A Feminist Analysis of Lyman Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* and Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*.

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Introduction

From the moment children learn to read, they are cast into the magical world of literature. Characters, settings, themes and plots found in children's literature often pertain to the child reader's own life. Concepts such as friendship, education, nature, curiosity, discovery, religion and growth are explored in such a way that children feel a close connection to the reading material. Critics have "argued that children's literature came into existence only when texts began to portray realistic child characters or illustrate the child's point of view" (Grenby, "Chapbooks, Children and Children's Literature" 277). Lesnik-Oberstein explains that it was only then that children could identify with the books they read as they recognised themselves as the child protagonists in the texts.

Yet it is recognised that children's literature has a long, worldwide history originating in oral tradition and folk tales. In Britain children's books were produced from the mid-eighteenth century with classics such as John Newbery's *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* (1744) and "by the end of the century children's literature had become established as a flourishing branch of print culture" (Grenby, "Chapbooks, Children and Children's Literature" 277). By the beginning of the nineteenth century children's books were an identifiable genre within the literary world which is why Hunt suggests that "children's literature in its modern form is largely a nineteenth-century phenomenon" (5).

Additionally the nineteenth century witnessed the start of classic children's books that are still considered to be firm favourites of children today. Besides the general consensus that classic children's literature includes those texts that provide

distinguished value to the genre, children's literary works possess elements of classics if they include qualities such as universal themes, memorable characters, rich language and a strong rhythm (Mitchell 4). Sainte-Beuve suggests that a classic is an "author who has enriched the human mind, increased its treasure, and caused it to advance a step" (126). Children's books are only identified as classics once their value to the genre has been established which often takes many years in order for an unassailable readership to be developed.

With the expansion of children's literature at an international level, the nineteenth century advanced the initial presentation of female protagonists as early children's novels made use of male-child protagonists or male-animal protagonists only. This innovative concept can be seen from the very beginning of the nineteenth century with the German Brothers Grimm, Jakob and Wilhelm, publishing tales taken from the oral tradition such as *Snow White*, *Rapunzel* and *Hansel and Gretel* (1812). Similarly Denmark's Hans Christian Andersen introduced to the world his tales of *The Little Mermaid* (1836) and *The Snow Queen* (1845). The emergence of American children's books saw the publication of classics such as Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868) and Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty: The Autobiography of a Horse* (1877). Britain's Joseph Cundall's *Beauty and the Beast* (1843) and Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) were also evidence of the female protagonist at her best. The introduction of the female protagonist in nineteenth century children's texts became an important element in the emancipation of women and by the turn of the twentieth century many more classic children's novels were produced characterising strong female protagonists. Such influential literary works include Lyman Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

(1900), Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) and Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1911). These three children's novels selected for study possess similar elements, which allows for a feminist literary analysis, relating to the authors portrayal of the female protagonists, the secondary female characters and the secondary male characters. Published by three different writers from three different countries, the striking similarities between the characterisation and basic plot, which enables the three female protagonists to achieve self-actualisation, creates an interesting opportunity for comparison.

According to Rogers *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* writer, "Lyman Frank Baum was born on May, 15, 1856 in a frame house in Chittenango, fifteen miles east of Syracuse, New York" (1). His first book entitled *The Book of the Hamburgs* (1886) explored the task of raising birds. Baum then wrote and published the acclaimed children's novel, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900). Baum's other novels worth noting include *A New Wonderland* (1900), *The Master Key* (1901), *American Fairy Tales* (1902), *Animal Fairy Tales* (1905) as well as the celebrated Oz sequels.

Canadian female writer, Lucy Maud Montgomery was born in 1874 and spent most of her life in Prince Edward Island (Bienert 115). Montgomery's writing career begun at the early age of fifteen when her very first poem was printed "in a provincial Canadian newspaper" (Niall 175). Although her early interests focused on writing, it was not until Montgomery reached adulthood that she began producing novels. "In the Spring of 1908, Lucy Maud Montgomery's first novel, *Anne of Green Gables* was published, receiving immediate acclaim" (Bienert 115). Ironically, Montgomery was initially sceptical of the possibility of the novel's public success as she wrote the following in her

journal; “There in my hand lay the material realisation of all the dreams and hopes and ambitions and struggles of my whole conscious existence – my first book! Not a great book at all – but *mine*, *mine*, *mine* - ” (Rubio and Waterston 335).

According to Zirker, British female writer, “Frances Eliza Hodgson Burnett was born in Manchester on 24 November 1849, the third child of Edwin and Eliza Hodgson.” In June 1868 her first story, “Hearts and Diamonds”, was published in *Godey’s Lady’s Book and Magazine* and from that point her literary works were never rejected (“Frances Hodgson Burnett”). Her first novel *That Lass o’ Lowrie’s* was published in 1876 and eighteen others followed before the publication of her highly praised children’s novel *The Secret Garden* in 1911.

The particular area of study for this dissertation focuses on the selected texts, Lyman Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), Lucy Maud Montgomery’s *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) and Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *The Secret Garden* (1911). The similarities between the three children’s books is a concept worth exploring as although these texts are closely linked to the political and historical settings of each region, the themes and plot of each text share distinctive congruency. Firstly, the three books were published at a time when women’s rights were minimal. It was only in 1918 that Canadian women were given the opportunity to vote with America following close behind, allowing American women to vote in 1920 (Daley and Nolan 350). England was then galvanised to change its voting policies through the timeless efforts of the Suffragettes and it was their passion and dedication to the cause that led to the women’s right to vote in England in 1928 (Daley and Nolan 350). Although the idea of fighting for women’s rights and liberation was a new concept, all three texts represent

women's potential as independent beings. Secondly, the three children's novels are similar in both characterisation and plot. With their selection of young female protagonists and the similarities in the personal development of these girls throughout their respective texts, Baum, Montgomery and Burnett have created three individual pieces perfect for comparison. The characters of Dorothy, Anne and Mary are portrayed as orphans. Dorothy lives with her aunt and uncle, Anne is an orphan awaiting adoption and Mary's parents die leaving her in the care of an uncle. Not only are these three protagonists created from similar circumstances, they too take part in their own personal journey filled with the discovery of new friends and places. Additionally the characterisation and the development, both physically and psychologically, of the three female protagonists suggests their adoption of the stereotypical roles of women as well as their expressed attempts for female liberation. It is this illustration of the protagonists as females in traditional roles and their struggle for emancipation that feminist theory, which focuses on the history of female subordination and interrogates female resistance, is an ideal theory to use when analysing the three children's novels.

This dissertation aims to provide a close contextual and textual analysis of the selected works: *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) and *The Secret Garden* (1911) using feminist literary theory. The aims and objectives of the study include the analysis of how the selected works of Lyman Frank Baum, Lucy Maud Montgomery and Frances Hodgson Burnett's writing have contributed to maintaining women's stereotypical roles within society and perpetuated their subordinate position. An examination of the extent to which the female protagonists attempt to emancipate themselves from gender oppression will also be conducted using feminist literary theory.

Chapter one includes an examination of the historical background of the authors, Lyman Frank Baum, Lucy Maud Montgomery and Frances Hodgson Burnett. Additionally an interrogation of the history of children's literature is conducted with specific reference to American, British and Canadian children's literature.

Chapter two focuses on the theoretical framework of feminist literary theory used in the analysis of the selected texts. The background of feminism as both a movement and a contemporary literary criticism is explored. Prominent figures manifest in the birth of feminist literary theory are discussed according to their relevant contributions to this field of study. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* is analysed according to her views on the biological basis of gendered behaviour as well as women's roles in society. In addition Luce Irigaray's *Speculum of the Other Woman* and *This Sex Which is Not One* is analysed according to her focus of knowledge as being masculine and the psychological oppression of women through discourse. Furthermore Hélène Cixous' "The Laugh of the Medusa" and *The Newly Born Woman* is interrogated according to the need for change and masculinity versus femininity. Finally, Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and *Undoing Gender* are discussed according to gender performativity and undoing normative conceptions of sexually relegated choices of behaviour and life.

Chapter three consists of a close textual feminist analysis of the female protagonists: Dorothy, Anne and Mary. In addition the secondary female characters from each selected text are analysed such as the wicked witches, Aunt Em, the Queen of the Field-Mice, the princess made from china and Glinda's female soldiers in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Marilla Cuthbert, Rachel Lynde and Diana Barry from *Anne of Green Gables* and Martha, Mrs Sowerby and Mrs Craven in *The Secret Garden*. The

portrayal of the secondary male characters and their apparent patriarchal placement are additionally analysed according to feminist literary theory. The Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, the Lion and the wizard Oz will be analysed from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Anne of the Green Gables*' Matthew Cuthbert and Gilbert Blythe will be examined as well as *The Secret Garden*'s Mr Craven, Colin Craven and Dickon Sowerby.

The comparison of these children's classics by Baum, Montgomery and Burnett provides insight into the selected works of all three writers, especially through the lens offered by feminist literary theory. As a comparative study of these three texts has not yet been conducted, there is a significant opportunity for contribution to this actual field of study. Through this interrogation of these representative female protagonists found in early children's literature, a thorough understanding of not only the oppression of women, as exemplified in literature during this era, is highlighted but also the comprehension that women's liberation and emancipation were foreshadowed in these early children's novels. In order to better understand the texts, I believe it is important to consider the writing life of the authors. The following chapter explores the personal history of each author and how their life experience has influenced their writing.

Chapter One:

1.1 Historical Content

1.1.1 Lyman Frank Baum

Born on 15 May 1856, Lyman Frank Baum was diagnosed with a weak heart and therefore encouraged to spend most of his early years indoors, allowing him to spend his time reading the imaginative writing of Charles Dickens (Rogers 4). Baum's increased reading activated his mind which sparked his creative story-telling skills which was the foundation for his successful literary works.

Interestingly, however, Baum did not begin his cultural career as a writer of novels; instead he wrote articles for many local newspapers and succumbed to his interest of the theatre. According to Rogers Baum joined a travelling theatre at age eighteen and it can be assumed that this lifestyle cultivated his creation of interesting characters (6). Baum's writing of novels only began much later in his life. His first book entitled *The Book of the Hamburgs* (1886) was written when he was thirty years old and already married to Maud Gauge (Rogers 13).

In 1897 Baum teamed with illustrator, Maxfield Parrish, to publish his first children's book *Mother Goose in Prose*, two years later *Father Goose, His Book* was published becoming the best-selling children's book of that year. Baum then wrote and published the acclaimed children's novel, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900). Baum's other novels worth noting include: *A New Wonderland* (1900), *The Master Key* (1901), *American Fairy Tales* (1902), *Animal Fairy Tales* (1905) as well as the famous Oz

sequels: *The Marvelous Land of Oz* (1904), *Ozma of Oz* (1907), *The Road to Oz* (1909), *The Emerald City of Oz* (1910), *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* (1913), *The Tik-Tok of Oz* (1914), *The Scarecrow of Oz* (1915), *Rinkitink in Oz* (1916), *The Lost Princess of Oz* (1917), *The Tin Woodman of Oz* (1918), *The Magic of Oz* (1919) and *Glinda of Oz* (1920).

Critics have argued over Baum's motivation behind the creation of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and its sequels. According to Loncraine "Baum felt that he had simply *discovered* the Land of Oz rather than *invented* it" (1). This statement from Baum himself highlights the possibility that it could very well have been the psychological effects of Baum's own personal existence that formed the grounds upon which the characters journey through the Land of Oz. Baum wrote the children's classic between 1898 and 1899 under the original title, *The Emerald City*, which was however altered by his publisher, as it was believed that novels with the names of jewels in their titles did not get published. The timeless literary work would finally become known as *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (Schwartz x).

Baum's own life experiences permeated the setting and plot structure of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz.* At one point in his life, Baum attended the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, a world's fair that included the White City, a model city that was lit by new electric lights that created the impression of jewels. It was the vision of this city that assisted Baum in the creation of the Emerald City in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (Schwartz xii).

Baum was the type of individual who would optimistically try new things and never allow his enthusiasm to be stifled by difficult times (Schwartz xi). From this understanding of Baum it is apparent that he believed in people's ability to solve their own problems, a concept that is evident throughout the Oz books as the characters repeatedly demonstrate the qualities that they think they lack. The Scarecrow believes he is brainless yet he often comes up with solutions to problems, the Lion thinks that he is a coward yet his brave actions protect his friends and the Tin Woodman believes that he has no heart yet his compassion for his friends is the hallmark of his character.

