiction books on Sundays (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 199-200). Lucy Montgomery was similarly restricted by her conservative grandparents. She was prohibited to read any novels on the holy day and was advised to devote herself to the Bible or other religious texts instead (Merritt

141-142). Åhmansson (104-105) declares that Presbyterian ethics in general frowned upon reading novels and regarded fictive stories to be dangerous and sinful, particularly on Sundays.

4 *Anne of Green Gables*: An analysis

4.1 The author's life and its influence on her literary works

Lucy Maud Montgomery was born in 1874 in Clifton, Prince Edward Island. She was not even two years old when her mother passed away, and soon after her mother's death Montgomery's father started a new life in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Lucy Montgomery was sent to live in her grandparents' farmhouse in a small community called Cavendish (Rubio and Waterston 13-14). Her grandparents, Lucy and Hector Macneill, provided a secure life for the author but they did not give her the love and sympathy she desperately longed for. Furthermore, they neglected their granddaughter's interests and did not encourage her literary goals. In fact, she was expected to stop thinking about a possible career as a writer and to focus on her household duties (Watson 486). These personal experiences shaped some of Montgomery's literary works. Several main characters in her stories, such as *Anne of Green Gables* and *Emily of New Moon* (1923), are shown to have a lonely, miserable childhood before finding love and happiness (Zipes 89).

Religion was the centre of attention for most people during Victorian times and it was just as much priority to Montgomery's grandparents. Rubio (94) remarks that Cavendish was a "typical tightly knit nineteenth-century Scottish community, with life organized around its church." Like many other children, Lucy Montgomery had a very strict religious education. She was obliged to follow all religious customs advised to her, such as memorizing religious texts and listening to sermons (Rubio and Waterston 18). Merritt (141-142) adds that the Macneill family disapproved of reading any fictional stories on Sundays and constrained Montgomery to attend to the Bible instead. Reading about her early life, it can be speculated that the author grew to dislike certain religious practices. Like Anne, she sometimes seemed to question these regulations instead of simply accepting them.

Another characteristic worth mentioning is that Montgomery always had very strong imaginative powers. She created imaginary friends who not only helped her to cope with her loneliness but also helped her to develop a creative mind. The author gave

her favourite places and objects names and personalities, just as Anne does. In fact the terms, “Lover’s Lane, Lake of Shining Waters, [and] Dryad’s Bubble” (Merritt 142), which appear in the book, were all initially used by Montgomery when she was a little girl (Merritt 142). Watson (486) points out that Lucy Maud Montgomery “was a passionate, emotional child, rejoicing in the beauty of the world around her and marking the eccentricities of the people she encountered, hoarding everything for poems and stories.” One might assume that the author transferred some of her own experiences to the main character of the story. Yet, Montgomery definitely developed a story and a protagonist beyond her personal life. Therefore, one cannot simply jump to conclusions, but should be careful when comparing her personality with that of Anne. Rubio (97) emphasizes that Montgomery cannot be put on a level with her characters and her opinions are not identical with those of the protagonists in her stories. Because “Montgomery’s point of view is very complex and often unstable, and it changes at different points in her life” (Rubio 97), one cannot simply imply connections between the author and her fictional characters.

When Lucy Maud Montgomery came to visit her father in Prince Albert, she soon found herself in the typical female role present during this time. She had to take care of her two half-siblings and do most of the housework for her stepmother. Although she dearly loved her father, she had a very difficult relationship with her stepmother (Niall 178). Altogether, Montgomery was very unhappy in her father’s house and did not have a pleasant stay in Prince Albert. Therefore, she decided to return to her beloved Prince Edward Island in 1891 (Merritt 144).

At the end of the nineteenth century, higher education for women was not a matter of course and solely a few had the possibility to attend college. Lucy Montgomery was one of the few women who enjoyed higher education and proved to be an ambitious and diligent student. After grade school, in 1893, Montgomery attended Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown where she received a licence to teach. Because she wanted to earn money as soon as possible she finished the two-year program in only one year, demonstrating her high ambition. After her graduation she had trouble finding an appropriate school which was close to her grandparents’ home. In 1894, Montgomery got hired as a teacher in Bideford, Prince Edward Island (Rubio and Waterston 26-28). In her free time, usually before school even started, Montgomery

wrote stories and poems which she sent off to magazine publishing companies. Several of her literary works got published and she could save up enough money to attend Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, for one year (Rubio and Waterston 28-29). When she could no longer afford attending Dalhousie University Montgomery started to teach again in small towns in Prince Edward Island, namely Biddeford, Belmont and Bedeque, until 1898 (Brennan 252). Rubio (92) points out that Montgomery strongly advocated female education and that she was convinced that both women and men need educational rights and opportunities to fulfil their own lives.

While Montgomery was still employed as a teacher in Bedeque her grandfather Hector Macneill died in 1898. Thereupon, the author gave up her teaching career and moved back to Cavendish to care for her grandmother (Epperly 5). It was a woman's duty to support her family and so she accepted her fate as a caregiver. During this time, Montgomery felt terribly lonesome and separated from the rest of the world. While she longed to have children she knew that it was expected of her to care for her grandmother as long as she needed her. Probably Montgomery's only bright side of life was the time she spent writing books or poems (Merritt 147). "For the most part, however, Maud continued her quiet, lonely, unhappy life with Grandmother Macneill, longing for a home and family of her own, while writing about the life and loves of an orphan named Anne Shirley" (Merritt 148). Devereux (254) mentions that next to writing stories, Montgomery also found comfort and distraction in natural surroundings and in her imaginative powers. Montgomery highly appreciated the garden outside her house and was especially fond of the roses blooming there (Åhmansson 61).

At the end of the nineteenth century, teaching was one of the best forms of employment available to women. However, when Montgomery became a school teacher at the age of twenty-one she still longed for a career as a writer (Merritt 144). In 1901, another family member moved in with her grandmother and Montgomery's literary dream came true. The author moved to Halifax where she started working as a proof-reader for the newspapers *Daily Echo* and *Morning Chronicle*. Eventually, her employment ended and Montgomery moved back to Cavendish. A considerable number of her works were accepted by publishing companies and magazines, as a

result of which she was able to save up a fair amount of money (Rubio and Waterston 40). In 1905, Montgomery began writing her first novel *Anne of Green Gables*. One year later she sent her work to four different publishing companies which all turned the manuscript down. Being discouraged, the author tried not to bother about the piece of writing for two years. L. C. Page Co., a publishing company in Boston, finally accepted and published her revised version of *Anne of Green Gables* in 1908. The book immediately turned into an internationally celebrated piece of work and was translated into at least seventeen other languages. Readers wished for a continuing story about Anne Shirley and, thus, Montgomery agreed to write seven sequels which were all successful as well (Brennan 247).

Lucy Maud Montgomery was admired by quite a number of men and aroused their interest and affection. For a long time, however, the author resisted any relationship-related changes in her life and rejected several marriage opportunities (Niall 178). Although Montgomery accepted the proposal of Edwin Simpson, who was a distant relative, she was very unhappy and discontent with their relationship (Rubio and Waterston 30). Teaching in a school in Bedeque, Montgomery fell in love with Herman Leard and developed passionate feelings for him. Adored by the two men she found herself in a personal dilemma and eventually ended her relationship with Edwin Simpson (Rubio and Waterston 33-34). Although Montgomery's heart belonged to Herman Leard, she did not start a love affair with him. Due to the fact that he was not well educated and did not have any prospects in his life, Herman Leard was not considered a suitable husband and father. Montgomery ignored her inner feelings and rather chose to wait and marry someone for more practical reasons than for love alone (Prentice et al. 167).

Having returned to Cavendish, Montgomery got acquainted with the new minister, Ewan Macdonald, in 1903. Because Montgomery was responsible for church organisations they frequently met and spent time with each other (Rubio and Waterston 40). After Ewan Macdonald proposed to Lucy Maud Montgomery in 1906, she demanded to postpone their marriage until after her grandmother had died. Therefore, they had a secret relationship for five years. Due to her fiancé's profession, the author began to occupy herself with religious matters and enjoyed the interesting discussions she lead with the minister. On top of that, she spent a lot of

time reading the Bible and learned to appreciate its messages. Montgomery's relationship to Ewan and to her diligent study of the Bible might show itself in the novel *Anne of Green Gables*. Religion is a very prominent theme in the book. Despite the theme's relevance, however, religious aspects and customs are not solely valued but sometimes scrutinized (Sorfleet 175).

Shortly after her grandmother's death in 1911, Lucy Maud Montgomery agreed to marry Ewan Macdonald. From then on, members of the local community expected her to show perfect manner and behaviour at all times. The author constantly felt not only watched but also judged by other people and she could not lead a free and casual life anymore. After bearing two boys, Montgomery's duties and responsibilities increased further and she had to live up to the perception of an ideal Victorian wife and mother (Merritt 148). Her husband could not lend his support by cheering her up but rather made the situation worse as he suffered from religious melancholia. Although the author could hardly endure her unfortunate life, she was determined to fulfil all required duties and live up to the image of the flawless wife of a minister (Brennan 253). Gammel (4) affirms that Montgomery never really loved her husband and was annoyed by society's expectations assigned to a minister's wife.

Even though Montgomery was married to a minister, her approach to religion was different from her husband's beliefs. She even seemed to criticize some religious aspects and strict regulations (Brennan 253). Prentice et al. (165) remark that she "made it clear that church attendance for her was part of a social ritual and a way of focussing on her own spiritual development." Montgomery did not approve of some of the overly formal ideas church represented and instead preferred her own individual modality (Prentice et al. 165). Some of her literary works include satirical scenes about religious conventions and traditions (Rubio 94). In her writing Montgomery criticizes "long prayers and tedious sermons that a captive child – and indeed captive adults – must endure" (Rubio 95). One may assume that Montgomery reflects on her own childhood experiences, when she wanted to play outside instead of attending the mass on Sundays (Rubio 95).

Ewan Macdonald retired from his profession as a minister in 1935. Thereupon, the family moved to Toronto where Montgomery continued her writing business and

published, among other literary works, a new sequel about Anne Shirley (Rubio and Waterston 100). Lucy Maud Montgomery passed away in 1942 and was buried in her beloved home town Cavendish (Brennan 256). From what we know about Montgomery's life, Reimer (330) deduces that the author suffered from depression for a long period of time during adulthood. Therefore, upon hearing from Lucy Maud Montgomery's death, many of her relatives assumed that she committed suicide because she could no longer bear living in this world (Reimer 330).

Even today, Lucy Maud Montgomery can be considered one of the most popular and most widely read authors from Canada (Merritt 150). Her literary work *Anne of Green Gables* was translated into more than thirty languages, read and loved by children and adults alike all around the world (Reimer 330). The Anne Shirley book series transformed Prince Edward Island into a famous tourist attraction. Additionally, the novels have been made into movies, musicals and series loved by millions of people (Merritt 150).

4.2 Analysis of the female protagonist Anne Shirley

In this section I will focus on the first three parts of the Anne Shirley book series, namely, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Anne of Avonlea* and *Anne of the Island*. These books, the first trilogy, were published in the years 1908, 1909 and 1915. "In the first three Anne books Montgomery establishes Anne's voice through nature description and comic episode and relies on a number of types of romance to suggest Anne's power" (Epperly 12). In the first novel Anne is still a little girl. She is eleven years old when she comes to Green Gables and is adopted by Mathew and Marilla Cuthbert. Throughout these three books, Anne develops into a grown woman, until she is twenty-two at the end of the third book.

Having dealt with women's history, I would like to analyse whether or not Anne is an example of an ideal woman from Canada during the Victorian times. The main character of the series might seem to be a typical Victorian woman in some scenes, but she certainly distinguishes herself from this prototype through several other features. The following part of my thesis concentrates on Anne's characteristic traits

and her development. Seven features will be dealt with in detail, namely, imaginative and talkative skills, romantic ideas, ideas on love and marriage, religion, work, education, and appearance. After each chapter I will try to draw a conclusion as to whether Anne is portrayed as a proper Victorian woman or whether she deviates from this idea of femininity predominant during that time.

As already mentioned, it seems like the book series does not take place in the early twentieth century, the time of its publication, but can rather be allocated to the second half of the nineteenth century. The lack of any specific dates and references to the years the story takes in, as well as a predominance of Victorian values and customs, suggests that the book series takes place some years before its actual publication. Lerer (263) points out that the time period from 1901 to 1914 was assigned to technological inventions, such as motorcars, which were a threat to nature and Victorian cleanliness. Furthermore, science fiction, supernaturalism and ghost stories became the centre of attention for various authors during the early twentieth century (Lerer 255). The Anne Shirley book series, however, reveals to rather look back and mainly include features from the Victorian times. Taking the notion of time into consideration, the story about Anne Shirley can, to some degree, be compared to *Peter Pan* (1904), published by J. M. Barrie. Like *Peter Pan*, the Anne Shirley novels illustrate a "nostalgic Victorian world" and provide a "safe space of domestic childhood" for the main character of the story (Lerer 259). A comfortable and secure environment and domesticity were typical features for the Victorian times. Although *Peter Pan* and the story of Anne Shirley were published after the turn of the century they both "[look] back to a lost age of Victorian security" (Lerer 259). Furthermore, imagination and theatricality, which are also attributed to Victorianism, are highly important and play a significant role in both stories (Lerer 260). For these reasons, one can object the notion of Anne Shirley being a representative of women from the early twentieth century. Instead, it appears to be more suitable to compare the protagonist with Canadian women during the Victorian times.

4.2.1 Imagination and skills of communication

The Anne Shirley book series illustrates the impacts of a powerful imagination on the lives of young girls. Before coming to Green Gables, Anne was sent to various orphanage asylums or she was exploited as a valuable workforce by different foster families. Thus, she had a very lonesome childhood and longed for somebody she could talk to. As she had no friends, she pretended that her reflection in a bookcase or her echo were real people and named them 'Katie Maurice' and 'Violetta' (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 54). The protagonist explains that she dearly loved them both and had a very intimate relationship with them. Although Anne knew that her abstract ideas were mere imagination and could not be real, they at least distracted her from feeling miserable. More importantly, she had found 'someone' she could confide in without being reprimanded. "That is one consolation when you are poor – there are so many more things you can imagine about" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 193). Similarly, in *Anne of Avonlea* (187-188), Miss Lavendar creates pleasant, imaginary situations as this practice prevents her from feeling lonely and isolated. Anne is certain that having an unbridled imagination is not harmful to anybody and that it can even prove to have positive effects. Thus, having strong imaginative powers can compensate for a lack of social contact.

