

## Virtual Roundtable Emily 2023

17 June 2023  
12:00 Noon – 2:00 PM ADT (Atlantic Daylight Time)

Presenters:

Yoshiko Akamatsu (Notre Dame Seishin U, JP)  
Yan (Zoe) Du (Cambridge U, UK)  
Laura Leden (U of Helsinki, FI)  
Margaret Mackey (U of Alberta, CA)  
Katharine Slater (Rowan U, US)  
Margaret Steffler (Trent U, CA)

Moderator:

Joe Sutliff Sanders (Cambridge U, UK)

LMMI Assistants:

Austen Clayton (Administration, Technical Assistance)  
Weiqi Tang (Social Media)

Hosted by the L.M. Montgomery Institute, UPEI  
For further information, contact [lclement@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:lclement@lakeheadu.ca)

### Abstracts and Programme

*Introduction of Roundtable* (Lesley Clement and Joe Sutliff Sanders)

#### **Margaret Mackey, Novelty Values: The Shifting Hinterland of *Emily of New Moon***

An in-depth reception history for L.M. Montgomery's *Emily* trilogy should take account of ways in which her books (and their contemporary adaptations) present the new and the familiar to different readers over the course of the past century. Jane Urquhart's description of her mother's awed recognition of her own world, outlined in fictional terms for the first time, offers a vivid insight into what Montgomery's work meant to its first readers. Adrienne Clarkson's immigrant story of how much she learned about her unfamiliar Canadian home from *Emily* and *Anne* illuminates another kind of newness. These historic readers approached Montgomery's work through her own published words; contemporary readers are likely to encounter *Emily* through a television serialization or an online graphic novel. This presentation will consider the impact on audiences of these different manifestations, addressing issues what is rendered new (and how) in the context of significant literary heritage.

#### **Yoshiko Akamatsu, The Japanese Reception of the *Emily* Trilogy through Translation**

The list of Canadian and indeed western writers, readers, and policy makers who have been influenced by Montgomery's orphan girls is both long and familiar. Less well known are the many Japanese women informed and inspired by those same girls. In fact, *Emily* has played a significant role in the lives of many successful women, especially through the translation work of Hanako Muraoka. This talk will explore the women influenced by *Emily* and the ways in which the unique history of her Japanese translation subtly affected that history of influence.

### **Laura Leden, *Emily of New Moon Abridged in Nordic Translations***

L.M. Montgomery's *Emily of New Moon* was translated early on into Finnish (1928), Swedish (1955–1956), and Norwegian (1960). All of these translations were targeted at younger readers and thus abridged. The abridgments tone down Montgomery's characterization of Emily as an unconventional, empowered, and creative girl. Emily's challenging of societal norms or conventions as well as the narrator's subversive commentary are censored. Intertextual references showing Emily in interaction with a literary landscape are omitted. Descriptions of nature foregrounding her imagination and pantheistic thoughts are abridged. Changes like these demote Emily's identity as a budding female author in favour of a more conventional domestic identity. The book covers of many Nordic editions also place the *Emily* books strictly in the context of juvenile and girls' fiction and convey a more domestic image of Emily by de-emphasizing the role of nature, writing, and creativity.

### **Yan Du, *Transformative Networks: Writing as Ecology in L.M. Montgomery's Emily Trilogy***

Drawing from ecological approaches in rhetoric and compositional studies, this presentation re-examines the role of writing in the *Emily* trilogy by exploring how it demonstrates Montgomery's acute recognition of "the complex and interconnected nature of writing," in other words, its "ecological characteristics" (Luce-Kapler 141). By portraying the various elements that contribute to Emily's writing practices and situating her writing within a dynamic system of relations, the trilogy encourages a reading that is framed by ecological perspectives and offers a fertile space for redefining a cognitive, discourse-oriented model towards the heroine's authorship. An ecological lens acknowledges how Emily effects change through acts of composition: through the transformative process of engaging in dynamic relationships with other writers and their works, with broad ideas, social norms, and interpersonal encounters, as well as with non-human/more-than-human objects.