Writers' experiences often influence their creations within their texts. Events that have occurred during their lives become the basis for realism evident in their literary works. Baum's own employment history and financial strains have been associated with his understanding of the American economy. In the article "The Wizard of Oz: Parable of Populism" Littlefield explains how Baum lived in South Dakota during a time when the farmers, angered by the lack of government assistance, were constantly petitioning for financial support (49). During this time American politician William Jennings Bryan advocated "that the government stamp silver bullion into coins, upon demand, to increase the money supply and end the deflation" (Dighe 2). Littlefield highlights Baum's possible correlation between the economic struggle of America and *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* when he directly compares the way in which the Lion fails to scratch the Tin Woodman to the way Bryan fails to achieve the silver standard (53). Other monetary allusions include the yellow brick road, explained to represent the traditional use of gold and the silver shoes, associated with the freedom silver coinage would have brought to

the impoverished farmers, similar to the limitless magic the shoes could have brought Dorothy had she known their powers (Hansen 255).

Baum's passion for writing and the Oz series in particular consumed his life as aspects from his successful texts filtered into his personal existence. According to Schwartz in 1909 Baum moved to California where he named his house Ozcot (297). Additionally when his granddaughter was born he encouraged his son and daughter-in-law to change her name from Frances to Ozma, a character from the infamous series (Schwartz 303). The most interesting allusion to the Oz series has been recorded by Baum's great-grandson, Roger S. Baum and it reports the Oz writer's final words to his wife as he lay on his death bed: "Now we can cross The Shifting Sands," a reference made to one of the locations in his series, a most profound indication of his love for his created literary works (99).

1.1.2 Lucy Maud Montgomery

Canadian female writer, Lucy Maud Montgomery was born in 1874 and was raised on the small Canadian island of Prince Edward Island (Bienert 115). When Montgomery was only twenty one months old her mother passed away and shortly afterwards her father remarried and moved away leaving the toddler to live with her maternal grandparents in Cavendish. Montgomery's childhood was one filled with strict discipline and extensive reading as she lived in an isolated area where only limited entertainment or friendships were available. Like Baum, Montgomery's reading stimulated her imagination, therefore influencing her passion for writing.

The success of her first novel persuaded Montgomery to publish a series of Anne books which include the eleven sequels: *Anne of Avonlea* (1909), *Chronicles of Avonlea* (1912), *Anne of the Island* (1915), *Anne's House of Dreams* (1917), *Rainbow Valley* (1919), *Further Chronicles of Avonlea* (1920), *Rilla of Ingleside* (1921), *Anne of the Windy Poplars* (1936), *Anne of Ingleside* (1939) and *The Road to Yesterday* (1974).

The publication of Montgomery's first Anne book, *Anne of Green Gables* elevated Canadian children's literature from a relatively unexplored genre to international fame. Montgomery drew on many of her personal childhood experiences to create the character of Anne Shirley and the events that occur during her life's journey. According to Heilbron the motivation for writing the children's text was based on an incident involving Rachel and Pierce Macneill, a couple who had applied to an orphan asylum for a boy, but by mistake received a girl (254). As a child, Montgomery spent many Sunday afternoons playing and picking berries in the emerald fields located on Prince Edward Island, features found in the *Anne of Green Gables* text. Many trips to Cavendish town and the naming of certain areas such as "The Haunted Wood" and "The Lake of Shining Waters" were all places that Montgomery had either known of or had really discovered for herself as a little girl and included in Anne's journey (Gammel 22; 105).

Additionally many personality traits and characteristics of Montgomery as a child are manifest in the character of Anne. Montgomery enjoyed dressing up for Sunday school and used to paraphrase school work that needed to be studied. In 1895 Montgomery "obtained her teaching licence" (Rubio 74). In the same way the character of Anne is overjoyed with the pretty dress that she receives to wear to Sunday school and she, too, excels academically so that by the end of *Anne of Green Gables* she has obtained her

teaching licence. The strong teacher characters in the *Anne of Green Gables* series are created from Montgomery's own studies and work experience. During the 1890's Montgomery worked as a teacher "at Bideford, a North Shore community of farming and fisher-folk" situated on Prince Edward Island (Rubio 75).

Out of all the possible comparisons between Montgomery and Anne, their shared trauma of abandonment is most striking. Montgomery's mother died when she was young and her father sent Montgomery to live with her maternal grandparents. Gammel explains how "Maud's status as an unloved "charity child" was a deep wound on her sensitive psyche…" (20). This piece of Montgomery's history relates directly to the characterisation of Anne as she is an orphan who has also longed to be accepted into a family.

The entire Anne series reflects events and characteristics that are specific to Lucy Maud Montgomery's life. With regard to Montgomery's creation of Anne, it is evident that her own childhood challenges permeated the construction of a little red-haired girl who suffered with abandonment issues and possessed a deep passion to belong. Throughout Montgomery's life she often dealt with feelings of sadness and despair and evidence of her melancholic tendencies are apparent in the first Anne novel, *Anne of Green Gables* when Anne declares: "It's all very well to read about sorrows and imagine yourself living through them heroically, but it's not so nice when you really come to have them, is it?" (Montgomery 105). Throughout Montgomery's life she was "torn between the demands of duty and desire, conformity and rebellion, adult stricture and youthful yearning, without ever being able to resolve them" (Gammel 20). Additionally these

conflicts are easily identified in the characterisation of Anne as she attempts to balance her carefree feelings of being young with society's conventional values and norms.

1.1.3 Frances Hodgson Burnett

British female writer, Frances Eliza Hodgson Burnett was born in Manchester, England on 24 November 1849. Like Montgomery, Burnett lost a parent at an early age. Zirker explains how when Burnett was just four years old her father, Edwin Hodgson, passed away, leaving the family in a financially challenging position ("Frances Hodgson Burnett"). When Burnett was sixteen years of age her mother, Eliza Hodgson, moved the family to Knoxville, Tennessee in pursuit of stability and wealth. The move from industrial England to rural America was a journey to the green, natural world that would become a central theme in many of Burnett's written pieces. Burnett enjoyed writing from a young age as she would often scrawl little stories on sheets of old notebooks. According to Ziker in June 1868 her first stories, "Hearts and Diamonds" and "Miss Carruthers' Engagement", were published, followed by the children's novels *That Lass o' Lowries* (1878) and *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1884) ("Frances Hodgson Burnett").

In 1872 Burnett's mother died and Burnett then married Dr Swann Burnett with whom she had two sons, Lionel and Vivian. The Burnett's travelled across Europe for some time before returning to the United States and settling in Washington and later New York. Sutherland highlights the fact that although Montgomery was wealthy, she lived a rather unhappy life brought on by tragic events such as when "in 1890 her son, Lionel died and her own health deteriorated into chronic invalidism" (94). Burnett's novel, *The White People* (1920) was later dedicated to the memory of Lionel. The tragic loss of her

parents as well as her son filled Burnett with the extensive knowledge of isolation and grief, a characteristic evident in many of her characters, particularly Mary and Colin in *The Secret Garden*. Critics have documented that Burnett's adult life was filled with mental and physical illness, thought to be "brought on by overwork and mental strain" (Gerzina 106). Her experiences with depression and emotional illness can be seen in the creation of the character of Colin in *The Secret Garden* as he is brilliantly portrayed as a depressed young boy who is angered by the emotional turmoil of his mother's death. Bloom explains that "persistent illnesses led Burnett to seek relief in the new philosophies of Spiritualism, Theosophy, Mind Healing and Christian Science", all of which appear in some form in her literary works (89).

During her life, Burnett lived between Washington, D.C. and England's countryside. In 1898 Burnett divorced her husband, Dr Swan Moses Burnett and then spent much of her time writing children's novels, *The Secret Garden* in particular (Uglow and Hendry 97). According to Carpenter and Shirley, Burnett leased a country home in Kent and "discovered a long neglected garden, completely enclosed" which she restored to life in order to create an "outdoor study" in which she would consume herself with the writing of her novels (94). This concept of the enclosed garden connects strongly with the plot of *The Secret Garden* as the text is filled with imagery relating to nature, from the colour, shape and scent of the flowers to the serenity of the season and its animals all of which serve to create a tranquil picture enhanced by personal experience. Burnett's accounts with nature permeated her other works which include *The One I Knew Best of All* (1893), *A Lady of Quality* (1896), *His Grace of Osmonde* (1897), *Emily Fox – Seton* (1901), *A Little Princess* (1905) and *The Shuttle* (1906).

In 1900 Burnett married Stephen Townesend, an actor and former medical student, with whom she had started co-producing her plays as early as 1889. Additionally Townesend spent months with the then fatigued Burnett assisting her in caring for her ill son, Lionel (Gerzina 141). According to Zirker their marriage only lasted two years and once it was over Burnett returned to America and spent the first few weeks in a private hospital suffering from mental stress ("Frances Hodgson Burnett"). During her life Burnett made thirty-three trips across the Atlantic between England and America, even taking time away from writing to travel Europe.

Burnett's final novels include, *The Dawn of Tomorrow* (1909), *T. Tembarom* (1913), *The Lost Prince* (1915), *Robin* (1922) and *The Head of the House of Coombe* (1922). "In October 1924, one month away from her seventy-fifth birthday", Burnett passed away, leaving behind the inspiring message, "As long as one has a garden, one has a future; and as long as one has a future, one is alive" (Gerzina xvi). In 1936 a memorial sculpture by Bessie Potter Vannoh was erected in Burnett's honour in Central Park's Conservatory Garden, the statue depicts *The Secret Garden* characters, Mary and Dickon.

Biographer, Gretchen Gerzina, considers Burnett to be not only a great children's writer but a dedicated novelist. She writes this regarding the life and works of Burnett:

> Throughout her life, Frances was known for five things: her unrelenting literary production which often drove her to illness; her love of beautiful clothes and domestic surroundings; her inability to remain settled in any one place, or even in

> one country; her wonderful gardens; and in the second half of her life, compassion and enormous generosity to friends and strangers alike (Gerzina xii).

Frances Hodgson Burnett's contribution to children's literature has made her one of the most prominent writers of the twentieth century.

The selected works, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) and *The Secret Garden* (1911) creatively allude to the personal life experiences of the three writers: Lyman Frank Baum, Lucy Maud Montgomery and Frances Hodgson Burnett. Despite being born in separate decades, raised in different countries and the gendered differences with Baum being male whereas Montgomery and Burnett being female, these three writers managed to produce three strikingly similar children's novels in the beginning of the twentieth century that deal with female protagonists and the journey on which they embark. All three writers developed their classic texts based on personal life events which they moulded into the characterisation of their female protagonists, secondary female characters and secondary male characters. Baum's serious illness as a boy propelled him into the world of literature and with his adulthood consisting of economic understanding and excursions to events such as the Colombian Exposition, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was born. Montgomery's own childhood experiences of the death of her mother, her Prince Edward Island home and becoming a teacher are elements that were used to create the assertive character of Anne Shirley in *Anne of Green Gables*. Finally Burnett's time spent in the serene surroundings of the rose gardens at Maytham Hall in England, along with her own personal experiences with loss and illness, inspired the touching story of *The Secret Garden*. It can be deduced that in all of their lives these writers' individual battles with financial, emotional

and spiritual challenges somehow enabled them to create striking female characters who grow through similar life cycles.

1.2 Children's Literature

When focusing on the history of children's literature it is important to understand the features of the texts that classify children's literature as an independent genre. Grenby argues that children's literature began when "adults invented a new commodity, deliberately designed to give a newly identified audience what they thought it wanted, or, rather, needed" ("The Origins of Children's Literature" 3). It is difficult to trace the history of children's literature to one specific starting point. Many critics have argued that children's literature began as early as the fifteenth century while others have examined the likelihood that the children's texts published in the eighteenth century are far more classifiable than the ones written centuries before. The difficulty in identifying a specific timeframe for the origin of children's literature lies in the fact that during the early stages of development, children were, and still are, encouraged to read and write often using texts that were created for them, but were more instructional than entertaining. Children's literature is a genre that developed from the initial creation of religious and secular books of instruction for children. Purely instructional texts written for children were published in Britain as early as the fifteenth century with "William Caxton's *Book of Curtesye* (1477) and his translation of *The Book of the Knight of the Tower* (1484), providing boys and girls respectively with instruction on how to behave in a noble household" (Grenby, "The Origins of Children's Literature" 4). Similarly the first American book written for children was John Cotton's *Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes* published in 1646 (Hunt 5). The purpose of the book was to teach children about the

Bible and to instill the correct way of behaving. The book is a perfect example of how children's literature began as an instructional tool for developing morally and spiritually acceptable behaviour rather than an instrument for pure reading enjoyment.