On the ride home with Mathew, the reader notices that the girl is very talkative and has a wild imagination. "Isn't it splendid to think of all the things there are to find out about? It just makes me feel glad to be alive - it's such an interesting world. It wouldn't be half so interesting if we knew all about everything, would it? There'd be no scope for imagination then, would there?" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 18). Already her first conversations reveal that she is optimistic and possesses a strong sense of curiosity and imagination. Mathew appreciates the girl's speeches, which seem to add excitement to his monotonous life.

In Anne's opinion, making up stories and actually believing these stories are two separate ideas, which must be dissociated from one another. This distinction is very important and one should appreciate imagining things, for "in imagination all things are possible" (Montgomery, *Island* 90). The protagonist believes that it is completely

acceptable to have peculiar thoughts, and that people should not be obliged to justify what goes on in their minds. In the second novel, Paul Irving is upset about people telling him that he is odd because of his imaginary world. Although he does not believe his fantasies to be true, he still wants to be able to imagine all kinds of things. Anne tells the boy that his ideas “are not queer at all; they are strange and beautiful thoughts for a little boy to think, and so people who [can’t] think anything of the sort themselves, if they tried for a hundred years, think them queer” (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 166). In this particular scene Anne makes it clear that no matter what people say one should, by no means quit imagining things. Thus, having funny thoughts and having the ability to create an imaginary world with imaginary friends is a valuable feature and distinguishes one person from another. Because there are so many ordinary people in the world, it is crucial not to grow out of these unique, imaginative habits. Therefore, Anne encourages others to enjoy the pleasant practice of day-dreaming as well. From Anne’s standpoint peculiar people are the most interesting and fascinating ones.

In contrast to Anne, Marilla believes that a person should always act and think rationally and concentrate on facts. As a grown-up one is expected to exhibit sensible behaviour at all times and it would be considered foolish to pretend or imagine things. Although Anne is very obedient and supportive, she has troubles fulfilling her duties because she often loses her sense of time when day-dreaming. Marilla has the sense that “while this odd child’s body might be there at the table, her spirit [is] far away in some remote airy cloudland, borne aloft on the wings of imagination” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 33). Although Anne obeys Marilla’s instructions and helps her with the work in the house, she often drifts off into her own imaginative world instead of focusing on the task. Marilla also points out that God puts them in predestined situations and, therefore, one should not imagine or dream about anything else (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 50). Some people might say that children, like Anne, spend too much time fantasizing and dreaming about an unrealistic world. However, it might also be suggested that adults should not entirely lose their power of imagination but let it run free occasionally.

Anne’s philosophy is to only imagine positive scenarios because she believes that there are too many bad things happening in the world anyways. However, there is

one scene in the first novel of the book series, where Anne's imagination is illustrated as being uncalled for, which is already apparent in the title of the respective chapter, "A Good Imagination Gone Wrong" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 135). Anne and Diana imagine the woods to be haunted and their vivid ideas result in both girls becoming terribly afraid of the woods and never wanting to set foot in it again. Marilla does not approve of making up stories and tells Anne to stop fiddling around and to stick to reality. In her unsympathetic fashion, Marilla promptly sends Anne through the forest in order to lose her fear. Before going into the woods the girl is very upset and demurs at doing so. Only after a certain time does Anne realize that she overstretched her imaginative powers and should have maintained control over them (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 138-140). This insight reflects the character's development from an innocent girl to a responsible, young woman. This scene might illustrate that some people delve too much into their imagination and that one needs to learn to differentiate between reality and fiction. Although one should not fully abandon fantasizing, spending too much time imagining things could have negative impacts, as one runs the risk of losing touch with reality. Despite some unfortunate incidents, Anne's character proves that imagination is a positive attribute. The protagonist declares that she is able to put herself in other places and also in other people's shoes. After being accused of having startled Miss Barry to death, Anne states that she cannot be certain how the woman felt, but that she sure can imagine how she would feel in the same situation. Miss Barry admits that, unfortunately, she no longer possesses a vivid fantasy and cannot put herself into Anne's shoes (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 134). Anne's imaginative powers prove that the ability to breach the borders of reality can be beneficial because they allow one to empathise with other people.

In addition to her imaginative powers, Anne also proves to possess remarkable communication skills. Already at the beginning of the story the reader notices that she talks a lot and never seems to pause. After coming to Green Gables, Marilla must adjust to the girl's chatter and she complains: "For pity's sake hold your tongue […]. You talk entirely too much for a little girl" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 33). After some time, however, Marilla starts to appreciate Anne's way of speaking. The girl's speech amuses her and brings verve and colour into her monotonous life. Sometimes, Anne's language sounds quite odd and lavish, very unusual for a young

girl. On top of that, she often uses long and big words to express herself. One has the impression that Anne wants to stand out and receive attention. She often uses phrases like “depths of despair” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 28), “excruciatingly” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 97) or “afflicted mortal” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 157), which illustrate her exuberant way of speaking. Furthermore, Epperly (27) declares that “we learn to recognize in her outlandish sentences […] products of a romance-fed imagination and an instinctive ear for poetry.”

In the first novel, Anne has to apologize to Mrs. Lynde for being rude to her. Anne invents a highly dramatic and elaborate apology, which is comparable to a theatre performance. She kneels down in front of Mrs. Lynde, clasps her hands together and pours out her heart, saying how terribly sorry she is for her poor behaviour (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 65):

> I could never express all my sorrow, no, not if I used up a whole dictionary. You must just imagine it. I behaved terribly to you - and I've disgraced the dear friends, Matthew and Marilla, who have let me stay at Green Gables although I'm not a boy. I'm a dreadfully wicked and ungrateful girl, and I deserve to be punished and cast out by respectable people for ever. It was very wicked of me to fly into a temper because you told me the truth. It *was* the truth; every word you said was true. My hair is red and I'm freckled and skinny and ugly. What I said to you was true, too, but I shouldn't have said it. Oh, Mrs. Lynde, please, please, forgive me. If you refuse it will be a lifelong sorrow to me. You wouldn’t like to inflict a lifelong sorrow on a poor little orphan girl, would you, even if she had a dreadful temper? Oh, I am sure you wouldn't. Please say you forgive me, Mrs. Lynde.

This speech reflects Anne’s overly exaggerated way of speaking and her self-dramatization. One might believe that Anne is quite serious about her apology. At the same time, however, she seems to ridicule the situation and slightly mocks Mrs. Lynde. Anne’s ebullience and dramatic performance creates a satirical scene which makes the reader laugh. Because it seems kind of odd for a little girl to use such peculiar language and such big words, Anne is often laughed at and not taken seriously. Sometimes the protagonist might be satirical and not fully serious with her statements but she still wants to be noticed by other people. The girl is vexed by people who believe that “children should be seen and not heard” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 19). She considers this statement to be ignorant and hurtful to children. In her opinion younger people should be treated in the same manner as

grown-ups and not be ridiculed or looked down upon. In chapter twenty-six, Anne is looking forward to being grown-up and she mentions that it is “a great comfort to think that [she]’ll be able to use big words then without being laughed at” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 172).

The main character does not only talk nonstop but she also has the habit of speaking her mind freely and talking back to people. Her direct and honest approach can generally be seen as a positive characteristic trait, but it also gets her into a lot of trouble. During the Victorian times, it was not appropriate for women to speak their mind freely (Gammel 7). Thus, while Anne is not intentionally rude, some people take offence at her straightforward statements. Her snappy replies are indicators of her developed sense of self-confidence and self-worth. At the same time, Anne is forced to recognize the social verbal restriction of the time. As a result, she resorts to expressing herself through her imagination. The female protagonist’s imaginative powers portray a kind of freedom from the social norms concerning speech; in her fictional worlds, she can choose her words without fear of the consequences.

> Anne keenly enjoyed her walk through the great gray maze of the beechlands; though alone she never found it lonely; her imagination peopled her path with merry companions, and with these she carried on a gay, pretended conversation that was wittier and more fascinating than conversations are apt to be in real life, where people sometimes fail most lamentable to talk up to the requirements. In a ‘make believe’ assembly of choice spirits everybody says just the thing you want her to say and so gives you the chance to say just what *you* want to say. (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 199)

This scene appears to suggest that many people do not possess proper communication skills, and that it can therefore be more satisfying to talk to one’s own imagination. In contrast to real people, imaginary people empower women to freely discuss what they like for as long as they want to.

Towards the end of the first book, Anne, like most adults, grows out of these imaginative habits, and accepts her responsibilities and duties, particularly at home. This development exhibits the lack of space and time for imagination in adult life. Anne has to renounce her playfulness, including the imaginative games and the extraordinary way of speaking. As time goes by, Marilla notices and addresses

Anne's transition: "You don't chatter half as much as you used to, Anne, nor use half as many big words. What has come over you?" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 211). The protagonist replies that she no longer feels the need to say everything out loud but instead believes it is pleasant to keep some precious thoughts for herself (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 211). This change of opinion clearly illustrates Anne's coming of age. Epperly (18) too points out this obvious change in Anne's speech: "Anne's vocal self-dramatizations and spontaneity charm the stodgy establishment of Avonlea, but then, having won her right to speak, Anne gives up passionate articulation in favour of conventional, maidenly dreaminess and reserve." As time goes by, the female protagonist adopts evermore dignified manners. She hones her communication skills by reducing the pace and the eccentricity of her speech. Anne realizes that she cannot afford to get lost in daydreams as she used to when she was a little girl. As a mature young woman, she knows that she must be more sensible and fulfil certain responsibilities.

In addition to teaching and studying, Anne has to help Marilla bringing up Davy and Dora, the twins who get adopted in the second book, which requires a lot of time and energy. However, Anne refuses to give up her imaginative powers altogether. Therefore, she decides to spend at least half an hour imagining whatever she likes before going to bed (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 74). This practice is very important to Anne and she is delighted about the "splendid adventures [she has] for a little while" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 74). Although Anne is aware of the importance of completing tasks, exercising her imagination is also necessary to maintain balance in her life.

Taking Anne's vivid imagination and her desire to communicate into consideration one might assume that she is not a typical Victorian girl in this respect. At the time, a woman in Canada speaking at public meetings was considered to be abnormal and, usually, female views were overlooked and ignored (Prentice et al. 193). Firestone (25) emphasizes as well that women had no voice in political matters but were supposed to be silent and submissive to men. Anne stands out and serves as an example for other independent women who dared to speak up. Her straightforward way of expressing herself reveals that she does not want to withhold her opinion. In contrast to women who accepted their inferiority to men, Anne challenges her surroundings. She translates her thoughts with an uncommon frankness, which was

not a typical trait among women at that time. Unlike Anne, most Victorian women did not dare to speak their mind freely because they wished to be accepted by society (Gammel 7). Furthermore, “[w]omen traditionally [were] trained to hide their anger” (Åhmansson 93) and control their temper. Åhmansson (83) illustrates that Marilla is a typical Victorian woman as she is concerned with other people’s views and wishes to maintain a respectable reputation. Anne does not care about other people’s opinions of her but she only wants to please Marilla and Mathew (Åhmansson 91). Therefore, as Anne grows up, she cultivates her way of speaking and, thus, adapts to Victorian conventions to a certain degree. However, the female protagonist retains some of her exuberant language and never ceases to appreciate her imaginative powers. Referring to imagination and communication skills, one realizes that Anne deviates from a typical Victorian woman in Canada.

4.2.2 Romantic ideas

Anne behaves in a highly romantic fashion and is easily overwhelmed by ordinary events. Her exaggerated and romantic descriptions of life and nature communicate to the reader that she has a special bond with the world around her. When she is not permitted to join the school picnic, the girl feels depressed and sorrowful and complains to Marilla: “I couldn’t eat anything. My heart is broken. You’ll feel remorse of conscience some day, I expect, for breaking it, Marilla, but I forgive you. But please don’t ask me to eat anything, especially boiled pork and greens. Boiled pork and greens are so unromantic when one is in affliction” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 87). Anne’s choice of words is very dramatic and worthy of a theatrical performance. While the character takes this matter very seriously, the reader is put in the position of a spectator observing the events playing on a stage. As in this scene, Anne’s highly romantic approach can sometimes not be taken fully seriously but it rather has a humorous effect and makes the reader smile. Åhmansson (113) points out that “Anne’s romantic and overblown rhetoric is meant to be comic” and Montgomery intends to create humour. Using overly sentimental descriptions causes the reader to satirize and laugh at Anne’s mode of speaking. Saying that “[b]oiled pork and greens are so unromantic” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 87) sounds quite preposterous and thus, creates a comical scene.

A lot of children's books written in the nineteenth century often portray female characters raving about nature, female friends and life in general. As mentioned above, in some stories, female protagonists reject love relationships with men altogether and do not romanticize about marriage (Waterston 110). Girls in children's stories rather idealise female friends, natural phenomena and the world around them (Ferrall and Jackson 70-71). I would like to focus on these aspects in my discussion of the Anne Shirley book series.

4.2.2.1 Nature

Anne conveys her endless love for nature from the outset, as she is on her way to Green Gables and catches sight of the avenue. Anne is convinced that words like 'pretty' or 'beautiful' are insufficient to describe this scenery and enthusiastically exclaims: "It's the first thing I ever saw that couldn't be improved upon by imagination. It just satisfied me here – she put one hand on her breast – it made a queer funny ache and yet it was a pleasant ache" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 21-22). Especially for a child, Anne uses an odd and excessively sentimental way of describing her feelings about nature. At the beginning of the story, the reader realizes that Anne will love her future home Avonlea with all her heart and that she admires and values the gorgeous scenery around her.

Throughout the story, Anne treats all natural phenomena around her like living beings. In the second chapter of the first book, she compares a tree to a bride and is overwhelmed by its beauty. The girl believes that beautiful objects occurring in nature deserve beautiful names. This is exemplified in her belief that roses would not smell as good or be so beautiful if they were called thistles (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 37-38). She believes that every natural object should be given a personal name, such as "Snow Queen" for a tree, because it might have feelings too (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 135). The protagonist tries to convince Marilla of her romantic point of view by means of the following argument: "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" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 35). Anne thinks nature should be appreciated and treated as if it had a soul just like human beings. She perceives natural objects as friends and vocalises her deep love for them in several passages of the book. "'How dear the woods are! You beautiful trees! I love every one of you as a friend.' Anne paused to throw her arm about a slim young birch and kiss its cream-white trunk" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 74). Delighted by her surroundings, Anne renames the avenue to "the White Way of Delight" and Barry's pond to "the Lake of Shining Waters" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 22).