### **Katharine Slater, "A ghost you can *feel* and *hear* but never *see*": Queer Hauntings in *Emily of New Moon***

The unrecognized ghost of the *Emily* series is the specter of queerness. These three novels – the first in particular – are anti-normative texts that use haunting as a device to make queerness elusively visible. What this practice of spectral visibility achieves for *Emily* is a rejection of heteronormative futurity: a past and present-dwelling that refuses or delays entry into marriage, reproduction, and linear temporalities. If the ghost is the form through which something lost or hidden makes itself known to us, as Avery Gordon argues, then *Emily*'s Gothic spectrality reveals the series' tension between the rigid commands of compulsory heterosexuality and the destabilizing force of queerness, which threatens normative happiness. Importantly, although the *Emily* series' queerness is linked to its characters' anger and bitterness, this all-pervasive negativity does not endorse normativity. Rather, it demonstrates that anger and bitterness are rational responses from those for whom normativity is not comfortable.

### **Margaret Steffler, *Recollections, Flashes, Homesickness, and Kinship in Emily of New Moon***

In this short five-minute roundtable presentation, I examine how Emily's writing, a type of Wordsworthian recollection of her personal past and memories, works with the power of "spots of time" or "flashes" to nurture a homesickness that leads to her discovery of kinship beyond her own place and time. Emily's desire to control her private experiences through writing them out is often challenged by her openness to the feelings inspired by the flash. Such tensions between private control and submission to the sublime lead to a sense of emptiness and homesickness in Emily, accompanied by yearnings for worlds and times beyond her own. It is this sensation of vacancy or "presence of absence" that opens Emily to the important discovery and possibilities of connections, kinship, and a much larger universe than the one she inhabits.

*Q&A and Discussion to follow, moderated by Joe Sutliff Sanders*

## Resources List

### Primary Sources

*Emily of New Moon* (1923)

*Emily Climbs* (1925)

*Emily's Quest* (1927)

### Background and Critical Sources

Ahmed, Sara. *The Promise of Happiness*. Duke UP, 2010. (Chapter 3, "Unhappy Queers," pp. 88-120)

Akamatsu, Yoshiko. "Anne in Twenty-first Century Japan." [The Anne of Green Gables Manuscript](#).

Clement, Lesley D., and Margaret Steffler, with the assistance of Rita Bode and E. Holly Pike. Introduction and Preface to the Afterwords, *Children and Childhoods in L.M. Montgomery: Continuing Conversations*, edited by Rita Bode et al., McGill-Queen's UP, 2022, pp. 3-23, 277-83.

Cooper, Marilyn M. "The Ecology of Writing." *College English* vol. 48, no. 4, 1986, pp.364-75.

*Emily of New Moon Graphic Novel*. [Deja vu Dimensions](#).

*Emily of New Moon Trailer*. [YouTube](#).

Epperly, Elizabeth Rollins. *The Fragrance of Sweet-Grass: L.M. Montgomery's Heroines and the Pursuit of Romance*. U of Toronto P, 1992; rpt. with new preface, 2014.

Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., U of Minnesota P, 2008.

Leden, Laura. "[Emily Byrd Starr Conventionalized: Omissions of Nature Descriptions in the Swedish Translation of L.M. Montgomery's Emily Trilogy](#)." *The Looking Glass: New Perspectives on Children's Literature* vol. 18, no. 2, 2015.

---. "[Reading as Empowerment: Lost in the Swedish Translations of L.M. Montgomery's Emily Books](#)." *Journal of L.M. Montgomery Studies*, 2021.

Luce-Kapler, Rebecca. *Writing With, Through, and Beyond the Text: An Ecology of Language*. Taylor and Francis, 2004.

Pollard, Alicia. "[Wordsworth's Light and Shelley's Shadow: Revelation in Montgomery's Anne and Emily Series](#)." *Journal of L.M. Montgomery Studies*, 2021.

Roberta, Rubenstein. *Home Matters: Longing and Belonging, Nostalgia and Mourning in Women's Fiction*. Palgrave, 2001.

Steffler, Margaret. "Brian O'Connell and Emily Byrd Starr: The Inheritors of Wordsworth's 'Gentle Breeze.'" *Windows and Words: A Look at Canadian Children's Literature in English*, edited by Aïda Hudson and Susan-Ann Cooper, U of Ottawa P, 2003, pp. 87-96.