In Britain, children's literature quickly evolved and stories and fairy tale books began to replace the instruction manuals of the fifteenth century. Children's literature, "with its mixture of pictures, rhymes, riddles, stories and lessons on moral conduct", truly began in the mid eighteenth century with the publication of "John Newbery's *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*" (1744) (Grenby, "The Origins of Children's Literature" 4). Grenby identifies Newbery as the first British author "successfully to commercialise books for children, and he used a simple but durable formula: the encasement of the instructive material that adults thought their children would need within an entertaining format that children might be supposed to want" ("The Origins of Children's Literature" 4). Within the develop of children's literature an element of fantasy was introduced to children's texts as magical worlds, powers and creatures were explored in relation to the child protagonist's personal journey. The adult teaching of morals and values were still implemented into the writing of children's novels, but were combined with features that fuelled the child's imagination. In Britain the rise of the children's novel has been linked to the eighteenth century growth of the middle class, as individuals became infatuated with non-essential merchandise (Grenby, "The Origins of Children's Literature" 9). Early children's books were striking in appearance with "attractive illustrations, decorative binding and sometimes even gilt-edged pages" which depicted the adult's purchasing of children's books as more about the possibility of social elevation than the child's own interest (Grenby, "The Origins of Children's Literature" 9). In the nineteenth century

British children's literature witnessed the birth of a variety of children's classics such as Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* (1843), Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies* (1863) and Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1865). American children's literature only became apparent subsequent to the eighteenth century with the nineteenth century classics such as Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (1819), Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868), Susan Coolidge's *What Katy Did* (1873) and Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). During the nineteenth century Canadian children's literature originated from the influence of Britain and America; whereby Canadian writers of children's books were hard at work creating literary pieces suitable for the Canadian child to read and enjoy. Early Canadian children's literature includes Jean - Antoine Bouthillier's *Traité d'arithmétique pour l'usage des écoles* (1809), Robert Dodsley's *Aesop and Other Fabulists* (1810), Marie Cottin's *Elizabeth* (1820), Catharine Traill's *Little Downy* (1822), Charles Tomlinson's *The Snow Storm* (1852) and Robert Michael Ballantyne's *Snowflakes and Sunbeams* (1860).

An important element introduced by nineteenth century children's literature was the initial presentation of the female protagonist. Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* are prime examples of nineteenth century children's novels that rejected the traditional characterisation of male and animal protagonists and instead opted for dominant female protagonists. This new concept of using a female protagonist in a children's novel paved the way for Baum, Montgomery and Burnett's selected children's texts at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Gannon illustrates how "one of the greatest problems presented by the development of nineteenth-century children's literature in America is the shift after 1860 toward a new

way of looking at children and childhood, and the concomitant arrival of a children's literature strikingly different in moral focus" (144). What could have contributed to this change was that the nineteenth century was a time when almost every major writer wrote some literary piece for children (Commager 10). The adult experience brought about melancholic tones to the children's books as well as issues dealing with poverty and abuse; more gritty subjects were a direct move away from the instructional texts children read years before. The nineteenth century not only witnessed the increase in children's novels, but other publications dedicated to youth were developed. America's first children's magazine, "*Youth's Companion"* began in 1827 and "achieved a circulation that in 1885 outstripped that of all other U.S. magazines" (Clark 48). Prominent writers who did not produce children's novels such as "William Cullen Bryant, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Harriet Beecher Stowe" all made various contributions to various children's magazines (Clark 49).

Once children's books became a prospering literary culture their popularity formed the foundation for their success in the twentieth century and beyond. "Children's books worldwide began to demonstrate tensions between the exercise of educational, religious and political power on the one hand and various concepts associated with 'freedom' (notably fantasy and the imagination) on the other" (Hunt 5). Children's literature produced during the twentieth century contained noticeably more fantasy and elements of childhood freedom as evidenced in Lyman Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz,* Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* and Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*. Child readers began enjoying the content of magical lands, mystical creatures and talking animals, anything that would be filled with adventure and required

the use of imagination. These elements are evident in the selected twentieth century children's texts as Baum created the magical land of Oz, the talking Scarecrow, the Lion and the Tin Woodman to enable the child reader the ability to delve into the magical world that is only enabled through the use of imagination. Although Montgomery's text contains very little supernatural magic, the way in which Anne's vivid imagination is used during her many adventures illustrates this classic twentieth century writing style. Additionally Burnett uses Mary's discovery of the secret garden and her relationship with the Robin and nature to highlight the magical imagery offered to the twentieth century child reader. Other twentieth century children's novels include Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902), Edith Nesbit's *The Railway Children* (1906) Howard Pyle's *King Arthur and his Knights* (1903), Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* (1903) and Eleanor Hodgman Porter's *Pollyanna* (1913). Subsequent to the publication of nineteenth century Canadian children's texts, the twentieth century possessed a great deal of promise regarding the progression of independent Canadian publishing houses as well as the development of Canadian children's literature as an innovative genre. The twentieth century witnessed the publication of popular Canadian children's literature such as selected text *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) by Lucy Maud Montgomery and Marshall Saunders' *The Wandering Dog* (1918).

The variations that were identified between children's books published before 1860 and children's books published after 1860 were once again evident between nineteenth century and twentieth century children's books. The argument that stemmed from the divergence apparent between the two centuries centered on the fact that "adults can and do control the production of children's literature – however subversive the child's

reading might be" (Hunt 5). The question was whether adult ideas and more mature way of thinking would not harm the malleable minds of the child readers. Children's books are evidently about ideals and happy endings and Carpenter explains how "adult fiction sets out to portray and explain the world as it really is; books for children present it as it should be" (1). The selected children's novels explore realistic concepts such as traditional gender stereotypes and the resistance against them, issues of abandonment, difficult journeys and the experience of dealing with unsavory people. Although these can be considered an adult's perception, it is important to note that these are nonetheless issues that directly pertain to the child reader's own life. Baum's initial portrayal of Dorothy as a traditional young girl is soon challenged by her dominant and independent actions, an element that the twentieth century female child reader would find appealing. In addition the way in which Dorothy deals with being away from home and her perseverance in dealing with difficult people throughout her long and tiring journey encourages the child reader to overcome his or her own trials and tribulations. Montgomery's exploration of Anne's feelings of abandonment, her journey of self-discovery and the way in which she too deals with challenging individuals are factors that any child reader would benefit from reading. Finally the way in which Burnett's Mary deals with the grief of her parents' death and the ungrateful attitude of her cousin, Colin, can be viewed as elements important to the child reader's own life. One of the most important life lessons for the female child reader of the twentieth century is apparent in the characterisation of the female protagonists, who struggle with their stereotypical female roles in society and the emancipation they want to obtain.

Sarah Trimmer produced "the first children's book review journal entitled *The Guardian of Education* (1802-6), and she found no shortage of books to subject to her careful scrutiny" (Grenby, "The Origins of Children's Literature" 7). Trimmer's journal, although creating interest based on the quality of children's literature, was not an academic publication in the sense that it contained little context of reflective university culture. It is important to note that during the nineteenth century the collection of material based on children's literature was halted due to the world wars and that any "academic interest in children's literature resumed only in the mid to late twentieth century in Germany", "England, Canada and the United States" (Kidd 4). One of the first academic writers to provide insight into the analysis of children's literature was a children's book collector and "literary and cultural theorist", "Walter Benjamin (1892 – 1940)" (Kidd 4). Benjamin's essays include "Old Forgotten Children's Books" (1924), "A Glimpse into the World of Children's Books" (1926) and "Children's Literature" (1929). Benjamin's work was an example of the initial academic discourse that "surround the subject of literature itself and the discourse that surround the rearing, socialisation and education of the young" (Sarland 30). As the analysis of children's literature progressed, emphasis shifted and it was the characters and their representation that gained focus (Sarland 45). Academic publications regarding children's literature were introduced during this era with *Children's Literature in Education* (1969) being one of the first scholarly journals. The periodical focused on the literary understanding of children's literature and the analytical ideology of the texts (Silverman 201). One year later the academic journal, *Signal: Approaches to Children's Literature* (1970) began with Nancy Chambers as editor who says: "The journal includes critical studies and appreciations of children's books and

their authors as well as historical and biographical material relevant to the field" (qtd in Silverman 196). Other academic journals founded during the twentieth century include: *Children's Literature* (1972), *Phaedrus: An International Journal of Children's Literature Research* (1973), *Canadian Children's Literature: A Journal of Criticism and Review* (1975) and *The Lion and the Unicorn: A Critical Journal of Children's Literature* (1977). Significant attention has also been given to feminist interpretations of children's literature. The following chapter interrogates the use of feminist literary theory in the analysis of children's literature and focuses specifically on the works of Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous and Judith Butler.

Chapter Two

2.1 Feminist Theory and Children's Literature

Children's literature has been explored throughout the decades using various literary theories but for the selected texts in question, with their female protagonists, feminist literary theory offers the most insightful approach to their interrogation. As such, this research utilises the conceptions of influential feminist theorists; Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous and Judith Butler and how their works assist in the analysis of the selected children's novels.

With reference to *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Secret Garden*, an intricate analysis can be performed by re-reading and re-interpreting the characterisation of the three female protagonists, the secondary female characters and the secondary male characters through the lens of feminist literary theory. Sarland examines how in the early publications of children's literature "the protagonists of most children's books tended to be white, middle-class boys" (Sarland 33). Examples of such texts include Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) and James Matthew Barrie's *Peter Pan* (1904). The argument of inequality of these texts was based on the premise that "by representing certain groups in certain ways, children's books were promoting certain values" that ultimately led to the texts later being classified as "class-biased, racist and sexist" (Sarland 33). Simons explains how "girlhood and boyhood" were seen as "separate, different and unequal in children's literature" (143). Fiction from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries encouraged the masculinity of boys and this was supported by children's texts that portrayed male characters as mischievous daredevils,

pirates, highwaymen, bandits and smugglers whose acts consisted of crimes of violence and unruly individualism (Simons 145). On the other hand the stories written for girls showed a greater deal of respect for "authority and conformity" whilst celebrating the family and home as an important genre (Simons 145). This concept of the home and female's traditional roles is evident in the analysis of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Secret Garden.*

Particular children's texts published in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century illustrated changes in the portrayal of female characters as these texts consisted of elements relating to female liberation. Examples of such texts include Lewis Caroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868) and the three twentieth century children's novels selected for the purpose of this study. In 1868, a time when women had few personal and political rights, Louisa May Alcott published *Little Women* and with it the beginning of modern projections of the female in her character Jo March (Simons 147). "Struggling against her fate as one of her mother's four little women, Jo became an emblem of independent girlhood for generations of female readers" (Simons 147). The supposed reason as to why Alcott's *Little Women* became such an idealised text is because "it was perhaps the first American book that was explicitly directed to girls as an audience, at a time when children's literature was only starting to undergo gender segregation" (Clark 105). Nineteenth century children's novels such as *Alice in Wonderland* and *Little Women* influenced the writing and reading of the selected twentieth century texts, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Anne of Green Gables* and *The Secret Garden.*

Hubler explains that “fiction that reveals female oppression and offers constructions of femininity challenging traditional ones can be a powerful resource for girls seeking liberation from patriarchy” (57). These selected children’s texts illustrate the societal struggles of female characters, and although certain elements contribute to the stereotypical ideology, these novels are stories about women’s healing and their personal journey to liberation and freedom. The historical subordination as well as the new found changes evident in children’s literature brought about an appeal for literary criticism, specifically feminist literary. In 1982 a special section entitled “Feminist Criticism and the Study of Children’s Literature” was published in the journal, *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly*; the section included a collection of essays that documented “critical lines in children’s literature” that feminist literary theorists might find worthwhile (Paul 116). In 1988 *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly* published a literary piece which focused entirely on the connection with “literary theory and children’s literature” (Phillips 223). Additionally in 1991, the journal *The Lion and the Unicorn* published an issue called “Beyond Sexism: Gender Issues in Children’s Literature” in which an inclusion of gender studies contributed to feminist criticism of children’s literature (Paul 116).

Once feminist theorists began to delve into the content of children’s literature, feminist literary theory became a prominent theory used when analysing works from this genre. Examples within Baum, Montgomery and Burnett’s selected children’s books portray female characters in stereotypically traditional roles of being motherly, submissive and passive beings. It is this feature as well as the history of the stereotypical oppression of female characters evident in children’s books that makes “appropriating feminist theory

to children's literature" a valid choice (Paul 114). Thacker explains how "children's literature must be seen in terms of its influential role in providing and constructing a variety of reading positions and offering different degrees of autonomy for the reader in the text" (3). In addition, Thacker focuses on the power of discourse and the need for feminist literary analysis as she understands the underlying messages linked to written texts promotes the move away from "masculine narratives" (4). Female characters in children's literature are not only presented as subordinate to male characters, but the personality traits of these female characters often indicate a sort of yearning for liberation from patriarchy. This desire for emancipation is evident in the portrayal of Dorothy, Anne and Mary.

The concept of feminism emerged out of women's urgency to resist the male dominance to which they had been subjected for centuries (Rivkin and Ryan 765). According to Haslanger, Tuana and O'Connor "In the mid-1800s the term 'feminism' was used to refer to 'the qualities of females', and it was not until after the First International Women's Conference in Paris in 1892 that the term, following the French term féministe, was used regularly in English for a belief in and advocacy of equal rights for women based on the idea of equality of the sexes." Haslanger, Tuana and O'Connor define feminism as "both an intellectual commitment and a political movement that seeks justice for women and the end of sexism in all forms."