In addition to giving natural objects individual names, the girl also greets them and says good night to them (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 23). Anne immediately embosoms these items and expresses her deep affection for them. She is overly struck by what nature has to offer and values it as if it was an actual human being with actual feelings. Even as she grows older, Anne still treats natural objects as if they were her friends and she still finds comfort in them. In *Anne of Avonlea* (Montgomery 101) the female character states her belief that it would be delightful to be born in spring with the flowers in full bloom.

Before moving to Green Gables, Anne had a lonely childhood and often sought comfort in nature. When feeling gloomy, the beauty of nature has always been able to raise her spirits. In *Anne of the Island*, for example, the main character feels at ease around the pines in the park: "It is so comforting to creep away now and then for a good talk with them. I always feel so happy out here. […] I think, if ever any great sorrow came to me, I would come to the pines for comfort" (Montgomery, *Island* 45-46).

In contrast to Anne, Marilla is indifferent to nature's beauty and perceives Anne's feelings as pathetic. "Marilla, look at that big star over Mr. Harrison's maple grove, with all that holy hush of silvery sky about it. After all, when one can see stars and skies like that, little disappointments and accidents can't matter so much, can they?" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 148). While Anne is overwhelmed by this beautiful scenery, Marilla does not show any emotions at all. She remains reasonable and refuses to be distracted by the beauty which caught Anne's attention. This scene distinguishes

Anne's romantic perception of nature and Marilla's contrasting apathy. Towards the end of the first novel, the main character reflects that Marilla is a very sensible and thus probably better person than her. In spite of this insight, Anne does not want to become a sensible woman as she does not want to lose her sense of romance (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 171).

Not only does Anne exhibit tenderness for her surroundings, she often expresses her special bond to nature. She often recites poems, which emphasize her romantic perception of nature. Observing the brook in chapter thirteen of the second novel, Anne even 'sees' a poem (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 109): "There. . .down in the brook. . .that old green, mossy log with the water flowing over it in those smooth ripples that look as if they'd been combed, and that single shaft of sunshine falling right athwart it, far down into the pool. Oh, it's the most beautiful poem I ever saw." Unlike the other girls, Anne believes that poems have souls and do not just consist of lines and verses. Epperly (24) points out that her perception and romantic way of speaking illustrate "how she has been shaped by early reading of sentimental and chivalric poems and stories." Such poetic descriptions indicate that the female protagonist respects and truly adores the natural world.

Apart from citing poetic texts to romanticize nature, poetry has always given Anne feelings of comfort, especially during her unhappy days of childhood. Before coming to Green Gables, she did not have a very romantic or lovely time, and so she constantly sought consolation in her beloved poems (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 37-39). Anne's great knowledge about poetry and the fact that she is able to recite poetic texts is very unusual for a child. The reader does not regard her emotional attachment to poems as very plausible and understands her behaviour to be exaggerated and dramatized. Maybe the author wishes her main character to be highly sophisticated and wants her to be attracted to poetic diction. However, this unconditioned love for poems is not a realistic feature of a little girl with her background and the reader has troubles to accord credibility to the female protagonist in this aspect.

Anne is able to fully express her feelings by comparing them to nature. When discussing love and marriage, for example, she replaces human beings with natural

objects: “Yes, this was romance, the very, the real thing, with all the charm of rhyme and story and dream. It was a little belated, perhaps, like a rose blooming in October which should have bloomed in June; but none the less a rose, all sweetness and fragrance, with the gleam of gold in its heart” (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 256). Anne uses this horticultural metaphor to refer to Mr. Irving, who returns for Miss Lavendar after many years of separation. The protagonist senses the characters’ reciprocal love and is very excited about their reunion. Anne’s occasional comparison between people and nature may be a symptom of her close bond with nature. This bond and her rhapsody are quite uncommon features of female citizens in nineteenth-century Canada. Åhmansson (51) elucidates that Canadian nature was primarily regarded as harsh wilderness. People, like Montgomery, had to face the difficulties that came with living surrounded by nature every day. They did not rhapsodize about their environment but considered it as a challenge to survive (Åhmansson 51).

4.2.2.2 Outlook on life

Anne grows attached to people and objects very quickly. Marilla, with her sensible views, warns Anne not to get too excited and to keep her emotions under control. Marilla rarely shows her feelings but keeps them to herself. Thus, she appears indifferent, uncaring and unfriendly. Although she has troubles revealing her feelings, it becomes clear that Marilla truly loves Anne. Anne, in comparison, has a frivolous manner, which sometimes results in disappointment. However, she believes that the excitement and delight before a possible let-down is worthwhile:

> When I think something nice is going to happen I seem to fly right up on the wings of anticipation; and then the first thing I realize I drop down to earth with a thud. But really, Marilla, the flying part *is* glorious as long as it lasts . . . it’s like soaring through a sunset. I think it almost pays for the thud. (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 147-148)

Even if her inclination of getting enthusiastic very easily might lead to disappointment, Anne does not want to change her behaviour. The feeling of delight, which she describes in a highly romantic way, is something irreplaceable for her.

In *Anne of Avonlea*, Anne's wild enthusiasm and romantic views change due to growing up and the people around her, but she also influences and changes other people. Anne and Marilla often stand in contrast to one another. Anne's innocence is portrayed in juxtaposition to Marilla's life experience and wisdom. For example, in *Anne of Green Gables* (Montgomery 81), Marilla advises against getting excited about upcoming events. Anne, however, persuades her to also accept and value different perceptions of life instead of disregarding them (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 148). After some time Marilla grows to appreciate Anne's approach to life and Anne indirectly teaches her to take more pleasure in the here and now. Through the girl's influence, Marilla develops a sense of enthusiasm and a solution to the monotony of her repetitive activities. "Marilla [feels] that out of her sixty years she had *lived* only the nine that had followed the advent of Anne" (Montgomery, *Island* 148). Anne's exuberant nature brings joy and vitality to Green Gables and to her new family members.

Anne's positive thinking enables her to enjoy life to the fullest. The girl cherishes every part of her life and draws on the positive aspects from sorrowful events. She mentions that she is "sure no life can be properly developed and rounded out without some trial and sorrow" (Montgomery, *Island* 46). Anne's optimism, as well as the strength and maturity she gains from her experiences, is a positive feature and encourages her to develop into a confident young woman. Canadian women in the nineteenth century were usually limited and discriminated by societal norms. Therefore, they often became unhappy and discontent with their life. Women like Montgomery had to live up to female expectations during that time. Thus, they could often not see the bright side of life anymore and grew rather pessimistic (Merritt 148-150). Taking Anne's optimistic views on life into account, it becomes clear that she differs from the common Victorian woman in Canada.

4.2.2.3 Female friendship

Along with nature her close friend Diana holds a special place in Anne's heart. A number of children's books suggest that female friendships are much more important and essential than finding true love and marrying one's dream man. Often

relationships between girls are illustrated as being romantic, intimate and unique, quite distinct from love between a man and a woman (Ferrall and Jackson 85). In this book series the special bond between Anne and Diana is celebrated and reflects the above-mentioned essential female friendship of Victorian times.

Before being introduced to Diana, the protagonist eagerly asks Marilla: "[D]o you think that I shall ever have a bosom friend in Avonlea? […] – an intimate friend, you know – a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my inmost soul. I've dreamed of meeting her all my life" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 53). Anne does not long for a man but rather for a female soul mate in whom she can confide. As a result of her friendless childhood, Anne is overwhelmed when she meets Diana and immediately wishes to stay friends with her forever. Both girls are extremely happy about their newly developed friendship and they promise each other eternal love and loyalty. Anne, who takes this matter very seriously, is the first one saying the following oath, which she conceived herself: "I solemnly swear to be faithful to my bosom friend, Diana Barry, as long as the sun and moon shall endure" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 76). This oath illustrates Anne's highly romantic perception of friendship and reveals how important it is for her to keep Diana as her best friend. At the end of the second novel, *Anne of Avonlea* (Montgomery 237), there is a sentimental moment where Anne reflects on how her best friend has changed her life for the better: "When I came to Green Gables everything was changed. […] You don't know what your friendship meant to me. I want to thank you here and now, dear, for the warm and true affection you've always given me."

Anne loves Diana for her personality as well as her appearance. She is delighted by Diana's hair, her soulful eyes and by her beautiful figure (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 77). The protagonist talks about and adores her friend as if she was in love with her. The girls would do almost everything for each other and cannot bear to be parted from one another. Anne, however, is terribly afraid of losing Diana once she is grown up and gets married and, therefore, resolves to hate Diana's future husband no matter how wonderful he will be (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 102). The two girls even consider not marrying at all, but living happily together as maids (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 198). At the beginning of the story neither of them cares about men or about becoming a proper wife and mother. Their determination to remain unmarried

brings to mind that women could indeed lead a happy life without any male interference. During the nineteenth century, women were expected to marry and bear children as soon as possible. In fact, being a wife and mother was considered the main duty for the female sex (Rubio and Waterston 12). In *Anne of Green Gables*, however, men only play a minor role. In the first part of the book series the only scenes of intimacy or romance are between Anne and Diana and not between a girl and a boy.

The two girls spend every free moment together and are inseparable from one another. Therefore, it comes as a real tragedy when Mrs. Barry forbids Diana from seeing Anne after an unfortunate incident. Mrs. Barry is convinced that Anne made her daughter drunk intentionally and thus, she demands that the two girls go their separate ways from now on (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 109). Both girls are profoundly depressed as a result of this unfortunate situation and they bitterly sob and cry when saying goodbye to each other. Their farewell is accurately described by Anne through her characteristic dramatic and romantic manner (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 113): “Fare thee well, my beloved friend. Henceforth we must be as strangers though living side by side. But my heart will ever be faithful to thee.” After their sentimental parting, Anne returns home and laments her tremendous loss. She explains to Marilla that she will never have another friend again and that she cannot even find comfort in her imaginative friends anymore now, because “dream girls are not satisfying after a real friend” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 113). After Anne proves to Mrs. Barry that she is a sensible girl, the two girls are allowed to see each other again and they are overwhelmed with joy about their reunion (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 123-125).

Somewhat later in the story Anne is about to attend college and Diana becomes very jealous and is afraid of losing her best friend to someone else. Anne reassures Diana that she loves her more than ever and could never replace her with another friend (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 235). Touched by Anne’s words, Diana promises her friend that she could never love someone half as much as she loves her (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 238). Various aspects of their female friendship, which even involves physical contact, can be compared to a traditional romantic relationship. When Diana tells Anne that she loves her for the first time, the protagonist of the story is thrilled: “I

thought you *liked* me, of course, but I never hoped you *loved* me" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 112). Anne can hardly believe her luck and is overly happy and grateful for this kind of love, which she has never experienced before.

These confessions of love are usually only found in a relationship between a man and a woman. The author abandons these limitations and shows that two women can have a relationship just as dearly and affectionate. Apart from holding hands, Anne and Diana hug, kiss and even caress each other. Once, they even undress in front of each other and snuggle up under the blanket (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 130-131). Similar to in other female friendships, this intimacy does not indicate that the girls are lesbian. It rather serves to highlight the irreplaceability of same-sex relationships. Although Anne and Diana's friendship slightly changes with time due to the latter's marriage, they still love each other and their special bond is illustrated throughout the whole story. In *Anne of the Island* (Montgomery 114), Anne reassures Diana that she is the "sweetest and truest friend in the world."

Anne's love for her female friend paints her as a girl, and later young woman, with a typical Victorian female identity. Robinson (*Sex Matters* 170) reveals that intense feelings among Canadian women in the nineteenth century were normal as they had a strong emotional connection with one another. Montgomery, too, declared that "her primary emotional sustenance came from her female friends" (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 170). In Victorian times women supported each other and embraced intimate bonds with their female friends (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 172). According to Robinson (*Sex Matters* 170), Canadian women who enjoyed same-sex relationships frequently reported their passionate love and physical affection for one another. Considering these social norms regarding friendships among Victorian females, it becomes apparent that Anne celebrates and values her friendship with Diana in a similar manner. Thus, in regards to female friends, the protagonist's attitudes depict her as an exemplary Canadian woman during the Victorian times.

4.2.3 Anne's ideas on marriage and love

The ideal image of a nineteenth-century woman entailed being married and, thus, most Canadian female citizens were expected to have, and indeed had, a husband during that time (Dillon 453). Women who did not have an ideal life and a happy marriage were sometimes looked down upon by the public (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174). The Anne Shirley book series deals with different perceptions of marriage and love and also compares different attitudes towards married life.

Anne, as a general rule, does not approve of marriage and is uninterested in a love relationship. She strives against the "prospect of living happily ever after as wife and mother […] and remains […] the embodiment of the desire for freedom, self-expression, and intense, private responses to life" (Waterston 116). The protagonist wants to be independent and, unlike other female characters, she is not in the least concerned by the other sex. In her opinion marriage only has negative effects on people and she does not see any benefits in a legal commitment of love. In fact, she moans "how horrible it is that people have to grow up–and marry–and *change!*" (Montgomery, *Island* 179).

Anne is unsettled when her friend Diana gets engaged. She is afraid that she can no longer confide her secrets to Diana because she will tell them to her husband. In *Anne of Green Gables* the protagonist is frustrated and feels certain that she will eventually lose Diana to her future husband. By saying that "Diana will get married and go away and leave [her]" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 102), the protagonist reveals her utmost anxiety. Following Diana's engagement, the girls' friendship changes slightly, leaving Anne discontent. The female protagonist feels neglected by her friend and fears she will be fully replaced by Diana's fiancé. Anne becomes impatient with the recurring conversations about Diana's upcoming marriage. She misses their joyful and 'irrelevant' talks and their childish, imaginative games. Anne comes to hate Diana's fiancé and the idea of marriage in general. Her negative attitude towards married life reveals that she is not ready yet to settle with a man but rather wants to enjoy the days of her youth on her own.

In the second part, *Anne of Avonlea*, several characters view marriage as a dreadful thing and say that one should avoid being ordered around by a bossy husband, for example (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 85). In *Anne of the Island* (Montgomery 31) one of Anne's girlfriends, Phil, explains that love is dangerous because "[b]eing in love makes you a perfect slave […] [a]nd it would give a man such power to hurt you." Several characters share this, for Victorian times, progressive and feminist view of marriage. They declare that on top of being submissive to a husband, married women are always expected to act in a serious and reasonable manner. To illustrate this view, Phil states: "I really [hate] the thought of being married for a few years yet. I want to have heaps of fun before I settle down" (Montgomery, *Island* 31). The girl wants to enjoy and take advantage of her carefree life before getting involved with any duties and responsibilities that come with being a proper wife.