## Biographies

**Yoshiko Akamatsu** is a professor of English literature at Notre Dame Seishin University, Okayama, Japan. She received her Ph.D. in Literature (2011) for her study on John Donne's rhetoric. She translated Montgomery's posthumous collection of short stories, *Akin to Anne: Tales of Other Orphans* in 1989. Her other works include "Japanese Readings of *Anne of Green Gables*" in *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture* (1999), "The Continuous Popularity of *Red-haired Anne* in Japan" in *Anne around the World* (2013), and "During and After the World Wars: L. M. Montgomery and the Canadian Missionary Connection in Japan" in *The Looking Glass*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (2015). A book of her collected essays, *From Red-haired Anne to Black-haired Emily* (English translation) was released in March, 2022. Her paper "The Problems and Possibilities Inherent in Adaptation: *Emily of New Moon* and *Emily, Girl of the Wind*" was included in *Children and Childhoods in L.M. Montgomery: Continuing Conversations* in October, 2022. She contributed "Anne in Twenty-first Century Japan" to the digital exhibition, "The *Anne of Green Gables* Manuscript: L.M. Montgomery and the Creation of Anne" in 2023.



**Yan Du** is a PhD student and a CSC-Cambridge Trust scholar at the Centre for Research in Children's Literature at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. Her research interest lies in representations of writing and girlhood in youth fiction, poetry, and media culture. Her academic works have been published or are forthcoming in journals including *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, and Cultures*, *Girlhood Studies*, *Barnboken*, *International Journal of Young Adult Literature*, and *Nordic Journal of Childlit Aesthetics*. She has translated a number of picturebooks, and her new authored picturebook, *My Pocket Bathroom*, illustrated by Erin Vanessa, is due to be published by Yehoo Press.



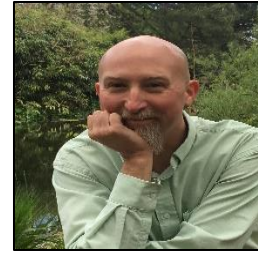
**Laura Leden** completed her Ph.D. on the adaptation of the image of girlhood in Swedish and Finnish translations of fiction for girls at the University of Helsinki in 2021. She is a regular participant at the LMMI biennial conference. With her expertise in girlhood studies, translation, and paratexts, as evidenced by a strong publication and conference record in children's literature journals (for example, *Journal of L.M. Montgomery Studies*, 2021; *Barnboken — Journal of Children's Literature Research*, 2019), collections (for example, *Translating Boundaries: Constraints, Limits, Opportunities*, Stuttgart, 2018), and venues (for example, the IRSCL conference in Stockholm, 2019), her contribution to Montgomery scholarship internationally is immense.



**Margaret Mackey** is Professor Emerita in the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta. Her most recent book is *Space, Place, and Children's Reading Development: Mapping the Connections* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2022). She publishes broadly on topics concerning young people's literatures and literacies, in print, media, and digital forms. She has written articles on Montgomery's original books and their subsequent adaptations, and presented at the International Symposium on L.M. Montgomery and Reading at the LMMI in 2018. She produced an extensive study of her own childhood literacies in Newfoundland (in which Montgomery's work naturally featured) in *One Child Reading: My Auto-Bibliography* (University of Alberta Press, 2016).



**Joe Sutliff Sanders** is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge. He is the author of *Disciplining Girls: Understanding the Origins of the Classic Orphan Girl Story* and two other monographs about children's media. With Yan Du, he is co-editing a new volume of essays celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of *Emily of New Moon*.



**Katharine Slater** is an Associate Professor of English at Rowan University, where she teaches courses on children's and young adult literature. Some of her recent and forthcoming publications include “Dearly Departed: Displacement and *The Arrival*'s Spectral Refugee,” “Daisy Ashford and the Child Writer's Use of Scale,” and “‘Lurched Forward and Stopped’: *Last Stop on Market Street* and Black Mobility.” Her current book project examines the queer geographies of YA literature, arguing that queer female characters grow and move in ways that disturb sequential narratives of adolescent development.



**Margaret Steffler** is professor emerita of English Literature at Trent University. Her research focuses on Canadian women's fiction, girlhood narratives, and life writing with a recent emphasis on Mennonite/s Writing and the work of Miriam Toews. Articles and chapters on the work of L. M. Montgomery have been published in journals and essay collections from 1998 to 2022. She is a co-editor of *Children and Childhoods in L.M. Montgomery: Continuing Conversations* (McGill-Queen's UP, 2022) and the editor of two volumes of P.K. Page's work published by Porcupine's Quill Press: *Mexican Journal* (2015) and *Metamorphosis: Selected Children's Literature* (2020).