Three waves of feminism have been identified. The first wave of feminism refers to the concerted movement toward the reform of women's social and legal inequalities in the nineteenth century. According to Johnson "the first wave of the U.S. Women's Movement in the United States began in 1848 with the first Women's Convention held at

Seneca Falls, New York...” In addition according to Park first wave feminism saw the founding of the “Women Writers’ Suffrage League in June 1908 by playwright Cicely Hamilton and novelist Bessie Hatton.” The intentions of female writers at the time was to demonstrate the importance and high-quality of women’s writing as well as encourage women writers to challenge the male dominated field.

Although there is no exact date dedicated to the end of first wave feminism, second wave feminism is believed to have gained momentum during the 1960s as it strengthened from the increased “reflection given to gender relations” (Nicholson 1). This particular reflection originated from “professional women who began putting the pressure on federal and state institutions to end the discrimination that women experienced in entering the paid labor force” (Nicholson 1). In addition second wave feminism witnessed an increase in feminist theorists’ writing surrounding the history of women’s subordination (Nicholson 7). The theorists selected for this study are Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous and Judith Butler, who have all contributed to second wave feminism as a literary theory. Their selected texts address the historical placement of women being subordinate to men. Although the selected children’s novels, which are to be analysed according to feminist literary theory, date back to the beginning of the twentieth century, the above mentioned feminist theorists’ literature reflect on the period in which Baum, Montgomery and Burnett’s texts were written. All four theorists’ works explore the traditional placement of women in society dating back to first wave feminism as the elements and concerns of feminist theory were evident long before the classification of the theory, therefore the selected children’s novels are analysed through a feminist literary lens.

Heywood and Drake define “feminism’s third wave as a movement that contains elements of second wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse, and power structures while it also acknowledges and makes use of the pleasure, danger, and defining power of those structures” (3). Even with the success that first and second wave feminism achieved, third wave feminism delves deeper into the gender inequalities imposed on women by society, focusing particularly on racial as well as transgender issues.

In theory feminist thought focuses on the question of “why women have played a subordinate role to men in human societies?” (Ryan 101). The subordination of women is said to have originated in primitive societies in which women served as objects of exchange through marriage. Feminist theory is, therefore, concerned with the subordination of women and how their treatment differs to that of men. Feminist literary theory, on the other hand, focuses on the study of literature and how it addresses the position of women and gender conflicts featured in texts (Ryan 101). It is a complex, dynamic area of study that draws from a wide range of critical theories including Marxism, Psychoanalysis, Cultural Materialism and Structuralism (Rooney 5). Unlike the feminist movement, feminist literary theory not only seeks to change the social stratum, but aspires to invent new substitute models of reading and writing in an attempt to determine the reasons behind and the elevation of the condition of women in the world.

Using particular theories and works of feminist theorists Beauvoir, Irigaray, Cixous and Butler, a close textual analysis of the selected children’s novels is presented. Baum, Montgomery and Burnett’s female protagonists’ characterisation is analysed according to the concepts discovered by the selected feminist theorists. Additional focus is given to the secondary female characters and the secondary male characters that appear in

the selected children's texts as their roles are of great importance when analysing the protagonists' journeys. Beauvoir's theory on the biological basis of sex and gender and her work on analysing women's roles are used to highlight the portrayal of female characters in the selected children's novels. Additionally Irigaray's identification of a feminine and masculine discourse and her opposition to the act of objectifying women are used to highlight the inequalities surrounding the representation of the male and the female characters. Cixous' work on the historically powerful position of male dominance and the need for women's emancipation are utilised when exploring the traditional placement of the female protagonists and how they struggle for liberation. Finally Butler's theory on how an individual's biology should not determine their gender and her work on role reversal are used to highlight the selected texts' examples of change in the representation of men and women.

2.2 Simone de Beauvoir

According to Manoussakis Beauvoir's most seminal work, *Le Deuxième Sexe* (1948), translated into English as *The Second Sex* in 1953, "consists of two volumes and sheds fresh light on the position of women throughout history concluding with an analysis of contemporary womanhood." Beauvoir influenced the seventies American thought as her philosophical and sociological discussions on the negative effects of prejudice against young women as well as the hope for confidence in being female were explored (Constable 676). *The Second Sex* acted as the foundation for feminist theory as Beauvoir's analysis of the female condition explores women's oppression from a biological, psychological as well as a sociological perspective. Beauvoir "saw all aspects of women's lives as distorted by a patriarchal ideology common to all cultures

throughout history, and permeating our laws, religion and literature" (Simons and Benjamin 335). In an interview conducted on 13 March 1979 in Paris, Beauvoir explains how she wrote *The Second Sex* from her own experience and in response to personal questions that she had intellectually articulated for some time (Simons and Benjamin 337). Beauvoir's text was a way of voicing her ideas regarding the ideologies surrounding women and men.

2.2.1 The Biological Basis of Sex and Gender

Within the first volume of Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, the myth of women being biologically inferior to men or commonly referred to as "the weaker sex" is criticised (Borde and Malovany-Chevallier 440). One of Beauvoir's most memorable claims is that "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (*The Second* Sex, 301). This statement illustrates Beauvoir's belief that women's position in society was created by cultural practices and beliefs rather than a specifically biological basis. "The term 'female' is derogatory not because it emphasises woman's animality, but because it imprisons her in her sex..." (Beauvoir 3). Beauvoir criticises the ideology that women have always been prejudged according to their sex (3). Being born a man holds a greater weight regarding respect and power than being born a woman. With reference to Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* text when Marilla and Matthew discover that the orphan they want to adopt is not a boy but a girl, they express great disappointment (Montgomery 18).

In the next section of the text Beauvoir additionally condemns sections of work created by leading theorists of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud and Friedrich Engels. Beauvoir

openly writes about her disapproval of Freud's belief in an Oedipus complex and equally dispels Engels' belief in "assigned roles in society" (qtd in Borde and Malovany-Chevallier 440). Her dissatisfaction is evident when Beauvoir clearly states: "Freud never showed much concern with the destiny of woman; it is clear that he simply adapted his account from that of the destiny of man, with slight modifications" (40). She condemned psychoanalytic theory, "considering it as evidence of the psychological depths of women's social and political oppression" (qtd in Simons and Benjamin 336). Beauvoir's belief emphasises the fact that women were always viewed as second to men and that men were the original and stronger model on which women and their perspectives are based. "It is among the psychoanalysts in particular that man is defined as a human being and woman as a female – whenever she behaves as a human being she is said to imitate the male" (Beauvoir 53). This can be understood as women being perceived as objects that mimic men, further illustrating their subjugated position in society.

Women are, therefore, defined as objects and not as independent beings who have the ability to think and behave on their own accord; they instead act in relation to the behaviour of men. This concept of women as objects ruled by men is evident in Burnett's *The Secret Garden*; when Colin learns of Mary's friendship with Dickon he becomes possessive over Mary and tries to limit or prevent her contact with Dickon (Burnett 98). Colin believes that Mary should only be friends with him and keep only him company, this highlights Beauvoir's theory regarding men's desire to suppress women's independence. The classification of sexual differences in the eyes of Beauvoir was seen as a form of oppression as opposed to any type of categorisation. Interestingly,

Beauvoir's identification of the biological differences between men and women in *The Second Sex* is closely linked to her personal belief and feminist activism relating to the legalising of contraception as well as abortion in France in 1967 and 1974 respectively (Kaufmann 124). Beauvoir believed that women and their bodies had become the mere object of men's desire and that this needed to be eradicated. Her activism was based on the premise that by controlling their fertility, women would be one step closer to achieving complete emancipation.

Beauvoir's efforts regarding the legalisation of contraception and abortion illustrate her desire to enable women to authorise their fertility and make their own decisions about taking on the role of motherhood. In the analysis of *Anne of Green Gables* it is apparent that the secondary female character, Marilla has chosen to reject the role of mother (Montgomery 32). Marilla's initial resistance to accepting Anne into her family suggests her lack of maternal instinct. This element within the children's text highlights Beauvoir's belief that women should be free to choose whether they want to be a mother or not. The physical fact that women bear children was seen in the eyes of Beauvoir as a way of hindering the idea that women are just as powerful and important as men. She explains how motherhood is unfortunately seen as a form of "maternity-slavery" as it does indeed turn women into slaves (qtd in Simons and Benjamin 337). Women who become mothers are confined to the home as any personal time that they had to themselves previously is restricted by their duty to raise their children. When Mary nurtures Colin back to health it is viewed in relation to the traditional placement of women as mothers. As Beauvoir sees motherhood as a form of oppression, this

element within the children's text highlights Mary's acceptance of the subjugated position of mother.

2.2.2 Women's Roles

Beauvoir's second volume evident in *The Second Sex* focuses on the concept that women are created by society and that they are given specific roles based on civilisation as opposed to biology. Beauvoir explains that "there is no difference in the attitudes of girls and boys during the first three or four years" and that it is the way in which society treats them that creates the difference (283). Within the first section of the second book the dismissal of Freud's "castration complex" appears as Beauvoir explains how many girls are not even aware of the existence of sexual organs until their later years (284). Therefore, not knowing the physical differences in sexual anatomy between them and their male counterparts, girls are undoubtedly judged and treated according to societal beliefs rather than any physical attributes. Beauvoir writes:

> Thus the passivity that is the essential characteristic of the 'feminine' woman is a trait that develops in her from the earliest years. But it is wrong to assert that a biological datum is concerned; it is in fact a destiny imposed upon her by her teachers and by society. (294)

In the nineteenth century not many critics were yet opposed to the way in which children's literature had been written. In 1886, literary critic, Edward Salmon expressed his belief in that the children's literature written for girls and boys should differ according to their gender; texts should teach girls how to be women and boys how to be men (516). Salmon's viewpoint compared with the actual fact that children's literature was

mainly written to educate children about the practical skills and lessons necessary to live a life following societal norms and strong moral codes (517). William Darton published the texts, *A Present for a Little Girl* (1797) and *A Present for a Little Boy* (1798) which consisted of short stories that were filled with societal norms and morals consistent with males and females' stereotypical roles (Simons 144). Texts written for boys "laid a heavy emphasis on adventure, service to empire, stamp collecting, taxidermy as well as science and sport" (Simons 145). Conversely, texts written for girls were often passed down by the mother and acted as a clear understanding of how "this mother is giving her child the book as a continuation of the mother's own tuition, and, in more general terms, the book is being identified as an admissible component of domestic education" (Grenby, "The Origins of Children's Literature" 12).

Beauvoir identifies adolescence as the time when the differing treatment of girls and boys is most evident, as it is during this stage that women themselves exert female chores and duties onto their female offspring (354). The adolescent girl takes on the role of "little mother" as she learns her domestic duties of caring for younger siblings, cooking, sewing and cleaning (Beauvoir 354). In *The Secret Garden* Mary is described as lacking her mother's "beautiful" qualities and it is suggested that this is due to her mother's absence. Mary has had very little contact with her mother resulting in her stilted or socially inappropriate behaviour (Burnett 7). In the analysis of *Anne of Green Gables* it is evident that once Marilla and Matthew decide to keep Anne, Marilla acknowledges the possibility of teaching Anne the things she will need to know to become a well-mannered woman (Montgomery 28). This act of teaching Anne her

domestic duties coincides with Beauvoir's theory regarding the fact that women are taught to be placed in a subordinate position by other women.

In the final chapters of *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir identifies different female roles, two that are pertinent to this study include "The Married Woman" and "The Mother" that are placed on women by society with the role of the married woman being considered "the destiny traditionally offered to women" (Beauvoir 447). In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and *Anne of Green Gables* both Dorothy and Anne desire home and the institution of the family. Dorothy's longing to return home signifies her deep seated attachment to women's traditional placement as mother and wife, roles that are associated with the home. In addition Anne longs to be a part of a family, desiring to be integrated into the traditional female roles. Beauvoir envisions the institution of marriage as the objectification of women as the female is "given in marriage by her parents" and the husband is said to "take a wife" (451). In addition the idea of a woman giving up her sexual freedom by committing herself to marriage is seen as a form of oppression as the woman in many cases has made a legal agreement to belong to her husband (Beauvoir 453).

Within the second section of *The Second Sex* Beauvoir once again explains how the role of the woman as mother is a stereotypical placement bestowed upon the female across cultures. The woman is often not only seen in relation to marriage but is valued according to her fertility and child bearing abilities. Beauvoir states that it is through motherhood and this idea of "feminine vocation that women are enslaved to the home, that they are enslaved to their husbands, enslaved to man, enslaved to housekeeping..." (qtd in Simons and Benjamin 341). Beauvoir believes that motherhood

is a form of oppression as the woman becomes set in a role that she cannot escape (518). Within the text it is important to note that Beauvoir is not against the idea of motherhood but that it should not be forced upon a woman; instead, she should have the opportunity to utilise her freedom and choose when or if she wants to become a mother.