In the first book, when Gilbert is introduced, the reader assumes that Anne might develop feelings for him. However, after Gilbert insults Anne by calling her "Carrots! Carrots!" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 95), she begins to hate and avoid him. She is outraged and insulted by his impertinence. Although Gilbert apologizes to Anne several times and clearly regrets his insensitive actions, she remains stubborn and does not forgive him: "It's nothing to me what that person does […] I simply never waste a thought on him" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 170). These words paint Anne with a touch of arrogance and one does not sympathize with her enduring rage. In fact, the reader disapproves of Anne's behaviour which is overly dramatic and childish.

Only at the end of *Anne of Green Gables* (Montgomery 252-253), does the female character finally condone Gilbert's offense and the schoolfellows become friends. They have a joyful talk when walking home together and Anne glows with happiness when she enters the house. When Marilla asks her about Gilbert, Anne is "vexed to find herself blushing" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 253). This sign of affection might suggest a possible love relationship between Anne and Gilbert in the near future. In the continuing story, however, Anne does not see a lover in Gilbert and considers him only as a loyal friend. Even though the reader discovers her signs of affection for Gilbert, the protagonist suppresses and refuses to recognize these feelings. When being asked about Gilbert, Anne states that she only cares for him "ever so much as

a friend and not a bit in the way [Diana] mean[s]" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 235). Although the protagonist thinks that Gilbert is very handsome, he cannot arouse her interest, for "he [doesn't] look at all like her ideal man" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 167). Anne is so concentrated on the man of her dreams, with all his perfect qualities, that she does not recognize her affection for Gilbert.

In contrast to Anne, Gilbert is sure of his feelings and exhibits his fondness for Anne openly. He pays her compliments and verbalises his adoration for her appearance as well as her character traits. However, every time he tries to say something sentimental, the protagonist gets angry and abruptly switches to a less 'nonsensical' topic. Anne is persuaded that Gilbert's confessions of love can only be detrimental to their friendship. She is vexed about the fact that "[s]omething alien ha[s] intruded into the old, perfect, school-day comradeship–something that threaten[s] to mar it" (Montgomery, *Island* 5-6). Several people, including Mrs. Lynde and Diana, presume that Anne and Gilbert will be a perfect couple one day. Naturally, Anne resents the predictions that Gilbert would make her a happy and satisfied wife. When she smashes Gilbert's last hopes of falling in love with him he announces that he will never bother her again. Although Anne always thought that a mere comradeship is all she wanted, she feels terribly sad, as if she has lost something very precious belonging to her life (Montgomery, *Island* 142).

While a few characters in the story disapprove of marriage and believe that a husband is just an unnecessary inconvenience, the majority of the characters are in favour of the nuptial tradition. In *Anne of the Island*, many inhabitants of Avonlea, like Mr. Harrison, advise Anne to get married as soon as possible and not to wait too long: "I don't believe in putting marrying off too long–like I did" (Montgomery, *Island* 92). In this instance, Mr. Harrison can be considered an example of the members of the community who encourage Victorian traditions. It is brought to mind that the unwed Mr. Harrison might not lead a happy life and might feel lonely because he has nobody to care for him (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 149). This exemplifies that a marriage partner enriches people's lives and prevents the feeling of loneliness. Additionally, it is brought to mind that married life is beneficial in shaping one's personality. In *Anne of Avonlea* (Montgomery 241), Davy ascertains that "getting married makes folks nicer," emphasizing that marriage is something worth striving for.

At a later point in the story Anne slightly alters her perception of marriage and acknowledges that it "can't be so very terrible when so many people survive the ceremony" (Montgomery, *Island* 180). The protagonist might realize that love relationships are not merely detrimental but also comprise positive aspects. However, one cannot be certain if Anne's observation aims to be serious or sarcastic. Her assertion about settling down has a comical effect as she does not cherish the idea of marriage but merely remarks that one is able to live through it. This humorous scene demonstrates that Anne might not yet be ready for a love relationship but still needs time to get adapted to the idea of wedded life.

In contrast to other characters, the female protagonist has a specific ideal of love in her head, which is almost impossible to fulfil. While she imagines a fairy tale like courtship phase for herself, Marilla regards courtship as a simple and plain issue. These diverse perceptions become visible when Stephen Irving, Paul Irving's father, finally comes back for his childhood sweetheart, Miss Lavendar:

> Prince Charming is coming tonight. He came long ago, but in a foolish moment went away and wondered afar and forgot the secret of magic pathway to the enchanted castle, where the princess was weeping her faithful heart out for him. But at last he remembered it again and the princess is waiting still . . . because nobody but her own dear prince could carry her off. (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 258)

This description shows that the protagonist of the story, in her typical romantic way of speaking and seeing things, maintains a childish perspective of marriage.

During her childhood, Anne imagined her wedding proposal to be unique and wonderful. After receiving several proposals from various suitors, the protagonist admits that the image of the ideal proposal she had envisioned was not a realistic one. In her disappointment she asks herself if "anything in life […] [is] like one's imagination of it" or if it is all a "disillusion of childhood" (Montgomery, *Island* 223). Anne is shocked by her first proposal experience when Jane asks her if she wants to marry her brother Billy Andrews (Montgomery, *Island* 58-59). After rejecting another proposal from Sam, Anne wonders if all proposals have to be so horrible and unromantic (Montgomery, *Island* 199-200).

The main character of the story does not want to settle with just any man and believes that she will someday discover the man of her dreams. When Diana asks her if she ever wants to get married, Anne's response is: "[p]erhaps . . . some day . . . when I meet the right one" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 235). This indicates that Anne is not in a hurry to settle down any time soon. Diana does not share Anne's idea of love and marrying and wonders how one can identify the 'right' man. The protagonist of the story, however, explains that it should be evident when one's soulmate has entered one's life as all doubts should automatically be swept out of the way. But before that happens, Anne is unwilling to waste her time with other suitors. If the right man never enters her life, Anne would prefer to live on her own and "die an old maid" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 236). From a Victorian perspective, it would seem that Anne is unreasonable and unrealistic. In fact, her considerations and expectations seem to be part of a fairy tale and her dreams cannot possibly come true. Regardless, the female character stays adamant and does not care about other people's objections. Even when Diana brings to mind that people's ideals change from time to time, Anne stubbornly emphasizes that hers will not (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 235). The protagonist's somewhat naïve ideas may imply that she is still a child at heart and not mature enough to cope with a relationship.

After meeting Roy, the protagonist initially believes that she has found her dream man and begins a relationship with him. Roy is handsome, clever, rich and good, all qualities of a perfect husband. He possesses highly romantic features and proves his love to Anne by writing her poems and taking her to the most romantic spots. Even though Anne has always wanted her husband to be eloquent and poetic she longs for more humour, laughter and passion in her life. Not wanting to be misunderstood, Anne clarifies to Marilla that she "wouldn't want to marry anybody who was wicked, but [she] think[s] [she]'d like it if he *could* be wicked and *wouldn't*" (Montgomery, *Island* 177). The female protagonist wants her husband to have common, ordinary thoughts like everybody else, which also include 'wicked' thoughts. At the same time, however, Anne wants her husband to be well educated and show good manners in public. Although Roy's proposal is "beautifully worded as if he ha[s] copied it" (Montgomery, *Island* 223) and just how Anne had imagined it, she remains indifferent to his speech.

Anne realizes that she needs to adjust her idea of a perfect proposal. She comes to understand that it does not depend on the way a man proposes but on the man who proposes. Anne considers Roy's proposal to be unauthentic and empty rhetoric. Although she frequently expresses herself using romantic words, she comes to understand that poetic language cannot replace true feelings. Only when Gilbert is at risk of dying at the end of *Anne of the Island*, does Anne come to understand her true feelings for him. She is not satisfied with friendship anymore but longs for more. "The rose of love made the blossom of friendship pale and scentless by contrast" (Montgomery, *Island* 240). Anne is afraid that this revelation has come too late and she is overcome with sorrow. However, Gilbert's condition slowly improves until it is clear he will not die. In the last chapter of *Anne of the Island* (Montgomery 241-242), Gilbert proposes to Anne in a plain and simple manner. He admits to Anne that he does not have the means to spoil her. He can only promise her his eternal love and vows to her that he will never let her down. The female protagonist is not interested in wealth and other worldly goods. This final proposal is a testament to real love and Anne's acceptance demonstrates that she has matured and adapted her perception of marriage.

In comparison to Canadian women living in the Victorian era, Anne can be considered very lucky. It was by no means a given condition that women could marry a man they actually loved. Often they were forced by circumstances to marry a wealthy suitor who could support them financially. Women usually did not expect to find true love when entering into the bond of marriage and accepted the solely practical purpose of their relationships (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 174). In such cases the wife hardly ever really cared for her husband and did not lead a happy married life. In this period of time a lot of people married for convenience and could not freely choose their future husband (Prentice et al. 167-168). Unlike most Victorian women in Canada, Anne rejects the idea of marrying for practical reasons. Instead of contenting herself with a rich man she wants to marry someone she really loves.

In *Anne of Avonlea* (Montgomery 263), one of Anne's friends mentions that her aunt "has been married three times and she says she married the first time for love and the last two times for strictly business." Thinking about one of her suitors, Phil

remarks the following: “[H]e would do if he wasn’t poor. I must marry a rich man, Aunt Jamesina. That–and good looks–is an indispensable qualification” (Montgomery, *Island* 137). Mrs. Lynde, however, is convinced that money is not essential when choosing one’s marriage partner. In her opinion marrying for financial reasons is a big mistake and she emphasizes that a rich man will not make a woman happy if she is not in love with him. Another character, Miss Sarah, tells the story of her poor admirer. Although they loved each other, the woman obeyed her father and no longer saw her suitor (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 159). As in most Victorian families, the father was responsible for his daughter’s future. As mentioned above, Canadian girls living in the Victorian times simply accepted this unjust patriarchal hierarchy and conceded to their father’s final word (Townsend 80).

Montgomery delays the love relationship between Anne and Gilbert for as long as possible. This allows Anne to develop as an independent woman, who stays true to herself and to her own principles throughout the story. Epperly (38) points out that “Anne does not instantly swap the old tortured, chivalric romance ideal for the equally prescriptive romance of love and marriage.” The protagonist has interests which she values above love and marriage. Her perspective illustrates that being in a love relationship is certainly not the only, not even the most important purpose in a woman’s life. Even though marrying and bearing children was what every woman in the nineteenth and early twentieth century was expected to do and aspired to, it was not necessarily their personal priority in life. Aspects like female friendships etc. were often considered more important to a happy and fulfilled life (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 173). Some of Anne’s ideas on love and marriage are thus quite similar to those of the majority of Canadian women during the Victorian times.

Throughout the whole story the characters only exhibit certain signs of affection. As in most nineteenth-century children’s books, feelings of love are illustrated in an innocent kind of way. For example, when Anne’s feelings for Gilbert become known, Anne feels herself blushing while talking about Gilbert and their romantic conversation (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 253). Also in later parts of the story the protagonist “always blushe[s] hotly when any one sa[ys] anything about Gilbert Blythe” (Montgomery, *Island* 173). Upon receiving a letter from Gilbert, Anne’s heart gives a “queer, quick, painful bound” (Montgomery, *Island* 178). The protagonist feels

very nervous and her heart starts to beat wildly talking about the future with Gilbert at the end of the third book (Montgomery, *Island* 241). Furthermore, Anne also experiences some jealousy when she hears about Gilbert's relationship with another woman. She does not admit her jealousy explicitly but the reader notices it by her behaviour. After Anne is told that Gilbert will soon be engaged, "she [feels] her face burning. […] Her hands [are] trembling and her eyes [are] smarting" (Montgomery, *Island* 219). These examples illustrate that Montgomery applies a childlike, romantic approach to write about love relationships within the Anne series.

All of these descriptions reflect the innocence which is common in nineteenth and early twentieth-century children's literature published in different English-speaking countries (Ferrall and Jackson 78-79). Some might argue that Montgomery's depictions belittle and effeminate the reality of serious love affairs and claim that she only includes innocent and sentimental descriptions. However, these signs of affection might not be fully innocent but 'blushing', for instance, was a common sign and confession of love during that time. Åhmansson (69-70) points out that several critics complained about unrealistic portrayals of female characters in nineteenth and early twentieth-century fiction. They argue that authors, like Montgomery, completely neglected sexual interests or passionate feelings in their stories. However, one must consider that sexual aspects were completely omitted in any nineteenth and early twentieth-century literature (Åhmansson 70). In real life, discussing passion and sexual desire was frowned upon and most children received a poor sex education. Society in the nineteenth and even in early years of the twentieth century disapproved of people who discussed this taboo issue in public. Therefore, authors often had to adjust to such formalities and felt limited in their writing (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 177-178).

4.2.4 Work vs. play

The children's book series addresses the balance between work and fun in the Victorian era. Only those professions important for village life are dealt with in the story. In addition to life and work on the farm, Montgomery also mentions the jobs and functions of Avonlea's minister and teachers. Further jobs are not mentioned.

Women's duties are a focal point in all three books. While male characters are primarily occupied with duties outside the house, their female partners stay and work inside the house. Women are not only responsible for raising and looking after the children, but they also have to complete strenuous household chores. Marilla, for example, is depicted as a proper housewife, constantly cleaning, scrubbing the floor, doing the washing, cooking, and a lot more. All tasks are done very thoroughly and it is observed that "[o]ne could [eat] a meal off the ground without overbrimming the proverbial peck of dirt" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 9). In several passages in the story it seems as though the female characters compete against each other to have the cleanest and tidiest home of all.

Mrs. Lynde is portrayed as both a perfect housewife and an active supporter for Avonlea's church. She conducts "the Sewing Circle, [helps to] run the Sunday-school, and [is] the strongest prop of the Church Aid Society and Foreign Missions Auxiliary" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 7). Mrs. Lynde's community involvement is exemplary of the ideal Victorian woman. In nineteenth-century Canada many female citizens were voluntarily involved with the church. The church was the centre of the community and all respectable citizens attended church events regularly. Women dominated church membership and supported religious events and organizations (Clarke 277-278).

In the nineteenth century job opportunities for women were quite limited; thus, they usually worked as a domestic servant or as a teacher (Prentice et al. 134). Anne pursues the profession of a teacher and after receiving her licence she finds herself carrying out one of the most traditional jobs in the nineteenth century. Her first form of employment places Anne in the category of Canadian women with few prospects in their lives. At a later point in the story Marilla encourages Anne to use the money she has earned from teaching to further her education. The protagonist is given a onetime opportunity to go to Redmond College and she embraces the idea of gaining a higher education (Montgomery, 128-130). Although Anne is initially employed in a traditional job, she wants to prove herself to society and demonstrate her intellectual abilities. She enjoys being a teacher but her high ambitions and curiosity lead her to attend university.