Additionally Beauvoir refers to the portrayal of stereotypical female roles in classic modernist texts such as D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*. Lawrence evidently illustrates the two classic roles of women as mistress and mother and emphasises the stereotypical ideology that women are either one of the two (Beauvoir 520). Beauvoir explains how female characters in most texts are assigned the roles of being angelically good or devilishly bad and that no level of normalcy is ever reached. In the analysis of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* it is evident that Baum has used this structure in the creation of his female protagonist and secondary female characters. The characters are portrayed as either good or bad, no combination of the two or level of normalcy is evident.

In addition Hemingway represents the romantic female in *A Farewell to Arms* which is a classic form of feminising the woman and reinforcing the idea of sensitivity and emotion being connected to the female sex (Beauvoir 275). Although Beauvoir does not dedicate an entire chapter to children's literature, she does mention a few stereotypical female characters from children's classics such as the fairy tales of *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty* as well as Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*. The submissive and helpless tendencies of female characters are evident in many texts, particularly fairy tales, whereby the girls need saving and this can only be done by a strong, young man. The

female characters exhibit no self-reliance and instead look to their male counterparts for guidance, solutions and physical help. These stereotypical portrayals of female characters drew attention from feminist critic, Simone de Beauvoir in her work, *The Second Sex* as she refers to the negative and passive representation of heroines in fairy tales (Paul 119). The fairy tale of Cinderella "encourages the young girl to expect fortune and happiness from some Prince Charming rather than to attempt by herself their difficult and uncertain conquest" (Beauvoir 144). "With their rigidly defined gender roles (which typically ensured the subordination of women and girls) and overtly socializing function, fairy tales offered an ideal space within which to contest patriarchal notions of gender and power" (Flanagan 27). According to Thacker an element evident in fairy tales is how the "masculine" qualities of "strength, activity and triumph" are constantly opposed to the "feminine" qualities of "passivity, beauty and gentleness" (5). It is not enough that certain qualities are isolated and given to particular genders, but one group of qualities are considered to be more superior than the other is what creates total inequality in both children's literature and adult fiction. The works of the selected feminist theorists aim to eradicate such portrayals of inequality in society and with a physical and psychological change in the representation of stereotypical characters in children's literature a transformation of gendered roles can take place.

Beauvoir's text is an important exploration of the objectification of women based on the socially constructed differing in treatment of men and women as well as the social standards and norms regarding the particular roles of women in society. Her theory on the oppression of women is used in the feminist analysis of the selected children's texts

as Beauvoir's concepts cautions of female subjugation are represented in the portrayal of the female protagonists and the secondary female characters displayed in the novels.

2.3 Luce Irigaray

Luce Irigaray was born and raised in Belgium. Her "academic training began in Louvain, Belgium, where she studied for a degree and then completed a doctorate in French and Philosophy in 1955" (Rawes 5). In the 1960s she moved to Paris where she became a psychoanalyst (Gilbert and Gubar 437). Rawes identifies particular phases of Irigaray's work worth noting. Firstly when Irigaray's *Speculum de l'autre femme* was rejected by Vincennes university, it fuelled "her fierce criticism of how modern Western culture constructs social and gender relations; in particular, the control of ideas that academic disciplines, such as philosophy and psychology exert on their respective members" (5) Secondly her works from the 1970s "focus on the structures, languages and expressions that consciously *and* unconsciously inform cultural ideas about the difference ways in which women and men express themselves" (Rawes 6).

Irigaray's works deal with relationships between women and the act of exchange whereby women are treated as commodities. Irigaray's two early texts, *Speculum of the Other Woman* and *This Sex Which Is Not One* are prime examples of the exploration of the woman as "Other" as Irigaray expresses that woman does not exist "because our discourse is incapable of representing woman other than as a negative reflection of man" (qtd in Ty 215). Although her texts were mainly published in French, many of her books have appeared in English translation, including *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1974), *Elemental Passions* (1992), *Sexes and Genealogies* (1993), *An Ethics of Sexual*

Difference (1993), *Thinking the Difference: For a Peaceful Revolution* (1994) and *I Love You: Sketch for a Happiness within History* (1996).

Gilbert and Gubar explain how:

> Irigaray's approach to the psychological oppression of women, her often allusive writing style, and her engagement with the history of philosophy from Aristotle and Plato to Kant, Hegel and Emmanuel Levinas endow her meditations on the engendering of subjectivity with extraordinary nuance and range. (437)

2.3.1 Speculum of the Other Woman

Speculum of the Other Woman was first published in French in 1974 and later translated into English in 1985 (Schutte 65). Irigaray uses this text as a "mediation on the history of Western philosophy from the perspective of women" (Irigaray, "The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine" 795). Her writing surrounds the notion that subjectivity is subordinate to psychological structure of gender dominance (Schutte 65). In the opening chapter of the text, Irigaray states that "the enigma that *is* woman will therefore constitute the *target*, the *object*, the *stake* of a masculine discourse, a debate among men, which would not consult her"; further highlighting women as secondary and men as primary (13). The discourse used in the selected children's novels is analysed to illustrate how through the use of language the position of men as dominant and women as subordinate has been reinforced. Irigaray further explains that this idea of women's subordination is reinforced by the use of discourse which defines "masculine" as "active" whereas the term "feminine" connotes the "passive" (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 15). This idea is explored further when

Irigaray explains the link between masculine and feminine discourse arguing that when an individual speaks of anything masculine and links it to terms such as “powerful” or “aggressive” then belief in that connection will consume that individual’s psyche (Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* 15). In the analysis of the selected children’s texts the use of masculine and feminine discourse is apparent as the female protagonists are initially described using terms associated with feminine qualities and the secondary male characters are described according to characterisations considered to be masculine. Irigaray continues with the idea of activity and passivity when she explains the process of reproduction. “The point being that man is *the* procreator, that sexual *production-reproduction* is referable to his ‘‘activity’’ alone, to his ‘‘pro-ject’’ alone” whereas, “woman is nothing but the receptacle that passively receives *his* product…” (Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* 18). The woman is merely the “machine” that creates the “finished product” that the man “will put his trademark upon” (Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* 23). Irigaray continues to explore the inequalities of men and women by questioning the societal expectations that women should not behave in ways that could be considered “masculine”. In other words women should not demonstrate aggression or power as this will be seen as women usurping the masculine (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 20). When analysing Montgomery’s *Anne of Green Gables* Irigaray’s ideology of women being represented as passive and men as aggressive is evident as throughout the novel Anne’s behavior is constituted by her many emotional outbursts, which reiterate her position as a female.

In the sub-sections entitled “The Labor to Become a Woman” and “The Little Girl is (Only) a Little Boy” Irigaray explains the sexual development of women. She illustrates

the change of girl to woman by explaining how a girl has similar characteristics to a boy, but that as she gets older she begins to physically and socially imitate her mother and demonstrates “greater dependency”, “pliancy” and “a greater need to be shown affection” (Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* 24). These qualities that Irigaray identifies as being female are apparent in Baum’s characterisation of Dorothy; who, when realising she is unable to return home, is overcome with grief and despair (Baum 16). Before adulthood, the little girl presents the same level of aggression as the little boy, yet society censors such behaviour by treating little girls differently to little boys (Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* 25. According to Braidotti, “feminist philosophers lucidly state that sexuality is the site of power struggles and contradictions” (206). Additionally Irigaray explores this idea and believes that girls become more powerful than boys as females endure a more painful and complex developmental process to transform and become a normal woman (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 26). The complex personal journey of the three female protagonists highlights the difficulties women are required to overcome during their developmental process.

In the first section of the book Irigaray’s connection to Sigmund Freud is seen as she explores similar ideas regarding his Oedipal Complex and his interpretation of castration. Irigaray agrees with Freud regarding the sexual connection between father and daughter as well as mother and son (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 38). In addition Irigaray believes in Freud’s theory regarding the concept of the little girl in fact being a little boy (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 28). Freud and Irigaray believe that individuals of both sexes go through libidinal stages in the same way and that the little girl shows equal aggressiveness as she responds in the same way as a little boy

(*Speculum of the Other Woman* 28). In the analysis of *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Secret Garden* it is evident that Anne and Mary are both outspoken and adventurous females. Their representation coincides with Freud and Irigaray's belief in the similar qualities initially possessed by boys and girls. Irigaray, however, does not believe in all of Freud's ideologies and her greatest concern lies in the foundation of psychoanalytic theory as she believes it supports masculine ideology that fails to include the status of women. According to Falcus Irigaray does not completely reject the schools of Psychology and Philosophy, but she does recognise "the historically specific ways in which they have positioned women as matter and nature".

In the final section of the book, Irigaray uses Plato's myth to discover the origin of masculine and feminine discourse and how women became secondary regarding the terms used in language. According to Falcus in "identifying the feminine as the repressed of western culture, Irigaray seeks to establish a new ethical relation between men and women, a transformation of the symbolic order". The exploration of this concept is apparent in the analysis of the selected children's texts as the stereotypical use of feminine and masculine discourse is identified and the beginning of change in the social order is evident.

2.3.2 This Sex Which Is Not One

In Irigaray's text, *This Sex Which Is Not One* she highlights the idea that female differences and women's interests are not adequately presented by the "patriarchal symbolic order" (Weedon 123). Irigaray explores the relationship between language and bodies especially male and female bodies and masculine and feminine language

(Klages 106). This text is a feminist piece of writing that advances the ideas of separatism and the "idea that women should withdraw from patriarchy entirely and constitute an alternative arena of their own" (Irigaray, "The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine" 795).

In the first section of *This Sex Which Is Not One*, Irigaray explains how "female sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters" (200). A woman's sexuality is only expressed according to her role of providing a man with pleasure – her sexual needs and desires are not the concern. Woman is, therefore, seen as "the beautiful object of contemplation" (Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One* 385).

In her discussion of the objectification of women, Irigaray explains that it is not just the female sex organ and woman's pleasure that is objectified but that "woman is never anything more than the scene of more or less rival exchange between two men, even when they are competing for the possession of mother-earth"; suggesting that women are viewed as an object used only for men's purposes (*This Sex Which Is Not One* 389). The rivalry between Colin and Dickon in *The Secret Garden* indicates the objectification of Mary as Colin feels the need to compete with Dickon in order to win Mary's affection; Mary's own feelings are not taken into account. Irigaray highlights how women fail to experience any advantage from their objectified situation and are instead used for men's pleasure, housework and reproduction (*This Sex Which Is Not One* 389). Irigaray argues for separation of women from men so that "female commodities" who are traded by men can have their own identities and their own lives ("Women on the Market" 799). To a man, the possession of a woman is vital for the reproductive

value that she represents; however, the man wants to have access to more than one woman as he wants "to "accumulate" them, to be able to count off his conquests, seductions and possessions, both sequentially and cumulatively, as measure or standard" (Irigaray, "Women on the Market" 801). It can be said that men have taken the power to use a wide selection of women for their personal pleasure all the while not taking into consideration the feelings or identities of their female partners.

Irigaray focuses on women's historical sexual abasement and her belief that women will remain inferior if they do not emancipate themselves. She believes that "a woman's (re)discovery of herself can only signify the possibility of not sacrificing any of her pleasures to another, of not identifying with anyone in particular and of never being simply one" (*This Sex Which Is Not One* 388). The key to change is in the creation of a feminine imaginary as within this realm women would be able to transform and assume subjectivity (Weedon 123). Therefore, Irigaray argues that the goal of women is to defy their position as object and become their own subject. This defiance is evident in the selected children's texts as the three protagonists strive towards achieving emancipation by focusing on their personal goals and pleasures.

2.4 Hélène Cixous

According to Schiach "Hélène Cixous was born in Oran, Alergia in 1937 to a Jewish family, and her family history expresses much of the complexity of ethnic and national identities in twentieth century Europe and related regions." Cixous' childhood consisted of shifting back and forth between Algeria and France during a time when Algeria was fighting for independence. In 1955, at the beginning of the Algerian War, Cixous moved

to Paris where she studied English literature (Gilbert and Gubar 414). In 1968, Cixous received her doctorate for her work, *The Exile of James Joyce or the Art of Replacement* at 31 years. According to Shiach 1969 proved to be an eventful year for Cixous as it marked the publishing of her first novel, *Dedans,* which was awarded the Prix Médicis for French literature and her participation in founding the experimental University of Paris VIII at Vincennes. In addition to Cixous' many achievements, she has been viewed as an important figure in the French women's movement since "the years following the student uprising of May 1968" (Jerinic 77).

The purpose of Cixous' works involves engaging in "the psychoanalytic ideas of Jacques Lacan and the deconstruction theory of Jacques Derrida" in order to "affirm the value of the devalued, feminine component in what has been historically subordinated, marginalised and repressed in traditional discourses" (Gilbert and Gubar 414). In an interview with Kathleen O'Grady in March 1996, Cixous explains that "an ethical writing style (which women in particular can access) that is able, through a phonetic inscription of the feminine body, its pulsions and flows, to open up and embrace the difference of the other" (6). "Cixous has written a number of articles and books in both literary criticism and philosophy" (O'Grady 6). Some of her original French works include; *Prénoms de personne* (1974) and *La Jeune née* (1975), *Portrait de Dora* (1976), *La Venue à l'écriture (1977), Le Livre de Promethea* (1983), *L'Indiade; ou, l'Inde de leurs rêves* (1987), *Manne: aux Mandelstams aux Mandelas* (1988), *L'Heure de Clarice Lispector* (1989), *Jours de l'an* (1990) and *L'Ange au secret* (1991)

2.4.1 The Laugh of the Medusa

Cixous' original French text, "Le Rire de la Méduse" ("The Laugh of the Medusa") which appeared in *L'Arc* (1975) was successfully revised and translated into English by authors Keith and Paula Cohen in 1976. The text is considered to be "the manifesto of Cixous' text "Écriture Féminine" (Jerinic 78). Cixous' literary work addresses the issue that women should write as women and about women in order to bring all women to writing. "Woman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history – by her own movement" (Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" 875). The title of Cixous' article alludes to the myth of Medusa, the woman with snakes for hair and whose look transforms men to stone. Cixous' inclusion of the Greek myth in the title of her text is used to highlight the concept of myths in general and particularly the one relating to the non-existence of women's freedom in writing as well as their own lives. Zajko and Leonard explain that "Cixous makes it clear that her project involves more than a defiant rejection of the existing order. It is also a profoundly creative political engagement with the way things could have been" (3). Cixous illustrates the importance of myth in understanding women's historically subjugated position and that only once the past appears as a myth, can change in the social order take place. Cixous' focus surrounds her idea that "the future must no longer be determined by the past" ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 875). A move towards the future is Cixous' hope as repeating the past and the inequalities that it represents between men and women, only hinders the ability for improvement. Cixous identifies this historical indoctrination of women's subordination as the reason why women hate themselves, and other women, leading to the impossibility of transformation as a gender (Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" 878). Furthermore

Verena Conley writes in her book, *Hélène Cixous: Writing the Feminine* (1991) of how the mythical Medusa's laugh can be seen as a powerful medium that "shatters the negative moment of death and brings women to life and movement" (56). Cixous' belief is that an end is in sight as long as women unite and stand up for themselves. The idea of rejecting the past oppression of women is evident in the selected children's texts as Baum, Montgomery and Burnett have included certain characters and incidents' that highlight the move towards change in the social order.

Cixous' text focuses on the intended reader for the text being women: "When I say 'woman,' I'm speaking of woman in her inevitable struggle against conventional man; and of a universal subject who must bring women to their senses and to their meaning in history" (Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" 875). The discussion continues and directly addresses the insecurities that women possess with regard to writing and the fact that writing has, for many years, been considered as something that is only "reserved for the great – that is, for 'great men'" (Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" 876). Additionally in "The Laugh of the Medusa", "Hélène Cixous targets the centrality of language in the construction of feminine identity in her work, and French feminist scholars have made women's language a central facet of their cultural critique" (Cordón 42). In particular, Cixous sees language as being the foundation for female oppression and appeals to her female readers when she states:

> It is time to liberate the New Woman from the Old by coming to know her – by loving her for getting by, for getting beyond the Old without delay, by going out ahead of what the New Woman will be, as an arrow quits the bow with a

> movement that gathers and separates the vibrations musically, in order to be more than her self. (Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" 878)

Cixous explains how a woman must write as herself as it will allow her to carry out her transformation at both individual and public levels and believes that a woman's only form of emancipation is through her writing herself ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 880). The association of feminine language with female characters is evident in the selected works of Baum, Montgomery and Burnett, further illustrating how language has the power to further oppress women. Similar to Irigaray, Cixous' "The Laugh of the Medusa" "shatters the placid surface constituted by the petrifying gaze and which exposes the dialectic of Same and Other as taking place through the axis of sexual difference" (Butler, "Gender Trouble" 131). In this statement Judith Butler expresses how Cixous has contributed to the emancipation of women by highlighting the importance of rejecting the historical placement of women as other and men as the active participant in the social order.

2.4.2 The Newly Born Woman

In 1975 Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément co-authored the book *La Jeune née* which was later translated into English in 1985 by Betsy Wing. The first section of *The Newly Born Woman*, entitled "The Guilty One" and written by Clément "explores the cultural meaning of the sorceress and the hysteric, using a variety of texts and figures from medieval witches to Freud's patients" (Eagleton 110). Cixous' section of the book entitled "Sorties" "seeks to uncover the feminine and to provide women with escape routes from a negative and marginal historical position" (Eagleton 110). The third and

final section of the book is entitled “Exchange” and is written in the form of a dialogue between Clément and Cixous. Cixous’ “Sorties” begins with the question, “Where is she?”, which ultimately focuses the context of her writing (348). She connects the question of women’s position by utilising the terms “logocentrism” and “phallocentrism” (Cixous, “Sorties” 350) “Logocentrism” is the attitude that *logos* (the Greek term for speech, thought, law, or reason) is the central principle of language and philosophy” (Powell 33) and “phallocentrism is the condition where the phallus, signifier of the symbolic order of masculine power, is privileged as the dominant perspective” (Flood, Gardiner, Pease and Pringle 475). Cixous uses these terms in her text as a way of explaining how language and thought are connected and that certain words represent particular ideas – especially words that certify woman’s position as the other. In addition she explains how this idea of language is used to maintain male supremacy and female subordination (Cixous, “Sorties” 350).

Furthermore Cixous uses the ancient understanding of opposites to emphasise the position of women as she writes: “activity/passivity”, “sun/moon” and “man/woman” (“Sorties” 348). She explains how thought works through the idea of opposites and everything is seen in relation to what it is not. The act of victory is witnessed with relation to hierarchy and order which in turn alludes to the idea of activity and passivity – men versus women (Cixous, “Sorties” 349). Cixous explains how sexual differences and the way in which philosophy has maintained women’s subordination are often related to the idea of opposites and particularly the idea of activity versus passivity as “woman is always associated with passivity in philosophy” (“Sorties” 349). Either a woman is seen as being passive or she does not exist as those are the only options given to her by

society (Cixous, “Sorties” 349). When analysing the selected children’s texts it is apparent that the use of feminine and masculine discourse is used to identify the traditional contrasting roles between men and women, however, Baum, Montgomery and Burnett attempt to utilise masculine discourse in the descriptions of their female characters to illustrate the potential for change. In Cixous’ text she continues to explain the “natural” order in society and questions what would happen if the foundation of male supremacy were destroyed (“Sorties” 350). The three writers of the selected children’s texts illustrate this possibility for change in the “natural” order, even though these novels were written during the period of strict social tradition and regarding the prescribed roles of men and women.

Cixous identifies what she calls “The Masculine Future” and in this section she focuses on a reconsideration of bisexuality (“Sorties” 351). She ultimately refers to two types of bisexuality, the first idea focuses on “bisexuality as a fantasy of a complete being, which replaces the fear of castration and veils sexual difference…” (Cixous, “Sorties” 351). This first idea of bisexuality highlights the belief in unity and the concept of two within one instead of two wholes (Cixous, “Sorties” 352). Cixous’ second idea of bisexuality is based on the premise that everybody should be responsible for their “erotic universe” and that “the location within oneself of the presence of both sexes, evident and insistent in different ways according to the individual, the non-exclusion of difference or of a sex…” can be utilised to allow people to develop their sexuality without prejudice (“Sorties” 352). In addition Cixous explains that the fear of homosexuality stems from men’s fear to be feminine as the underlying representation of women is seen as being inferior to men. Therefore the stigma surrounding homosexuality and bisexuality is

connected to the idea of men wanting to maintain their position of power even if it means forgoing their personal sexuality (Cixous, "Sorties" 352). The idea of an individual possessing the presence of both sexes can be envisioned as a form of balance between men and women. If men had more "feminine" qualities and women had more "masculine" qualities, equality between the sexes could be reached. Baum, Montgomery and Burnett illustrate this possibility through the creation of their female and male characters. One example is taken from the analysis of *Anne of Green Gables* where Matthew practices a type of passivity, usually associated with females. He is described as being shy and allows his sister, Marilla, who appears to have masculine qualities herself, to be the leader when it comes to decision-making. However, these qualities do not portray Matthew or Marilla as unacceptable characters, instead they are portrayed as good examples of how the equality amongst the sexes is possible.

In the final section of *The Newly Born Woman* an illustration of the shared and different interests of Clément and Cixous is given (Eagleton 110). When asked about the use of a "master-discourse" as connecting to masculine power Cixous responds: "…it is a refusal on my part to leave organized discourse entirely in men's power. I never fell for that sort of bait" (Cixous, "Exchange" 111). Cixous explains how women do not need to use master-discourse, that is male-dominated, but instead are encouraged to create their own master-discourse as she has explained that "there will be not *one* feminine discourse but thousands of different kinds of feminine words" that women would have created as their own ("Exchange" 111). Cixous continues by stating that "the one who is in the master's place, even if not the master of knowledge, is in a position of power" and the only way to stop that master is to eliminate him ("Exchange" 114). At the end of *The*

Wonderful Wizard of Oz the Lion, the Tin Woodman and the Scarecrow are all given land and subordinates to rule over, indicating the historical return of these male characters to a position of power. In relation to this, Cixous appeals to women to trade places – to become the master instead of being the slave. Women need to become the master with knowledge as knowledge is a direct link to power (Cixous, "Exchange" 116). In addition Cixous explains how in order to change the world, people need to be active participants in the process of change by "scratching" and "tearing" at the surface of the world ("Exchange" 119). Although Dorothy is not given land and people to rule, she does achieve her heart's desire, to return home. This connects with the concept of changing women's roles, from slave to master, as all three selected children's novels emphasise the possibility of women being the masters of their own journeys. The personal development of Dorothy, Anne and Mary are easily viewed in relation to each female protagonist being in control of her own destiny.

It is important to understand that Clément and Cixous differ in opinions in the final section "Exchange" as to what type of woman should take a stand; however they do agree on the idea that the general route taken by women for liberation should be "one of writing rebelliously, thereby bringing a feminine subject into existence and history" (Wright and Chisholm 419). Overall the idea of both Clément and Cixous' work in the text *The Newly Born Woman* "is that if women are going to take part in history they must write themselves into it", regardless of their biggest challenge of the dominant culture being masculine (Wright and Chisholm 418).

2.5 Judith Butler

According to Rottenberg Judith Butler was born on 24 February 1956 in Cleveland, Ohio and is considered to be one of the most prominent and influential feminist theorists whose groundbreaking book, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) introduced the notion of "gender performativity" in which gender and subjectivity are the main concerns. Riley acknowledges how Butler's follow-up collection of essays entitled *Undoing Gender* (2004) is a fundamental piece of work that once again is based on gender performativity; however, it explores gender and sexuality outside societal norms. Jagger states: "Butler's work combines aspects of feminist theory and philosophy, lesbian and gay studies, and queer theory, as well as increasingly drawing on aspects of psychoanalysis" (1). Butler completed her undergraduate Bachelor of Arts degree at Bennington College and obtained her doctorate in philosophy at Yale University (Appelrouth and Edles 622). In addition Butler has taught at Wesleyan, George Washington, John Hopkin's University and at the University of California. According to Rottenberg Butler's first book entitled *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France* was published as a revised version of her dissertation in 1987 and acted as a foundation for the publishing of other essays, articles and books. Some of Butler's texts include: *Bodies That Matter: On The Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (1993), *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (1997), *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (1997), *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death* (2000) and *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence* (2004).

In her works, Butler's intention has been "to dismantle or destabilise the distinction between gender and sex that had animated so many earlier feminist thinkers" (Gilbert and Gubar 708). Butler "argues that categories that are often assumed to be natural, like gender, sexuality and the body, have always been defined to serve particular political agendas" (qtd in Smedman 61). According to Martin and Barresi, Butler's impression of feminist theory differs from most theorists as she contrastingly believes that "feminism made a mistake by trying to assert that "women" are a group with common characteristics and interests" (269). Butler rejected the traditional concept that all women can be classified as one group, as this "allowed no room for choice, difference, or resistance" (Martin and Barresi 269).

Butler's work has had an enormous impact on feminist theory, cultural studies, philosophy and queer studies and "while she has mostly engaged in philosophical and political questions, her contribution to literary studies has been significant". In addition Smedman explains how Butler's writing is considered to be "a model of interdisciplinary scholarship, combining feminist, structuralist, psychoanalytic and deconstructive methodologies" (62).