Alongside work life, the story also deals with the joys of play. Anne is often lost in a fictional world and prefers to spend her time day-dreaming or playing imaginative games with Diana rather than working. When Anne is allowed to play outside she "[flies] to the door, face alight, eyes glowing" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 34). The girl's willingness to work is put into question, because she is so enthusiastic about playing. Marilla observes Anne and makes sure that she does not only fulfil her duties half-heartedly but that she washes the dishes properly, for instance (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 34). While keeping an eye on Anne, Marilla evaluates her eagerness to carry out a task and her working abilities. After some time she concludes that Anne is "smart and obedient, willing to work and quick to learn" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 49). However, Marilla also remarks that Anne sometimes fantasises too much and she criticizes the girl slipping into day-dreams too easily.

Although Anne regards duties as something positive she often feels the desire to play and is thus frequently faced with an inner conflict between fun and work. Instead of completing the household tasks thoroughly, the female protagonist makes quite a number of mistakes and gets into a lot trouble. At one point in the story she ruins a cake by adding a wrong ingredient (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 147-148). Anne is easily distracted by her vivid imagination, which often results in small disasters. That said, she knows how to react properly to the obstacles she faces. After hearing that Minnie May's life is at stake, Anne renounces her romantic and poetic attitude and her imaginative habits, and responsibly starts to "work with skill and promptness" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 121). By saving Diana's sister, she demonstrates her practical qualities and her ability to act wisely when necessary. The doctor praises her actions and addresses that "[s]he seems to have a skill and presence of mind perfectly wonderful in a child of her age" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 122).

Even though Anne is not a mother she is experienced in raising children and knows how to care for them. Before coming to Green Gables, she lived with a foster family who did not treat her very well and mainly used her as additional labour. In addition to fulfilling several exhausting household chores, Anne had to look after eight children. Still a child herself, this assignment demanded all her energy. Moreover, the excessive responsibility proved to be a great burden to her (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 38-39). Devoting all her energy and time to the kids, Anne quickly learned

and honed her skills as a proper and suitable wife and mother. In the second part of the book series, the female character exhibits her motherly competence again. She supports Marilla and helps her raising Davy and Dora, Marilla's adopted twins. Anne has a good rapport with children and knows how to communicate with them. Marilla is very thankful for Anne's assistance and experience.

In former times, farm tasks and areas were clearly divided between men and women (Prentice et al. 121-122). *Anne of Green Gables* illustrates that women were generally bound to the house and mainly stayed inside, while most of the work done outside belonged to the range of duty of the male family members. In the novel Marilla is responsible for the household chores and for bringing up the girl, tasks traditionally attributed to the mother or wife. In contrast, Mathew is in charge of all the physically demanding work and looking after the barn. These roles have clear boundaries and their assignment seems quite stereotypical. Because the Cuthberts would have needed a boy to help Mathew on the farm, Marilla is initially opposed to adopting Anne. She argues that a girl cannot fulfil the physically demanding tasks and does not see any point in keeping the orphan. Only when Mathew brings to mind that they "might be some good to her" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 30), does Marilla reconsider the situation.

Afterwards, Anne proves to be a useful assistance inside the house. Marilla tries to teach Anne women's tasks, which, in the nineteenth century, included cooking, cleaning, doing the laundry, and sewing (Prentice et al. 121-122). Anne is obedient and does as she is told but she sometimes remarks that several assignments are quite monotonous and she misses the romance in them (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 79-80):

> I do *not* like patchwork, […] I think some kinds of sewing would be nice; but there's no scope for imagination in patchwork. […] But of course I'd rather be Anne of Green Gables, sewing patchwork, than Anne of any other place with nothing to do but play. I wish time went as quick sewing patches as it does when I'm playing with Diana, though.

It becomes clear to the reader that Anne prefers playing with her friend to needlework. However, she accepts all kinds of duties and tries to fulfil all the expectations because she feels grateful for having been adopted by the family. In fact, she would submit to anything because she finally feels at home at Green

Gables. While Marilla's priority is work, Anne at first is not concerned with tasks on the farm but has her mind set on playing. In the first novel Marilla teaches Anne the importance of business before pleasure (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 77). This proverbial saying is reversed in *Anne of the Island* (Montgomery 203-204) where the girls believe it is better to spend time outside playing first and then go to work with fresh energy and enthusiasm.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, more and more girls and women from Canada started to work as a teacher in public schools (Sager 202). Married women, however, were not considered to be suitable teachers for a long time, and people were convinced "that married women did not belong in the classroom as teachers" (Barman qtd. in Sager 209). Sager (205) additionally points out that considerably more women taught in urban areas which might indicate that people in rural places were not yet used to the idea of female teachers.

Mrs. Lynde does not approve of the fact that a woman, named Miss Stacy, is going to teach in Avonlea. She worries that this development is a "dangerous innovation" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 153). In contrast to Mrs. Lynde's conservative perspective, Anne is looking forward to having a female teacher and she is sure that the lessons taught by her are going to be just wonderful. The protagonist's ways of thinking are much more liberal in this respect. Miss Stacy proves to be a fantastic teacher and is a role model for many of her students. Anne is especially keen on Miss Stacy's way of teaching and aspires to become a teacher as well.

As Anne starts her teaching career, she is faced with several prejudicial complaints. One boy in her class claims that he does not enjoy her lessons and that he would rather have a male teacher again. In his opinion "girl teachers are no good" and will never be able to teach well (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 51). Anne, however, tries to ignore his narrow-mindedness and is determined to win his approval with kindness and patience. Anne's way of teaching is quite different from the common teaching methods at that time. While another teacher, Jane, supports a good whipping for bad behaviour, Anne is strictly opposed to this kind of punishment. Mr. Harrison is convinced that pupils need to be whipped from time to time and he says that only then will Anne succeed in managing the class. Anne, however, perseveres and

continues using her own, non-violent methods. She explains to Mr. Harrison that she "shall govern by affection" and will refrain from whipping her students (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 30). Anne's approach and her determination of winning the respect of her students through affection, is not really respected but rather disregarded. In fact, many people ridicule her efforts and her ideals as a good teacher.

While she is employed as a teacher, Anne is faced with new duties and responsibilities which she takes very seriously. The main character of the story has goals which she is determined to reach. She believes that one of her duties is to discover a pupil's good qualities and to develop them further. Some people, like Jane for instance, do not worry about being a good influence on their pupils. Instead, Jane aims to "earn her salary fairly, please the trustees, and get her name on the School Inspector's roll of honor" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 26). Anne has little interest in recognition for her accomplishments. Instead, she rather focuses on winning the love of her students by trying to be a person they can trust and rely on.

Anne finds her job very interesting and is happy not to suffer from the kind of monotony often associated with other jobs. Although teaching also includes various difficulties and can be strenuous, Anne enjoys her profession for the most parts. She remarks that "teaching has its pleasures as well as its pains" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 86). Teaching is portrayed as multifaceted, as a job in which one faces new challenges every day. Whereas Anne can enjoy the pleasant challenges of being a teacher, other women, like her mother, were expected to give up their jobs to look after the house and their husbands. Anne's "mother was a teacher in the High School, too, but when she married Father she gave up teaching, of course. A husband was enough responsibility" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 38). Canadian women living in the nineteenth century were usually expected to give up their working positions voluntarily in order to become proper wives and mothers (Merritt 94). Because Anne is capable of pursuing a professional career, she proves to differ from typical nineteenth-century women in Canada.

Some moments in Anne's career can be compared to Montgomery's own professional life. At the beginning of the first novel, Anne organizes a story club and proves to be a talented writer. Towards the end of the first book, however, she fully

turns away from the idea of publishing stories and is preoccupied with more serious matters, such as studying. She even remarks the silliness of “writing about love and murder and elopements and mysteries” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 211). Brennan (247) indicates that Lucy Maud Montgomery, too, had doubts about her writing skills. Montgomery initially started working as a teacher and most of the time she had no reason to complain about her job. However, she always had literary dreams and spent much of her free time writing stories or poems (Rubio and Waterston 28). After her first novel, *Anne of Green Gables,* was rejected by four publishing companies the author was discouraged and tried not to bother about the work anymore. Eventually, Montgomery decided to make one more attempt and sent the novel to an editor in Boston. L. C. Page Co. finally accepted her story and it got published in 1908 (Brennan 247).

Like Montgomery, Anne has an ambiguous attitude towards teaching. She is generally happy about working in school and enjoys spending time with her students. In *Anne of the Island* (Montgomery 90), however, the reader realizes that the protagonist is still tempted by the idea of gaining recognition as a writer when she sends one of her stories to a publishing company. Anne maintains her literary dreams but she fears failing and finds other people’s criticism quite discouraging. Therefore, she tries to keep her literary intentions private. To Anne’s despair her story, *Averil’s Atonement*, is rejected by two publishing companies (Montgomery, *Island* 91). She is quite frustrated and draws the conclusion that she is not capable of writing successful stories. She therefore decides to abandon her literary ambitions and to devote herself to a job she is officially qualified for: “I’ll stick to teaching. I *can* teach. I can’t write stories” (Montgomery, *Island* 92). Anne feels foolish and wishes to forget the matter.

However, at a later point of the story, the female character takes another chance and sends in a short draft. This new attempt reveals that despite her doubts about her writing skills and her proclamation not to write again, Anne has been occupied with literary thoughts ever since her story was rejected. The draft is accepted and the editor even requests to see more of her work. Anne is delighted and her “eyes [shine] all day; literary ambitions [sprout] and [bud] in her brain” (Montgomery, *Island* 211). With reassurance form her friends and family, the protagonist resolves to focus on writing.

Similar to Lucy Maud Montgomery, Anne is restricted by editors who expect stories to have a plot and a happy ending. Although Anne loves to put her ideas on paper she is sure they are inadequate for release, as they do not meet the publisher's plotline expectations. Furthermore, she wishes to write sad endings to her stories, but editors are rumoured only to approve of happy endings, such as marriage. Anne therefore adjusts her work according to the editor's wishes and expectations (Montgomery, *Island* 87). To some extent, Montgomery was also pressured by editors as well as readers into assimilating her literary works. For example, although she had not initially intended to, Montgomery included a love relationship between Anne and Gilbert. The author was expected to write a happy ending to her story, which meant Anne and Gilbert entering into the bond of marriage (Gubar 58). Like other female authors around the turn of the century, Montgomery was forced to add a wedding to her literary work if she wanted it to be published (Åhmansson 70). She reluctantly gave in but tried to delay the inevitable as long as possible (Gubar 60).

4.2.5 Religion

Religion is a very prominent theme in the three Anne Shirley novels. The importance of this theme reflects the significance of religion and the church in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. During that time many people, like Montgomery, were raised in a strict, conservative way and had to conform to rules set by their parents and society (Rubio 100-101).

The book series occasionally compares the traditional perspective to Anne's individual approach to religion. In one scene in *Anne of Green Gables*, the girl sees a holy picture of Jesus Christ surrounded by children. She likes the picture but she wishes that Christ would not look so sorrowful: "I don't believe He could really have looked so sad or the children would have been afraid of Him" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 52). The protagonist visualizes Christ as a cheerful person who enjoys interacting with other people. From her point of view, happy people who have a positive nature are best for imparting and conveying faith. Marilla, in contrast, has quite a different notion of religion. She is shocked by Anne's statements and warns

her not to be so irreverent about such important religious matters (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 52).

4.2.5.1 Praying

One issue that is brought into question is the typical way of praying during which one has to kneel down. As she is unacquainted with praying, Anne reveals that she is a non-Christian at the beginning of the story. At first Marilla is shocked of Anne's ignorance, but she soon realizes that the girl "kn[ows] and care[s] nothing about God's love, since she […] never had it translated to her through the medium of human love" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 47). This insight reflects how human beings are dependent on the love of other people. God's love can only be desired and requested once one has understood the concept of love and benevolence. As a faithful Christian, Marilla assumes it to be her duty to teach this "heathen" something about religion (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 48). In contrast to Marilla's attitudes towards religion, Anne perceives the practice of belief quite differently.

Instead of the traditional way of praying, Anne prefers her own method, which is much more natural and honest and comes from her heart. She explains to Marilla that she would rather go outside, look into the beautiful sky, and then "just *feel* a prayer" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 47). This scene suggests that it does not matter so much how or where one prays as long as it comes from the heart. Anne represents individual, modified praying methods, opposed to conventional ones during the nineteenth century.

Anne links religion to nature and feels closest to God when she is outside appreciating the world around her: "'The woods were God's first temples,' quoted Anne softly. 'One can't help feeling reverent and adoring in such a place. I always feel so near Him when I walk among the pines" (Montgomery, *Island* 171). This statement illustrates that Anne has a very individual, but certainly authentic connection to religion. Some people may be of the opinion that only the strict and stern religious traditions are appropriate. If at all, most people have the feeling that they are close to God only when attending church. Anne does not require this

essential link and is certain that nature is the perfect place to give her thanks to God. In various scenes Anne connects religion to nature, and thus, deviates from other people's conventions. First only being apparent in her romantic way of speaking, this bond becomes apparent when she enters church with a hat decorated with real flowers (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 73). Anne "is bringing her values into church and is helping revivify Avonlea religious services which have become stultified. […] The message to the congregation and minister – to apply their faith and not to let it stagnate – is one that Anne with her hat is visibly representing" (Sorfleet 181). This particular scene suggests that the protagonist's approach to religious matters is more personal than that of other people. Anne does not only gain religious education but with her unconventional approach she also transforms Avonlea's citizens and changes their one-sided perspective towards Christianity.

Another scene which proves that Anne has matured is her explanation regarding the necessity of daily prayers. Marilla tells Davy, whom she adopts, that something dreadful will happen to him if he does not pray before going to bed. Davy does not believe her and finds out that not praying has no consequences at all. Therefore, he does not see any sense in saying his prayers any longer. Anne reasons with him that terrible sins are not always apparent right away and convinces him to do as Marilla wishes (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 80-81). This explanation and rationality clearly illustrates the protagonist's development. Anne accepts and lives up to responsibilities and duties, which show that she is not a child anymore but that she has grown into a sensible young woman.

4.2.5.2 The holy day

As in the novel, Sunday was the holy day of the week and religious matters exclusively were appropriate on this day in nineteenth-century Canada. Only reading the Bible or attending sermons were approved on Sundays and people, including Montgomery, were prohibited to read any kind of story books or tales (Merritt 141-142). On Sundays, Marilla teaches Anne Bible verses, catechism and church songs which have to be learned by heart and recited afterwards. Furthermore, household chores on this holy day should be postponed to another day of the week. In *Anne of*

the Island (Montgomery 94), swearing is a dreadful sin, which will be punished by God, especially when done on Sundays.

Mrs. Lynde is a very religious person and she disapproves of people who devote themselves to matters other than religious ones on Sundays. She explains the importance of going to church on Sunday to Anne and complains about students who dismiss this custom: “I understand college students are great sinners in this respect. I’m told many of them actually study their lessons on Sunday. I hope you’ll never sink that low, Anne” (Montgomery, *Island* 39). This quote demonstrates that Mrs. Lynde is appalled by the audacity of not honouring the holy day. She warns Anne not to perform such a scandalous behaviour and disrespect her family.

These strict rules mentioned above illustrate that Sundays should be used exclusively to think about and carry out religious matters. Anne is aware that it is appropriate to talk about certain matters only, such as besetting sins, and she obeys to these strict regulations. Although she is obedient, Anne wonders why she is prohibited to think anything that comes to mind. While many adults claim that one can only think religious thoughts in connection with sermons and Sunday school lessons, Anne has a slightly different perception. The protagonist suggests that every beautiful idea, no matter what day it is or what it is about, is of religious character (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 244). Various passages in the novels clearly contrast old-fashioned manners and more modern, individual ways of thinking. The modern approaches are primarily represented by Anne. While these two different notions do not work against each other, Anne’s behaviour shows that they actually share the same intention (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 244).

4.2.5.3 The minister and his family’s duties

Another ambiguous issue is the minister’s nature. On the one hand, his character is praised, but at the same time derided. The majority of society respects and adores the minister. Anne, however, criticizes his monotonous, almost depressive way of preaching and his lack of imagination (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 71-72). Most people have the feeling that whatever the minister says must be true and that one

has to believe it because he is God's representative. Therefore, the minister's opinion is of utmost importance to a lot of people who want to behave well in front of him. Proper use of language in front of a minister seems quite important to most citizens from Avonlea and they would not dare to use any unholy expressions in his presence. "He was so earnest and tender and true. He was everything a minister ought to be" (Montgomery, *Island* 158). This quotation shows that ministers must be very serious, be concerned with graver matters and possess a lot of dignity. It is also suggested that once one becomes a minister, one relinquishes any fun in life in favour of more serious matters (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 143).

In the novels dealt with in this thesis, one can find quite a number of stereotypes associated with the minister and his family. Anne, for example, is convinced that it is a real honour to have Mrs. Allan, the minister's wife, as a friend. She believes that such an important person just has to be innately good and constantly looks up to this authority. Anne believes that "it's always wrong to do anything you can't tell the minister's wife" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 194). Mrs. Allan serves as a model for Anne and draws her to religion and Sunday school:

> Mrs. Allan said we ought always to try to influence people for good. She talked so nice about everything. I never knew before that religion was such a cheerful thing. I always thought it was kind of melancholy, but Mrs. Allan's isn't, and I'd like to be a Christian if I could be one like her. (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 144)

Mrs. Allan helps Anne realize that religious matters do not necessarily have to be boring and, thus, introduces a new perspective on faith to the girl.

Anne is a curious girl. Thus, she appreciates the fact that Mrs. Allan says that "she [doesn't] think it [is] fair for the teacher to ask all the questions" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 144). Anne has always wished to ask questions during her Sunday school lessons. Therefore, she is glad to hear Mrs. Allan's approach, which allows for her inquires. Before getting acquainted with the new minister's wife, Anne finds religion and Christian people to be rather melancholic. Mrs. Allan, however, shows Anne that it is possible to be serious about one's faith, but at the same time enjoy life and interacting with other people. The main character finds a role model in Mrs. Allan and adores her exceptional and warm-hearted personality.

However, the role of a minister's wife is portrayed as challenging. In Victorian Canada, a minister's wife was constantly observed by everyone and could not afford misbehaving in public. Montgomery, as a minister's wife herself, had to lead a life in which she constantly had to strive to meet other people's expectations (Merritt 148). The author outlines that being the wife of a minister entails various difficulties. In *Anne of the Island*, these high standards are also illustrated through the use of language. Being married to a minister demands refraining from slang expressions, such as 'dig in', and using proper language instead (Montgomery, *Island* 204). Furthermore, a minister's wife is supposed to wear conservative and sophisticated clothes. In *Anne of Green Gables* (Montgomery 142), the reader notices that people judge and criticize the minister's wife for being dressed too colourfully.

Another scene in which religious policy is questioned is when Anne is frustrated about the fact that women are not able to become ministers. She argues that this regulation is unjust and she is sure that certain women would prove to be good ministers as well. Other people find the idea of female ministers scandalous and hope that this regulation will never change (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 208). In the third part of the Anne series, "Mrs. Lynde [has] more time than ever to devote to church affairs and […] [flings] herself into them heart and soul" (Montgomery, *Island* 39). Anne is convinced that Mrs. Lynde could preach and lead a congregation as well as any male minister. She feels that women should be freed of this discrimination. This may very well reflect the author's opinion. In Montgomery's days, it was mostly women who were concerned with religious events and organisations. Female citizens did not only maintain social meetings but they also spent a lot of time to raise money for the church (Clarke 287-288). Montgomery's grandparents were steadfast Presbyterians and advocated strict religious conventions (Rubio and Waterston 18). Brennan (253) shows that Montgomery's religious beliefs differed from other people and that she sometimes seemed to question and even mock traditional customs and their necessity.

4.2.5.4 Attending church and Sunday school

In the books, various opinions about religion and attending mass are presented. Some characters, especially the younger ones, perceive church to be dull while others cherish it and could not proceed with their daily lives without the weekly service. Some passages in the books might give the reader the sense that Montgomery pokes fun of several traditional religious practices. She seems to imply that some religious habits and procedures should be modified because they are too strict. Attending church, for example, automatically evokes an uneasy feeling for some people, especially the young children. This is because one ought to think exclusively of sacred things in church. Furthermore, laughter and running around in church are not tolerated. Instead, children are supposed to behave themselves and listen to the minister quietly and attentively. In *Anne of the Island* (94) Mrs. Lynde warns Davy: “Don’t forget the Golden Text. Don’t lose your collection or forget to put it in. Don’t whisper at prayer time, and don’t forget to pay attention to the sermon.” Her warning illustrates how society may demand too much of children with regards to going to church. As a result, children may be intimidated by these instructions, and therefore, not appreciate mass. Therefore, some aspects of attending church could be made less strict, so that people could enjoy the church experience more easily and without any pressure put on them.

Lucy Maud Montgomery also seems to criticize, or at least question, some aspects of Sunday school. Both in real life during the Victorian times as well as in the novels, Sunday schools require a specific dress code. It is only after Marilla obtains suitable clothes that Anne is allowed to attend Sunday school (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 48). Åhmansson (90) points out that strict regulations during the second half of the nineteenth century, such as wearing sensible clothes, had to be fulfilled by people of all classes. In *Anne of Green Gables* all the children who attend Sunday school have to learn scriptural selections by heart. After Marilla asks Anne if she knows who God is Anne recites a text without really understanding what she is saying (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 46). This scene portrays criticism for learning prayers by heart without really understanding the message.

Anne's impressions of Sunday school are received with outrage by adults. She declares that the sermons are far too long and that the minister has too little imagination. Although Marilla would have never dared to say it out loud, she has to admit to herself that Anne is right and that she herself is often bored by the minister's way of preaching (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 71-73). The book conveys the message that children's outspokenness and honesty can be surprising and that one should not ignore their comments. Marilla never questioned the traditional methods of preaching. Anne also complains that she is not permitted to ask questions in Sunday school: "I don't think it was fair for her to do all the asking. There were lots I wanted to ask her" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 72). She feels that one should be comfortable in Sunday school classes and that asking questions should be encouraged instead of frowned upon. To some degree, Anne's frankness can be understood as model behaviour for the adult world. Her outspokenness illustrates that one should question traditional customs and old-fashioned manners instead of accepting all methods immediately.

From the discussion in this chapter it has become obvious that religion positively influences Anne and enriches her imagination and critical thinking skills. Furthermore, she also broadens the narrow view of Avonlea's citizens. Mrs. Lynde, for instance, who is known for her stern and strict religious beliefs, is positively influenced and her perspectives are slightly transformed by Anne. In all three novels, religion is illustrated to have a positive influence on the main character. At the same time, she reciprocally influences religious aspects in her community and challenges traditional and obsolete customs.

4.2.6 Education

In nineteenth-century Canada female education was considered of secondary value and very few women had the chance to attend college. The common perception was that higher education for women was useless and people often ignored their ambitions and intellectual interests (Åhmansson 115-116). Before coming to Green Gables, Anne had never been sent to school. As a result, she is extremely grateful for the opportunity to gain proper education. She turns out to be a talented student

and takes pleasure in learning. As a model student, she enjoys almost every subject and perseveres to obtain good grades. Anne is very ambitious and spends a lot of her free time on schoolwork: “She [flings] herself into her studies heart and soul, determined not to be out-done in any class by Gilbert Blythe” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 116). During the late nineteenth century educational competitions between girls and boys were very uncommon. While girls’ and women’s intelligence and skills were often ignored, people focused on and praised male accomplishments (Zipes 90). Anne sometimes even surpasses Gilbert and gains recognition for it. This rivalry distinguishes the female protagonist from a typical Victorian woman, who was seen as inferior to a man’s intellect.

Despite the community’s doubts concerning women and intellectuality, Anne proves herself as a smart young woman. She is determined to succeed in everything and to out-shine Gilbert while doing so. Anne’s intellectual curiosity and her self-discipline earn her special recognition (Montgomery, *Island* 218). She reflects on future challenges in the following way: “[I]t’s delightful to have ambitions. I’m so glad I have such a lot. And there never seems to be any end to them – that’s the best of it” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 232). Anne is happy about constantly being faced with new challenges and she is sure that her ambitious nature makes life much more interesting.

Because Anne is “the smartest scholar in school” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 118), her teacher recommends that she should apply to college. When Anne decides to stay at home to care for Marilla instead of pursuing a higher education, Mrs. Lynde approves and remarks that Anne has “got as much education now as a woman can be comfortable with. [She doesn’t] believe in girls going to college with the men and cramming their heads full of Latin and Greek and all that nonsense” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 250). Mr. and Mrs. Barry, too, do not believe women should attend higher courses and, therefore, they do not permit Diana to go to college (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 202). Mrs. Lynde even remarks that college “unfits them for woman’s true sphere” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 240). This common notion of higher education being dangerous for the female sex was pervasive until the end of the nineteenth century and women had to endure educational discrimination for a long time (Åhmansson 116).

Most people believed that a woman's priority was to get married and to look after her husband (Rubio and Waterston 12). In the Anne Shirley book series, various citizens advocate this tradition. Mrs. Andrews, for instance, discourages Anne from going to college by claiming that Latin and Greek will not do her any good when she is married. She believes that "[i]f they taught you at college how to manage a man there might be some sense in her going" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 252). Her view illustrates that most women were only occupied with getting married and settling down. In *Anne of the Island*, Aunt Jamesina does not completely disapprove of higher education for women but she feels that they first ought to learn how to do all of the household chores. Speaking of her daughter, Aunt Jamesina clarifies that "[she] taught her to cook *before* [she] let a college professor teach her Mathematics" (Montgomery, *Island* 170). Only after knowing how to run a household, should girls be given the possibility of attending university. These beliefs show that, in the late nineteenth century, women were often looked down upon after having received higher education and, therefore, attending courses at college was an extremely problematic matter for them. If women had the courage to pursue higher education, they rarely received any recognition for it (Zipes 90).

Anne tries to fight against this notion of female inferiority. She has to compete for recognition and her ambitious nature helps her to achieve all of her goals. University demands a great deal from the protagonist. She has to cope with the "steady grind of study" and she would sometimes "[study] until the world seem[s] azure" (Montgomery, *Island* 206). Anne demonstrates a lot of endurance and determination. Even though she feels discouraged and frustrated from time to time, she constantly tries to recollect that the results will be worth the great effort. Anne is aware of the strenuous work university holds for her. She knows that the high-level courses will not be easy and that "graduation honors must be fought for persistently" (Montgomery, *Island* 206). Her lack of intimidation regarding these high expectations demonstrates her ambitious qualities.

In order to motivate herself and other girls, Anne comes up with the following argument: "[T]hink of all the great and noble souls who have lived and worked in the world […] Isn't it worthwhile to come after them and inherit what they won and

taught?" (Montgomery, *Island* 207). Anne selects a few female paragons and emulates them and their accomplishments. She especially admires feminists who fought for women's rights and promoted female achievements. Anne is convinced that making an effort is always worthwhile. She believes that "next to trying and winning, the best thing is trying and failing" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 236), which shows her persuasion that one should always aim high and learn from one's experiences.

Anne's example proves to society that women can compete with men and that they are capable of completing college degrees as well. For the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the main character is definitely very well educated and she "appears to be encouraged to develop her potential, abilities and interests to the fullest" (Watson 39). Marilla is very supportive of Anne's plans for the future and she is also proud of her ambitions. Marilla generally advocates female higher education and believes "in a girl being fitted to earn her own living whether she ever has to or not" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 201). The reality of nineteenth-century Canada, however, did not look as bright but was the opposite: women could rarely count on assurance and were advised against attending university (Åhmansson 116).

After Mathew's death, Marilla is forced to sell the farmhouse because she cannot look after it on her own. Anne decides to support Marilla at home instead of going to college (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 249). Although the girl never regrets her decision and enjoys her time at Green Gables, she still wishes to broaden her horizons and longs for academic challenges. In the second half of the nineteenth century, it was taken for granted that women sacrifice themselves for others. They were expected to support their family members and neglect their own desires and ambitions (Brennan 251). Therefore, girls often did not have the choice whether they wanted to get a higher degree or not. Anne gives up her scholarship which was commonly expected of Victorian women. Åhmansson (125) points out that "[s]he does not, however, renounce her ambitions, they are only modified to suit the new situation." Thus, taking Anne's sacrifice of gaining higher education into consideration, the protagonist cannot be considered a traditional, submissive woman living in Victorian Canada. Unlike other women during this time, Anne does not fully

relinquish her educational prospects but only postpones them for an indefinite period of time.

In the second novel, Mrs. Lynde moves in with Marilla. Anne is finally able to attend college and to pursue her educational dreams (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 228-229). Anne admits that she aims to win a few prices and honors at Redmond College. However, she expects more from the courses and it is most important to her to gain "knowledge of the best way of living life and doing the most and best with it" (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 270). Her own professional career is not a priority to her but she rather wants to concentrate on how to improve life and help other people (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 270). Anne's attitude towards education portrays that she has a very modest character without being a bit egocentric. She remarks that she is "going to study and grow and learn about many things" (Montgomery, *Island* 8). These expectations are what college really ought to be about. Instead of bringing out self-centred individuals who lack social competence, college should teach people empathy and perseverance. With her attitude and her ambitious goals, Anne is on the right track of becoming both an excellent scholar and a well-rounded and kind person at the same time.