2.5.1 Gender Trouble

In *Gender Trouble*, Butler highlights the idea that "gender identity is not innate, but rather a set of behaviours that all members of a culture perform" (qtd in Smedman 61). In addition the text looks at the way in which feminism obeys "notions of identity that reinforce binary categories and logic" (Smedman 62). *Gender Trouble* is separated into three parts, namely, "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire", "Prohibition, Psychoanalysis, and

the Production of the Heterosexual Matix" and "Subversive Bodily Acts." The first section of the book focuses on feminist politics and how women's identity exists through "political representation" (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 3). Butler believes that the formation of language and politics represents women as "the subject of feminism" and it is this ideology that creates obstacles for women (*Gender Trouble* 3). Butler argues that it is unacceptable to assume that women are all the same and share a universal identity.

> The political assumption that there must be a universal basis for feminism, one which must be found in an identity assumed to exist cross-culturally, often accompanies the notion that the oppression of women has some singular form discernible in the universal or hegemonic structure of patriarchy or masculine domination. (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 5)

As the chapter continues Butler focuses on what she calls "the compulsory order of sex, gender and desire" (*Gender Trouble* 8). In this section she discusses the difference between sex and gender and how sex is biologically based whereas gender is culturally constructed (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 8). Butler emphasises this idea by stating that sex remains constant, but any gender can be transformed to a particular person regardless of their biology (*Gender Trouble* 9). A male may possess femininity whereas a female can easily be considered masculine. This could be further explained by picturing a quiet, submissive man and a powerful, aggressive woman – although their sexes are constant, their genders are considered to be altered. The changing of these gendered qualities is evident in the construction of Baum, Montgomery and Burnett's characters; an alteration encouraged by Butler and should be considered the standard in social development.

The second chapter of *Gender Trouble* focuses on the "psychoanalytic structuralist account of sexual difference and the construction of sexuality with respect to its power to contest the regulatory regimes" (Butler 46). In this section, Butler explains that although psychoanalytic theory is "extremely significant and clearly influential, it has come to occupy a hegemonic position within the emerging canon of feminist theory" (*Gender Trouble* 90). Butler continues to emphasise the limitations of psychoanalytic theory and specifically Jacques Lacan's work regarding identification and the idea that "multiple and coexisting identifications produce conflicts, convergences, and innovative dissonances within gender configurations which contest the fixity of masculine and feminine placements with respect to paternal law" (*Gender Trouble* 91). Butler's belief in the idea of identification lies in the resistance of labelling genders according to their biology and instead allowing every individual the ability to discover his or her own identification without the pressures of a binary structure (*Gender Trouble* 91). She focuses on the notion that individuals should be free to develop their gender and sexuality without the demands of society (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 105). Generalisations should be avoided in order for men and women to develop independently from their cultural structures. In the analysis of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* it is evident that Baum's initial description of Dorothy and the act of her finding water in order to wash her face clean, illustrates the generalisations placed on women in society to appear pure and perfectly groomed. In addition *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Secret Garden* first introduce the female protagonists as being deviant from the norm, this is precisely the type of categorising that Butler seeks to eliminate.

The third and final section of the text focuses on the criticism of other theorists such as Kristeva, Foucault and Wittig, with regard to their work on sex and gender. Butler explains that these theorists' possible solutions to the sex and gender debate are ultimately flawed as they end up representing "the very order they wish to contest" (McIntosh 114). Butler explains how these and other theorists reject the idea that an individual's biology should determine their life structure, however, their works still revolve around the idea of a patriarchal society and that males and females are determined by masculine and feminine acts. Butler warns theorists about constantly using oppressive terms to explain and emancipate the position of women as it has an opposite effect (*Gender Trouble* 126). In addition Butler expresses how not only discourse but race, class and sexuality all form a crucial part in determining a person's gender and that it is not their biological sex that depicts their masculine and feminine characteristics (*Gender Trouble* 127). Butler uses the example of dressing in drag to reiterate her perspective of gender being socially constructed. Stone develops this notion: "Men getting up in drag, doing the gestures and postures and wearing the clothes which signify femininity, shows that 'being' feminine is just a matter of doing certain activities" (64). This concept supports Butler's ideology that gender is performative and that anyone of any sex can perform activities commonly associated with being male or female.

Modern children's literature has been written with more freedom as many traditional boundaries relating to gender and race are crossed with the publishing of each new text. "Writers for children and adolescents have embraced feminist principles in their new desire to promote feminine agency and interrogate normative constructs of gender

and sexuality" (Flanagan 26). Role reversal, cross-dressing as well as the physical swopping of bodies has become a prominent feature in modern children's novels (Paul 121). Baum, Montgomery and Burnett explore the possibility of role reversal with regards to gender performativity in their selected children's novels as many characters perform activities traditionally associated with the opposite gender.

Towards the end of the final chapter of *Gender Trouble,* Butler focuses on the connection of the power of language to gendered subjects. Butler uses the works of Monique Wittig to explain how "concepts, categories and abstractions can affect a physical and material violence against the bodies they claim to organise and interpret" (*Gender Trouble* 158). Similar concepts are found in the works of Beauvoir, Irigaray, Cixous and Butler explains how language can be used to either cause sexual oppression or to fight against it; however, she believes that the power lies in the way in which language is used (*Gender Trouble* 158). Women are seen as "the particular" whereas men are seen as "universal" and it is this notion in language that Butler seeks to change (*Gender Trouble* 160).

Butler's overall ideology evident in her work, *Gender Trouble* deals with breaking traditional norms, criticising academic material that contributes to oppression and ultimately focusing on an individual's potential to be whoever they want to be regardless of what society expects from them.

2.5.2 Undoing Gender

According to Riley, Butler's text *Undoing Gender* was published in 2004 and consists of a collection of eleven essays all of which deal with her work on gender and sexuality. In

this text Butler continues with her earlier examination on gender performativity and focuses particularly on the idea of what enables an individual to be classified as human. Chinn explains how Butler's text deals with the question of "what constitutes a liveable life" (315). Butler believes that "liveability is constituted by not only access to love and sociability, but also the possibility of imagining one's own life" (qtd in Chinn 316). This imagining for feminists would suggest freedom for people and women in particular focusing on the idea that in order to imagine one's own life, one needs freedom. In Butler's opening essay entitled, "Beside Oneself: On the Limits of Sexual Autonomy" she questions the identity of human beings. Butler discusses how an individual is made up of himself or herself in their private capacity and himself and herself that belongs to society (*Undoing Gender* 21).

Butler additionally focuses on the challenges that gender normativity poses for human beings as transsexuals, intersexuals and homosexuals put into question their very existence due to what society believes are gender norms (*Undoing Gender* 33). Her work continues to address the inequalities posed to individuals that are not considered to be acceptable by society's standards. Butler emphasises her frustration toward not only society's norms, but the fact that society is patriarchally structured. Butler blames psychoanalysis for its influence in what she calls the "binary structure" and uses the familial nuclear structure to illustrate one's supposed identity (*Undoing Gender* 102). In the selected children's novels the abolition of the structure of the nuclear family is evident as there is an overall absence of biological parents. At some point during the texts Dorothy, Anne and Mary are orphans, signifying the rejection of the stereotypical structure of the family and alluding to the possibility of future changes in the social

order. According to Riley, Butler not only challenges the family structures identified by theorists and followed by society; like Beauvoir, she criticises the institution of marriage as she focuses again on the inequalities posed by the union. Butler expresses her belief in gay marriage and homosexuality in general as she believes that every individual has a unique gender, but that society is only interested in viewing the socially constructed one.

In her discussions regarding society's norms and the presupposed gender that an individual should have according to their sex, Butler uses the story of David Reimer who was born in 1965 and was medically given female genitalia after a botched circumcision at eight months (*Undoing Gender* 59). Medical experts believed that Reimer would become feminine and would ultimately take on the female gender because his biological sex had been altered. However, Reimer ended up being a heterosexual male. Butler uses this case study to explain how those individuals who do not fit into society's perfect definition of male or female gender, should independently choose their gender and defend it (*Undoing Gender* 74). Butler explains that one's sex does not determine one's gender and that many women and men feel trapped as children growing up (*Undoing Gender* 72). Butler encourages the notion that children should be free to make their own choices according to gender instead of being forced to play with dolls or cars according to their sex. The title of the text refers to an individual's choice to undo the associated gender that society has given them and instead be liberated by the choice that they have made.

During the analysis of the selected children's texts the concept of gender performativity is evident as certain characters are portrayed according to the stereotypes placed on

them by society. The initial representation of the female protagonists highlights this idea as Dorothy, Anne and Mary are expected to behave in a ladylike manner, reinforcing their female status according to gendered performances. There are sections within the novels, however, where Baum, Montgomery and Burnett attempt to eradicate the traditional and gendered activities and duties that are usually associated with a particular sex. Dorothy's act of saving the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman and the Lion illustrates the rejection of gender performances based on her being female. Anne's outspoken nature and Mary's desire for adventure additionally demonstrate Butler's theory surrounding the possibility of eliminating society's gendered roles.

In addition Butler not only focuses on the idea of an individual holding the power to change, she also urges society to change as she explains that if one cannot imagine their own life as it brings about feelings of shame and what she calls "a social death", an individual will never truly gain the strength to make the necessary adjustments in their lives to be happy (*Undoing Gender* 22). Behaviours and performances in society are determined by repetition such as when a girl becomes a woman, she marries a man, has two children and lives happily ever after. It is this mindset that Butler aims to change as she discusses gay marriage, transgender identity and queer parenting (Chinn 316). It is through this belief that Butler's connection to feminist theory can be seen as she encourages people to not take the societal route that is considered "normal" but instead be free to do as they please regardless of what judgments might be imposed upon them by society, advocating that women should marry and have children because they want to and not because they are following society's norms (Chinn 316).

The end of her text *Undoing Gender* is a rather personal account of Butler's life as she introduces herself to her readers. Butler explains her connection to philosophy and that it is a part of an individual's life (Chinn 317). Butler believes that philosophy helps people understand their lives and can act as a form of helping and even saving themselves (Chinn 317). The liberated way in which she prides herself as being a woman, especially a non-normative one, inspires many feminist theorists as her emancipation is based on her own vision of society and not on patriarchy.

As the three chosen texts centralise the female protagonists, the secondary female and the male characters according to the subjugated position of women as well as the emergence of women's gained freedom, feminist literary theory is an appropriate selection used for analysis, as evidenced in the following chapter. The works of feminist theorists Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous and Judith Butler shaped the development of feminist literary theory and the potential for analysis of literature using feminist thinking. Beauvoir's classification of women's roles, Irigaray and Cixous' findings on feminine and masculine discourse and Butler's defiance of traditional gender stereotypes are factors that are evident in the three children's texts selected for study.

Chapter Three - Feminist Analysis of the Selected Texts

3.1 *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

3.1.1 An Analysis of Dorothy

The creation of Dorothy as a female protagonist in Baum's children's novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* sparked a change in an era bursting with male orientated children's literature. The usual pattern for children's literature would have been to have Dorothy portrayed as a young boy setting off on an adventure filled with dangerous, unknown territory culminating in self-discovery. Although Dorothy is presented as a self-reliant young lady, certain elements within the text support the notion of stereotypes and the portrayal of the traditional roles of women. Many of Dorothy's qualities contest female subordination, however. Baum uses certain aspects of Dorothy's character to emphasise the deep seated notions of female oppression. Ruth Moynihan's article "Ideologies in Children's Literature: Some Preliminary Notes" explains how "stories told or written for children are often indicators of the dominant values within a society" and this can be seen in Baum's representation of Dorothy (166).

There are few, but relevant, moments where Dorothy's behaviour coincides with the traditional representation of women and, therefore, these instances are worth mentioning. One of the first of these stereotypical attributes of Dorothy is evident in Baum's failure to defy any social norms or values when creating the physical appearance of his female lead. Baum's initial description of Dorothy's appearance is apparent when the narrator refers to Dorothy as "the little girl" (8). The term "little" is a prime example of the stereotypical way in which female characters are portrayed.