In the story quite a number of people express doubts about higher education for women and believe that the professors only teach "dead languages and geometry and such trash" and that some qualities, such as having common sense, can only be learned through experience (Montgomery, *Island* 216). Those in favour of education for women point out the benefits universities can offer. They believe that women should also have access to the important values and knowledge taught in universities. Therefore, one should further one's education if at all possible. Marilla, for instance, approves of girls completing studies for a degree and encourages Anne to attend college (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 228). Other characters, like Mrs. Bell, also approve of Anne's decision and are glad that she will eventually go to university (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 251). At first, Mrs. Lynde disapproves of Anne's intention of obtaining a higher degree. However, when Anne receives the title of a BA, Mrs. Lynde is very proud of her and praises the girl's achievements "with gloomy satisfaction" (Montgomery, *Island* 229).

After attending Redmond University for quite some time, Anne reflects on what she has learned so far and which lessons she has drawn from university. One aspect she appreciated at college was that she was taught how to overcome obstacles: “I really have learned to look upon each little hindrance as a jest and each great one as the foreshadowing of victory” (Montgomery, *Island* 217). She argues that university also taught her to be thankful and appreciative of the positive aspects in life. Due to Anne’s great efforts and achievements, she is offered the position of principal at Summerside High School (Montgomery, *Island* 222). Prentice et al. (135) point out that only very few women in Canada were offered promotions around the turn of the century, which emphasises Anne’s outstanding character, her intelligence and her educational background.

Anne seems to be an exception in women’s educational opportunities during the nineteenth century. While boys could attend school, girls were usually taught at home by tutors or older family members (Knoepflmacher 25). It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that most girls were permitted to attend school and their education was finally taken into account (Sager 222). Universities denied access to women for a long time and only a few women had the chance to further their education. Those women who strove for intellectual recognition were often frowned upon and their ambitions were devalued (Åhmansson 115-116). It becomes apparent that girls and women endured a long-lasting and exhausting struggle until they finally received educational equality. In the story, Marilla and Anne’s teachers encourage her to pursue her goals, particularly when she is given the rare opportunity to attend college. Unlike other Victorian women in Canada who suffered from educational disadvantages, Anne receives recognition for her studies and for her accomplishments.

4.2.7 Looks and appearance

Throughout the story, most characters are concerned with their own appearance as well as that of others. Anne worries a lot about how she looks and wishes to change certain aspects of her appearance. She imagines being beautiful without any faults. She wishes not to have freckles or green eyes. Furthermore, instead of being so

“dreadfully thin” she claims that she would rather be “nice and plump, with dimples in [her] elbows” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 17). Her biggest concern, however, is her red hair which she desperately wants to be auburn or raven black. Anne claims that she can never be perfectly happy because of the colour of her hair: “I can imagine that I have a beautiful rose-leaf complexion and lovely starry violet eyes. But I *cannot* imagine that red hair away. […] and it breaks my heart. It will be my lifelong sorrow” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 20). She often asks herself whether she would rather be “divinely beautiful or dazzlingly clever or angelically good” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 20). This shows that Anne is still a quite naïve girl not yet aware of the important inner values which really matter. She also pleads to God to “please let [her] be good-looking when [she] grow[s] up” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 48) while saying her daily prayers.

When Prissy Andrews remarks that Anne has “a very pretty nose” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 93), she is flattered and thrilled by this wonderful compliment. From then on she finds comfort in her nose and is very glad that it looks so nice. As she is pleased with her nose, she constantly draws attention to it and requests that other people comment on it. However, she also acknowledges that she might be a bit vain and reflects on her behaviour: “I’m afraid I think too much about my nose ever since I heard that compliment about it long ago. It really is a great comfort to me” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 173). Marilla does not encourage her vanity and thus withholds any compliments. Even though people marvel at Anne’s intelligence and believe that she is the smartest girl in school, Anne is still not satisfied with herself. She mainly worries about her outward appearance and even remarks that she would “rather be pretty than clever” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 94).

Anne is not just concerned with her own appearance but also with that of other people. She is very glad that her best friend Diana is pretty and has black hair instead of red one. Anne also adores her friend’s “soulful eyes” and wishes to have a figure like Diana’s instead of being so skinny (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 77). With great sensibility, Marilla points out that Diana is “good and smart, which is better than being pretty” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 53). In various passages of the book series Marilla places importance on different character traits than Anne does. After Marilla has seen the Premier, Anne is only interested in what he looks like. Marilla’s

candid response is that “he never got to be Premier on account of his looks” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 123). Marilla reminds Anne he is an eloquent orator, which is much more important, not only in politics, but in adult life in general.

Fashion was an important topic for females during the Victorian era. Characters in the story worry about the clothes they wear and want to appear fashionable. Again, Marilla’s attitude concerning fashion differs considerably from Anne’s. Anne insists on having a pretty dress with puffed sleeves. She argues that puffed sleeves are very fashionable nowadays and that every girl must have them. Anne does not want to look different from the others (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 69). She longs for chic clothes and envies her friends’ nice dresses. In contrast, Marilla is not interested in fashion and finds puffed sleeves ridiculous and useless. Instead, she makes Anne “good, sensible, serviceable dresses, without any frills or furbelows about them” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 69). After Anne receives the dresses that Marilla sews for her, she cannot hide her disappointment and acknowledges that they are not as pretty as she had hoped them to be. Upon being ridiculed by Marilla, she argues that she would “rather look ridiculous when everybody else does than plain and sensible all by [herself]” (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 69). Anne’s viewpoint seems to be very childish and superficial whereas Marilla’s view is sensible and mature. Marilla’s long life experience has taught her deeper values than paying attention to what one wears. When Mathew surprises Anne with a pretty dress, puffed sleeves attached, she can hardly believe her luck. This present means a great deal to the girl and she is overwhelmed by its exquisiteness. Marilla does not understand why Anne would need new clothes and thinks that making a new dress is a lot of unnecessary effort. Moreover, Marilla does not want to encourage Anne’s vanity and she warns Mathew not to spoil her (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 167-168).

Anne gets into a lot of troubles while worrying about her appearance. At one point of the story, she desperately wants to get rid of her red hair and accidentally dyes it green (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 180). However, Anne learns from her mistakes and she realizes that appearances are not all that important. From then on, she knows that she should not worry so much about her appearance but rather concentrate on her inner values. After her misfortune she remarks that “[she] mean[s] to devote all [her] energies to being good after this and [she] shall never try to be

beautiful again" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 182). As intended, Anne learns through experience and almost never thinks about her hair or her nose again. Anne's mistakes help her to devalue outward appearance and identify which factors really count in life.

It becomes obvious that Anne wishes to be one of Shakespeare's heroines when she requests to be called 'Cordelia', who is the heroine from his work 'King Lear'. In her opinion her real name 'Anne' is too unromantic; 'Cordelia' would be much more elegant (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 26-27). According to Davey (175), renaming herself indicates that Anne tries to "counter her orphanhood by linking herself to social and literary history." Thus, it becomes obvious that Anne renames herself because she wants to belong somewhere (Davey 176). Being called 'Cordelia', she would be part of the Shakespearean world. After Marilla refuses to call her 'Cordelia' Anne notes that "it's a million times nicer to be Anne of Green Gables than Anne of nowhere in particular" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 55). Having a home and belonging somewhere is more important than anything to Anne (Berg 125). Furthermore, the protagonist explicitly mentions that if people are adamant to call her by her real name, they should call her Anne spelled with an 'e'. Justifying her peculiar request, she says "it looks so much nicer. […] A-N-N looks dreadful, but A-N-N-E looks so much more distinguished" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 27). Worrying so much about the appearance of her name conveys the image that, at a young and naïve age, Anne is quite concerned about superficial matters and looks.

The female protagonist also considers other people's names and believes that one would be cursed with a name like 'Atossa', for example. Anne is sure that one must be cross about having such a terrible name (Montgomery, *Island* 82). In Anne's opinion one's name is of high importance and she believes that a beautiful name can simplify one's life. In contrast to Anne, Marilla does not believe in being called differently and reprimands Anne for her foolishness. Marilla believes that a person's name is not really important as long as he or she behaves. To console Anne, Marilla explains that "Anne is a real good plain sensible name" (Montgomery, *Green Gables* 26). In this scene the author juxtaposes Marilla's reasonable thinking with Anne's romantic approach to life.

At a later point of the story, the protagonist realizes that people themselves make their names ugly or beautiful. Anne comes to understand that the true value of a person lies in his or her personality and, consequently, is no longer frustrated by her plain name: “Living so that you beautify your name, even if it wasn’t beautiful to begin with . . . making it stand in people’s thoughts for something so lovely and pleasant that they never think of it by itself” (Montgomery, *Avonlea* 192). Anne esteems this way of thinking which is much more sensible. Her sudden insight is clear evidence of her growing maturity and shows that she has developed into an intelligent young woman.

Anne’s attitude towards superficial appearance at the beginning of the story can be seen as a typical feature of Victorian women living in Canada. Because they were constantly being judged by society, most women during this time were worried about their outward appearance and their behaviour in public. Therefore, the majority of female citizens conformed to late nineteenth-century dress codes and did not want or dare to dress differently from the commonality. They would only be acknowledged, instead of ridiculed, by members of society, if they accepted prescribed fashion standards (Spender 182-183). Even though Anne tries to adapt, she cannot be considered a Victorian ideal of beauty. In the late nineteenth century, red hair was not idealized but only dark or fair hair was considered beautiful (Howey, *Reading Elaine* 91). Thus, with her red hair, Anne is automatically excluded from the perception of beauty during the Victorian times.

As she grows up, Anne appreciates the true, inner values of a person more and more. The protagonist exemplifies how increasing numbers of women around the turn of the century became aware of what really matters in life. Focusing on factors other than appearances was a sign of female strength and independence. Evermore people emphasized that fashion was not “a desirable focus for women’s energy” and they criticized “the idea that women’s position in society could be reduced to the issue of dress” (Spender 185). It was probably already at this time that, with their progressive ideas and ambitions, a good share of women were on their way to independence. Feminists realized, for example, that appearance and clothes were of minor importance, as they could not improve women’s status in society (Spender 185).

5 Conclusion

In my thesis, I tried to analyse whether the main character of the story, Anne Shirley, can be considered an ideal Victorian woman or if she shows characteristic traits which differ considerably from the image of a typical woman during that time. Although the first trilogy of the Anne Shirley book series was published shortly after the turn of the nineteenth century, one can find various Victorian traditions and ideals concerning the characters and the situations they find themselves in. For analysing the main character in the book series the following seven aspects have been dealt with: attitude towards imagination, romantic ideas, love and marriage, work, religion, education, and appearance. These issues seemed to be of great importance and together they provided a clear idea of the personality of the female protagonist.

Various scholars have tackled this topic from a similar perspective before and came to similar conclusions as I have in my analysis. Howey (*Reading Elaine* 102), for instance, shows that Lucy Maud Montgomery confirms traditional Victorian conventions but, at the same time, she challenges some of the stereotypes during that time. With my thesis I want to make a contribution to this discussion of Victorian ideals in Montgomery's literary works.

During the Victorian times people were usually expected to conform to consisting regulations and ideals. Lucy Maud Montgomery, like other people, often experienced an inner conflict between conformity and individualism. On the one hand, she frequently tried to uphold her individual perceptions and questioned various Victorian ideals. On the other hand, however, with several issues she had no other choice but to adjust and adapt to the Victorian prototype. Similarly to the author, many people living around the turn of the century were confronted with discrepancies and had difficulties of finding the right balance between adjustment and originality.

Some of Anne Shirley's traits clearly portray her as a typical Victorian woman from Canada. Regarding her approach to several romantic ideas, her opinion on appearance and, to some degree, her religious sentiments, it appears that the protagonist's attitudes and perspectives match those of most female Victorian

citizens. Anne esteems her close relationship with Diana, which was quite ordinary among Canadian women in the late nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century, as female friendships were considered to be very important at that time. As mentioned above, women maintained intimate friendships with one another and proved to have passionate feelings for their female friends (Robinson, *Sex Matters* 170). Apart from female friendship, Anne reveals other qualities which were common among Canadian females during the Victorian era. Anne wishes to belong somewhere and, therefore, she conforms to some of Avonlea's traditions and conventions. Taking those two aspects and others that I dealt with in the thesis into consideration, I could conclude that Anne shows some typical features of an ideal Victorian woman.

Other features of Anne, however, strongly deviate from the ideal image of a proper Canadian woman in the Victorian times. Unlike most female citizens, the main character has an individual perception of marriage, love, work, education, and imaginative powers. She does not embrace traditional habits in these areas and does not conform to various ordinary Victorian ideas and conventions in Canada. The portrayal of the fictional character of Anne illustrates that some traditional rules and customs should be challenged and not simply accepted. Anne, as a girl, and later young woman, proves to be different and unusual. Her unique features, such as her imaginative powers, set her apart from the typical female ideal in the Victorian times. As analysed in my thesis, Anne proves that one should have individual ideals and always try to live up to them. She questions and rejects several traditional Victorian role models and ascribes unlimited capabilities to women. The Anne Shirley book series conveys and encourages the message that it is acceptable to be different from the commonality. The story and the main character illustrate that individual approaches and ideas are often beneficial and advantageous. According to Anne's characterisation atypical features, such as having a strong imagination, empower women and give them more self-confidence. These perceptions could be immensely useful and valuable for some female citizens in Victorian Canada as they came to understand that both individuality and conformity are important and essential in their lives.

Having compared Anne to the Victorian female prototype in Canada, it can be concluded that the main character is neither a prime example nor the complete opposite of the utopian Victorian woman. On the one hand, Anne respects and adopts many societal norms but, on the other hand, she also questions and rejects traditional customs. Although Anne is unusual and different from other people, she is not an opponent of her society and does not disregard Avonlea's citizens and their customs. The female protagonist primarily advocates her individual ideals and perceptions. In several passages in the literary works Anne experiences complete freedom and her own approach towards life is highlighted and praised. Other scenes, however, reveal that Anne's individuality is sometimes restricted and slightly disregarded by norms and other members of society. According to my findings, some of Anne Shirley's attitudes and perceptions portray the main character of the story as a common Canadian woman during the Victorian era. At the same time, however, in other aspects she is illustrated to deviate from the female prototype and occasionally differs from the Victorian ideal in Canada. Thus, Anne Shirley serves as an example showing how Victorian women were often confronted with the choice of combining both conformity and individualism in their lives or choosing one over the other.

I wish to conclude my thesis by quoting Robinson (qtd. in Stallcup 121): "*Anne of Green Gables* represents conflicting ideological movements–one stressing conformity for the heroine and one allowing agency–without resolving or reconciling them."

6 Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Ballontyne, R.M. *The Coral Island*. 1857. London: Dent, 1928.

Barrie, J. M. *Peter Pan*. 1904. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967.

Bennett, Mary. *The Canadian Girl; or, The Pirate's Daughter: A Story of the Affections*. 1838. London: J. Lofts, 1841.

Bowdler, H.M. *Pen Tamar; or, The History of an old Maid*. 2nd ed. London: Longman, 1831.

Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *The Secret Garden*. 1911. Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1912.

Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass*. 1865. New York: Bantam Books, 1981.

Green, Evelyn Everett. *Olive Roscoe*. 1896. London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1920.

Hart, Julia Catherine Beckwith. *St. Ursula's Convent; or, the Nun of Canada*. 1824. Ed. Douglas Lochhead. Ottawa: Carleton UP, 1991.

Marchant, Bessie. *A Daughter of the Ranges: A Story of Western Canada*. 1906. London: Blackie & Son, 1925.

Marryat, Frederick. *The Settlers in Canada*. 1844. The Project Gutenberg, 2008. 20 April 2015 <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/24211/24211-h/24211-h.htm>.

Meade, L.T. *A Sister of the Red Cross*. 1900. The Project Gutenberg. 2014. 20 April 2015. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/47705/47705-h/47705-h.htm>.

Molesworth, Mary Louisa. *The Cuckoo Clock*. 1877. London: Macmillan, 1933.

Montgomery, Lucy M. *Anne of Green Gables*. 1908. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987.

-----. *Anne of Avonlea.* 1909. Toronto: Seal Books, 1984.

-----. *Anne of the Island.* 1915. Toronto: Seal Books, 1983.

-----. *Emily of New Moon.* 1923. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001.

Rossetti, Christina. "Goblin Market." *Goblin Market, the Prince's Progress and Other Poems*. 1862. London: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1913.

Tennyson, Alfred Lord. "Lancelot and Elaine." *Idylls of the King*. 1859-1885. The Project Gutenberg. 1996. 20 April 2015. <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/610/pg610.html>.

Todd, Margaret Georgiana. *Mona Maclean, Medical Student*. 1894. Charleston, South Carolina: Nabu Press, 2012.

Wiggin, Kate Douglas. *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*. 1903. The Project Gutenberg. 1996. 20 April 2015. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/498/498-h/498-h.htm>.

Secondary Sources:

Åhmansson, Gabriella. *A Life and Its Mirrors: A Feminist Reading of L. M. Montgomery's Fiction*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1991.

Backhouse, Constance B. "Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth-Century Canada." *Law and History Review* 6 (1988): 211-257.

Berg, Temma F. "Anne of Green Gables: A Girl's Reading." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 13 (1988): 124-128.

Brennan, Joseph Gerard. "Classics Revisited: The Story of a Classic: Anne and After." *The American Scholar* 64 (1995): 247-256.

Careless, Virginia A. S. "L. M. Montgomery and Everybody Else: A Look at the Books." *Windows and Words: A Look at Canadian Children's Literature in English*. Ed. Aïda Hudson and Susan-Ann Cooper. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2003. 143-174.

Clarke, Brian. "English-Speaking Canada from 1854." *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*. Ed. Terrence Murphy. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1996. 261-360.

Davey, Frank. "The Hard-Won Power of Canadian Womanhood: Reading *Anne of Green Gables* Today." *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture*. Ed. Irene Gammel and Elizabeth Epperly. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999. 163-182.

Darroch, Gordon. "Domestic Revolution and Cultural Formation in Nineteenth-Century Ontario, Canada." *The History of the Family* 4 (1999): 427-445.

Devereux, Cecily. "'Not One of those Dreadful New Women': Anne Shirley and the Culture of Imperial Motherhood." *Windows and Words: A Look at Canadian Children's Literature in English*. Ed. Aïda Hudson and Susan-Ann Cooper. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2003. 119-130.

Dillon, Lisa. "Women and the Dynamics of Marriage, Household Status, and Aging in Victorian Canada and the United States." *The History of the Family* 4 (1999): 447-483.

Epperly, Elizabeth R. *The Fragrance of Sweet Grass*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992.

Ferrall, Charles, and Jackson, Anna. *Juvenile Literature and British Society, 1850-1950: The Age of Adolescence*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Fest, Karin. "Angels in the House or Girl Power: Working Women in Nineteenth-Century Novels and Contemporary Chick Lit." *Women's Studies: An interdisciplinary journal* 38 (2008): 43-62.

Firestone, Shulamith. *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution*. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1970.

Galway, Elizabeth A. *From Nursery Rhymes to Nationhood: Children's Literature and the Construction of Canadian Identity*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Gammel, Irene, and Dutton, Ann. "Disciplining Development: L.M. Montgomery and Early Schooling." *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture*. Ed. Irene Gammel and Elizabeth Epperly. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999. 106-119.

Gammel, Irene. "Introduction: Life Writing as Masquerade: The Many Faces of L.M. Montgomery." *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery*. Ed. Irene Gammel. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005. 3-15.

Gates, Charlene E. "Image, Imagination, and Initiation: Teaching as a Rite of Passage in the Novels of L. M. Montgomery and Laura Ingalls Wilder." *Children's Literature in Education* 20 (1989): 165-173.

Gerson, Carole. "'Dragged at Anne's Chariot Wheels': The Triangle of Author, Publisher, and Fictional Character." *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture*. Ed. Irene Gammel and Elizabeth Epperly. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999. 49-63.

Gray, Paige. "'Bloom in the Moonshine': Imagination as Liberation in Anne of Green Gables." *Children's Literature* 42 (2014): 169-196.

Gubar, Marah. "'Where Is the Boy?': The Pleasures of Postponement in the Anne of Green Gables Series." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 25 (2001): 47-69.

Hammill, Faye. *Canadian Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

Harrigan, Patrick J. "The Development of a Corps of Public School Teachers in Canada, 1870-1980." *History of Education Quarterly* 32 (1992): 482-521.

Herlihy, Jeffrey. "Reflections on Social Engineering and Settler-American Literature." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 15 (2011): 399-414.

Howey, Ann F. "Reading Elaine: Marjorie Richardson's and L. M. Montgomery's Red-Haired Lily Maids." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 32 (2007): 86-109.

Howey, Ann F. "Secular or Spiritual: Rereading *Anne of Green Gables*." *Christianity and Literature* 62 (2013). 395-416.

Knoepflmacher, U. C. Ventures into Childland: Victorians, Fairy Tales, and Femininity. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998.

Lerer, Seth. *Children's Literature: A Reader's History, from Aesop to Harry Potter*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2008.

Merritt, Susan E. *Her Story: Women From Canada's Past*. St. Catharines, Ontario: Vanwell Publishing Limited, 1997.

Mitchell, Sally. *The New Girl: Girls' Culture in England, 1880-1915*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1995.

Niall, Brenda. "Writing from Home: The Literary Careers of Ethel Turner and L.M. Montgomery." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 15 (1990): 175-180.

Prentice, Allison, et al. *Canadian Women: A History*. 2nd ed. Toronto: Harcourt Brace, 1996.

Reimer, Mavis. "A Daughter of the House: Discourses of Adoption in L. M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables." *The Oxford Handbook of Children's Literature*. Ed. Julia L. Mickenberg and Lynne Vallone. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011. 329-350.

Robinson, Laura M. "'A Born Canadian': The Bonds of Communal Identity in *Anne of Green Gables* and *A Tangled Web*." *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture*. Ed. Irene Gammel and Elizabeth Epperly. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999. 19-30.

Robinson, Laura M. "'Sex Matters': L. M. Montgomery, Friendship, and Sexuality." *Children's Literature* 40 (2012): 167-190.

Rothwell, Erika. "Knitting Up the World: L.M. Montgomery and Maternal Feminism in Canada." *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture*. Ed. Irene Gammel and Elizabeth Epperly. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999. 133-144.

Rubio, Mary Henley. "L.M. Montgomery: Scottish-Presbyterian Agency in Canadian Culture." *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture*. Ed. Irene Gammel and Elizabeth Epperly. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999. 89-105.

Rubio, Mary, and Waterston, Elizabeth. *Writing a Life: L.M. Montgomery*. Toronto: ECW Press, 1995.

Sager, Eric W. Women Teachers in Canada, 1881-1901: Revisiting the 'Feminization' of an Occupation." *The Canadian Historical Review* 88 (2007): 201-236.

Sorfleet, John R. "From Pagan to Christian: The Symbolic Journey of Anne of Green Gables." *Windows and Words: A Look at Canadian Children's Literature in English*. Ed. Aïda Hudson and Susan-Ann Cooper. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2003. 175-183.

Spender, Dale. *Women of Ideas and What Men Have Done to Them: From Aphra Behn to Adrienne Rich.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.

Stallcup, Jackie E. "'She Knew She Wanted to Kiss Him': Expert Advice and Women's Authority in L. M. Montgomery's Works." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 26 (2001): 121-132.

Townsend, John Rowe. *Written for Children: An Outline of English-language Children's Literature*. 2nd ed. Harmondsworth: Kestrel Books, 1983.

Waterston, Elizabeth. *Children's Literature in Canada*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992.

Watson, Victor. *The Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Zipes, Jack. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

7 Abstract

Meine Diplomarbeit “Anne of Green Gables – A representative of the Victorian woman?” beschäftigt sich mit den ersten drei Teilen der Anne Shirley Buchreihe von Lucy Maud Montgomery. Das erste Buch, *Anne of Green Gables*, wurde 1908 publiziert, gefolgt von *Anne of Avonlea* (1909) und *Anne of the Island* (1915). Die Romane erzählen von dem Waisenmädchen Anne Shirley, welches von dem Geschwisterpaar Marilla und Mathew Cuthbert adoptiert wird. Das erste Buch beginnt mit der elf Jahre alten Anne, die sich bis zum Ende des dritten Buches zu einer 22-jährigen, erwachsenen Frau entwickelt. Das Mädchen wächst in einer kleinen Ortschaft mit dem Namen ‚Avonlea‘ auf, wo man hauptsächlich auf konservative aber gutmütige Einwohner trifft. Annes Charakter hebt sich von den anderen Individuen der Geschichte ab. So unterscheidet sie sich von diesen, indem sie vorherrschende Gepflogenheiten hinterfragt, eigene Wertvorstellungen schätzt und ihre romantischen Gedanken oft vor ihre Vernunft stellt.

Der Fokus des ersten Teils dieser Arbeit liegt auf der Darstellung weiblicher Charaktere in Kinderbüchern aus dem 19. Jahrhundert. Obwohl die Buchreihe über Anne Shirley von einer kanadischen Autorin verfasst wurde, war für die Bearbeitung dieser Thematik auch britische Literatur relevant, da diese einen starken Einfluss auf die kanadische Kultur und Gesellschaft hatte.

Der zweite Teil meiner Diplomarbeit beschäftigt sich mit der Geschichte und Rolle der Frau in Kanada im 19. Jahrhundert. Aspekte wie Arbeitsbedingungen, Bildung, Familienleben und Religion werden an dieser Stelle behandelt, da jene alle in der genannten Buchreihe vorhanden sind. Um ein adäquates Bild der kanadischen Frau im 19. Jahrhundert darstellen zu können, wurden diverse Quellen als Sekundärliteratur herangezogen.

Die Analyse der Buchreihe befindet sich im dritten, und womöglich wichtigsten Teil meiner Diplomarbeit. Das erste Kapitel in diesem Abschnitt wird der Autorin Lucy Maud Montgomery gewidmet, die als Beispiel einer kanadischen Frau im 19. Jahrhundert, umgeben von gesellschaftlichen Anforderungen und Traditionen, dient.

Um die Einflüsse des persönlichen Lebens der Autorin auf die Charakterisierung von Anne Shirley erkennen zu können, wird deren Biografie aufgezeigt. Anschließend wird die Darstellung und Entwicklung von Anne Shirley in der Buchreihe analysiert. Aspekte mit hoher Relevanz, wie Vorstellungskraft und Redekunst, romantische Auffassungen, Einstellung zu Liebe und Ehe, Arbeitsleben, Religion, Bildung und äußerliches Aussehen werden dabei detailliert erörtert und dargestellt.

Das theoretische Vorwissen und die darauffolgende Analyse ermöglichten mir Schlussfolgerungen für die Fragestellung meiner Diplomarbeit zu treffen. Zu der Thematik, ob Anne Shirley eine typische kanadische Frau des 19. Jahrhunderts ist oder nicht, konnten keine eindeutigen Ergebnisse herausgearbeitet werden. Der weibliche Hauptcharakter der Buchreihe entspricht in manchen Aspekten, wie äußerliches Aussehen und zum Teil romantische Auffassungen, dem viktorianischen Idealbild. Andererseits sind in der Charakterbeschreibung von Anne auch etliche Eigenschaften, wie ihre Einstellungen zum Liebesleben und zur Arbeitswelt, vorhanden, welche diese von einer typischen Frau im 19. Jahrhundert unterscheiden.

8 Curriculum Vitae

Zur Person

Name:	Veronika HAUER
Nationalität:	Österreich

Ausbildung

SS 2014:	Auslandssemester an der Universität Ottawa
SS 2013:	Fachbezogenes Praktikum UF Bewegung und Sport, GRg 23 / Vienna Bilingual Schooling, Betreuerin: Mag. Martina Mettenheimer
WS 2012:	Fachbezogenes Praktikum UF Englisch, GRG 15 Auf der Schmelz, Betreuer: Mag. Kurt Pokorny
Seit WS 2009:	Lehramtsstudium Bewegung und Sport und Englisch, Universität Wien
Juni 2009:	Matura am BG/BRG Rohrbach

Berufserfahrung

Seit 2013:	Kursleiterin Kinderturnen an der Vienna International School
2012:	Englischkurs an der VS Oskar Spiel-Gasse
2011:	Leiterin Kinderschwimmen vom KIWI Kindergarten Schiffmühlenstraße
Seit 2010:	Ski- und Snowboardbegleitlehrerin bei Wintersportwochen

Sprachkenntnisse

Deutsch:	Muttersprache
Englisch:	C2 (TOEFL 2013: 96 Punkte)
Französisch:	B2
Spanisch:	B1