Before the reader learns anything more about Dorothy, they are given the details of her diminutive size. This reference to Dorothy's small structure alludes to the image of her being weak and rather insignificant and therefore contributes to the representation of the female as powerless. Additionally an entire page in the novel is dedicated to Dorothy's dress and cleanliness. Baum describes Dorothy's dress as having "checks of white and blue; and although somewhat faded with many washings, it was still a pretty frock" (18). A rather thorough explanation of Dorothy's sanitation follows as Baum expresses how she "washed herself carefully, dressed herself... and tied her pink sunbonnet on her head" (19). Such a description coincides with that of a traditional little girl from the late nineteenth century. Baum's mention of Dorothy's hygiene connects to feminine qualities of purity and cleanliness as girls are stereotypically supposed to be clean and tidy, whereas boys are allowed to be dirty and messy when out on an adventure. Furthermore the inclusion of Dorothy's "pink sunbonnet" completes the image of a stereotypical girl, with the colour pink of the headpiece representing the perfect feminine shade. Baum's description of Dorothy's dress and hygiene is not only mentioned in the beginning of the book, but is evident throughout the text. When Dorothy travels to the Wicked Witch of the West she is described as wearing "a pretty silk dress" – one that she was given whilst in the Emerald City (Baum 79). Additionally when beginning her journey with the Scarecrow, Dorothy insists on finding water and when the Scarecrow questions this action she explains that she must wash her face clean (Baum 30). Furthermore before Dorothy presents herself to the good witch, Glinda, she washes her face and combs her hair (Baum 138). Critic and author, Judith Butler explores the idea of resisting the identification of genders according to their

biological basis and instead believes in the encouragement of individuals to develop their gender without relying on the demands of society (*Gender Trouble* 105). Although Dorothy's description is suited to the late nineteenth century, Baum's creation contributes to the female restraint that Butler discusses and is opposed to as she believes that the expectations of society, with regards to one's behaviour as well as appearance, is what maintains traditional typecasting.

Dorothy's desire to get back home is another example of female submission. Dorothy explains how her aunt and uncle will be worried about her if she does not return to Kansas (Baum 15). Dorothy's reaction signifies her conformity to authority as she is described as being "anxious" when she thinks about how upset her family will be at the discovery of her absence (Baum 15). Additionally at the end of the novel Dorothy explains herself to Glinda, the good witch, and once again her intentions focus on her family:

> My greatest wish now is to get back to Kansas, for Aunt Em will surely think something dreadful has happened to me, and that will make her put on mourning; and unless the crops are better this year than they were last I am sure Uncle Henry cannot afford it. (Baum 139)

Dorothy's concern and sense of responsibility for her family's well-being is representative of feminine behaviour. Girls' contribution to the family is defined by their good behaviour as peacemakers. Society's representation of female children is that they should pose no trouble and instead do as they are told to the best of their abilities. This position of girls in society is apparent in Dorothy as she emphasises how Aunt Em

will “put on mourning” once she realises that Dorothy is missing (Baum 139). There is more emphasis on the possibility that Dorothy’s absence has disrupted the family than on her own desire to return home.

Furthermore when Dorothy is first informed that there is no possible way of going back home and that she will have to live with the Munchkins, she begins to sob because she feels lonely and helpless among the strange people (Baum 16). Dorothy’s emotional outburst once again indicates the stereotypical portrayal of women as traditionally women are viewed as being emotional and sensitive, whereas men are more physical and stoic. Feminist theorist Luce Irigaray explains how the differences of men and women are only seen once they begin to mature and when this happens, the girl will begin to demonstrate “greater dependency”, “pliancy” and “a greater need to show affection” (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 24). This distinct societal development that differentiates girls and boys is exhibited in Baum’s creation of Dorothy as at first she does not want to partake in any adventure, but instead wants to return home demonstrating her dependence on her family. Additionally when Dorothy believes that there is no solution to her problem she is overcome by feelings of sadness – emotions associated with femininity.

Another important aspect revealing the performative stereotyping of women evident in the character of Dorothy is how she puts her faith in the wizard, Oz. Dorothy believes that the male wizard holds the power to grant her wish and that he is the only one who will be able to help her return home. She is unaware of the power that she has and that it is the magic shoes that she has been given that will ultimately help her return to Kansas. Dorothy does not need to rely on the abilities of the male wizard, however, she

stereotypically believes that this older male character is the only one who can set things right once again. This belief in male supremacy is criticised in the works of theorist Simone de Beauvoir as she rejects society's belief that being born a man holds greater weight with reference to respect and power (3). This traditional belief is precisely what Baum illustrates in his novel as Dorothy not only believes in Oz's power herself, but she even goes as far as suggesting that her friends visit "the great Oz" in order for their wishes to be granted too (Baum 23). At each point when Dorothy meets one of her companions she encourages them to visit Oz, as evidenced in her invitation to Scarecrow: "If you will come with me I'll ask Oz to do all he can for you" (Baum 23). It is the blind faith that Dorothy has in a man she has never met that detracts from the self-reliance she unknowingly possesses and instead highlights the traditional role of woman as being inferior to and dependent on a man.

This subjugation of women witnessed in Baum's writing is once again exhibited when Dorothy meets Oz. An intense build up contributes to Dorothy's meeting of Oz as he is suddenly not only referred to as "the great Oz", but additionally he is called "Oz the Terrible" (Baum 69). The connotations connected to words such as "great" and "terrible" indicate the stereotypically masculine qualities said to be possessed by Oz and other male characters. Feminist writer Hélène Cixous specifically addresses the word "great" in her text "The Laugh of the Medusa" as she explains that the act of writing is only "reserved for the great – that is for 'great' men" (876). These words, therefore, enhance the powerful position of Baum's male wizard as he is considered to be impressive, famous and feared – qualities typically associated with males as opposed to females. In contrast when Dorothy hears these words used to present Oz, she introduces herself as

"Dorothy, the Small and Meek" and immediately asks for his assistance (Baum 70). The terms "small" and "meek" act as a direct reference to the traditional oppression of women as Dorothy, the protagonist, fails to give herself any power and diminishes her position, describing herself as being unimportant, undersized and submissive. What is even more interesting is how Baum does not illustrate the contrasting descriptions of Oz and Dorothy once, but a number of times throughout the novel. When Oz asks Dorothy why he should help her she responds by saying "because you are strong and I am weak; because you are a Great Wizard and I am only a helpless little girl" (Baum 71). The evidence of the power of discourse is unmistakable in this chapter as words are used to reinstate the powerless nature of women in society. In her article "The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine", Irigaray discusses the strength that particular words have in maintaining stereotypical ideology (Schutte 65). Irigaray's argument revolves around the idea that the use of stereotypically masculine or feminine words to describe people contributes to their traditional position in society – men as the primary and women as the secondary (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 13). Therefore, Baum's use of contrasting words in the description of Oz and of Dorothy is significant as they represent the masculine and feminine discourse that retains the stereotypical roles imposed on a specific gender by society.

Although Baum maintains certain stereotypical ideology by using Dorothy's appearance as well as examples of feminine and masculine discourse, the entire concept of creating a female protagonist connects to the idea of female liberation as generally nineteenth and early twentieth centuries children's literature was the epitome of male character

dominance. The use of a female lead character was deviant and therefore interesting as usually adventure novels contained male-child protagonists.

In the text, besides Baum providing Dorothy with stereotypical characteristics, he contrastingly gives her qualities that are considered to be opposite to those generally believed to be possessed by little girls. Firstly, the history of children's novels, especially fairy tales witnessed the submissive tendencies of female characters. The women and girls in the text were more often in need of saving by a male character who would take on the role of hero. In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, however, Dorothy is the one who acts as a heroine. When Dorothy meets each of her three friends along her journey, she rescues them from their personal predicaments. The Scarecrow has been placed on a pole for some time and is only saved when Dorothy lifts him off it (Baum 22). In addition when Dorothy meets the Tin Woodman he is rusted and cannot move so Dorothy fetches an oil-can and oils his joints in order to rescue him (Baum 32). Finally, Dorothy comes across the Lion and not only does she save Toto by smacking the Lion across the nose, she rescues the Lion from himself as she suggests that he join the journey in order to be given courage by Oz (Baum 38). Dorothy not only saves her three companions, she also saves the Munchkins from the Wicked Witch of the East (Baum 12) and the Winkies from the Wicked Witch of the West (Baum 88). Although Dorothy does not intentionally kill the wicked witches, her actions are nonetheless instrumental in their demise as the Wicked Witch of the East is destroyed when Dorothy's house falls upon her (Baum 12) and the Wicked Witch of the West melts into oblivion when Dorothy throws a bucket of water on her (Baum 88). Dorothy's acts as rescuer fulfills the role of the classic hero, a role typically played by male characters. The reversal of roles is

evident in the novel as Dorothy takes on the role of the heroine whereas the secondary male characters are the victims. Butler's work, *Undoing Gender* connects to the idea of role reversal, specifically the belief that an individual should be allowed to "undo" the gender that society has placed upon them (100). Watkins adds that "a biological female can have a masculine subjectivity" as subjectivity is based on nothing more than social construction and therefore "is always open to change" (61). Baum's creation of Dorothy as the heroine demonstrates the possibility of role reversal and ultimately the emancipation of females.

Baum's portrayal of Dorothy as the novel's heroine is not an isolated incident of female independence, as Dorothy demonstrates other characteristics suggesting the liberation of women. One such quality which is one of the novel's many themes is Dorothy's desire to return home. Although her intentions to go back to Kansas are in order to rid her aunt and uncle of worry, the way in which Dorothy's mind is set on returning home indicates self-governance. Dorothy reiterates this idea when she explains to the Scarecrow that "no matter how dreary and gray our homes are, we people of flesh and blood would rather live there than in any other country, be it ever so beautiful" (Baum 26). Baum writes the novel in such a way that his female protagonist does not change her mind, the same desire that Dorothy has in the beginning of the novel is the same desire that she possesses at the end. Regardless of how many people she meets, friends she makes or the hardships surrounding her desire to return home, Dorothy never changes her goal. The entire plot of the novel is based on the premise of Dorothy's self discovery and her journey home. Joel Chaston's article "If I Ever Go Looking for My Heart's Desire: "Home" in Baum's "Oz" Books" mentions how the novel

as well as the film's interest in home is not accidental (209). The screen writer for the film, Noel Langley, was instructed by assistant producer, Arthur Freed, to understand that the character of "Dorothy is only motivated by one object in Oz; that is, how to get back home to her Aunt Em, and every situation should be related to this main drive" (qtd Hearn 12). This idea manifests itself throughout the text as well as in the final words of the novel said by Dorothy: "I'm so glad to be at home again" (Baum 143). Additionally, the independence of Baum's female protagonist is displayed, as regardless of whether Dorothy's companions joined her or not, she had already begun walking alone on the yellow brick road and was determined to reach her destination where she would be able to attain her desire. She does not reflect on the dangers of the journey, how she would feed Toto or herself or whether she would survive walking such a long way. She resists the traditionally feminine behaviour of being afraid, dependent and weak and instead Dorothy shows an incredible amount of self-reliance and strength as she completes her physical and personal journey, regardless of external factors of danger and difficulty.

The determination and self-assurance that Baum gives his female protagonist is supported by the mention of Dorothy being an orphan. "Baum's decision to make his young heroine an orphan, … reflects his advocacy of the turn-of-the-century transformation in thoughts on the role of the child and responds, in particular, to the changing perception of orphans during that time" where "society began to embrace the sentimental value of children rather than continuing to view them as miniature adults" (Taylor 379). Baum creates his orphaned protagonist to indicate her isolated position and to allow Dorothy to embark on her own journey filled with personal growth and

understanding. At the end of the novel, Dorothy is excited to be home, illustrating Baum's belief in family as a unit defined by love and acceptance instead of biological duty as in real life Baum and his wife, Maud doted on their niece, Magdalena, even considering adopting her (Taylor 380). This idea is supported by Butler's work on performative acts which is based on a rejection of biology and an acceptance of actions performed (*Gender Trouble* 127). Dorothy's relationship with her family is not based on a biological connection to Aunt Em and Uncle Henry; instead, Dorothy's performative role of being a daughter creates a strong bond between them. In addition Butler has expressed her desire for the abolition of the psychoanalytic structure of and belief in the nuclear family (*Undoing Gender* 53). In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* it is apparent that the nuclear structure of the family has been demolished in favour of a more modern unit. The inclusion of an adopted girl who refers to her adoptive parents as Aunt Em and Uncle Henry as opposed to mother or father highlights this move away from the nuclear family. The break in tradition of the family structure in the text signifies a change in societal norms in general as Baum defies the traditional construction of the social order and instead creates a new story resplendent with transformation of not only conventional norms but of his female protagonist representing liberated women in society. The changes evident in society regarding the structure of the family allowed for a shift in traditional roles where men and women's societal positions were challenged and altered, a movement appreciated by Beauvoir.

A major theme evident in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is self-efficacy which relates to how at the beginning of the novel each main character does not believe in their abilities but by the end of the story their self-confidence has surfaced emphasising their

personal growth. This theme relates particularly to the emancipation of Dorothy. In the beginning of the text, Dorothy believes that her only way home is through the power of a superior male wizard. When she discovers that Oz is a fraud and, therefore, is unable to help her return to Kansas, she turns to the Good Witch, Glinda, who informs Dorothy of how she can return home (Baum 140). Ironically, Dorothy discovers that the power to return to Kansas was with her the entire journey as Glinda states: "your Silver Shoes will carry you over the desert...If you had known their power you could have gone back to your Aunt Em the very first day you came to this country" (Baum 140). By choosing this ending Baum places the power in Dorothy's capable hands and emphasises the belief that girls and boys, women and men have the strength and authority to create their own happy endings. Additionally in the end Baum chooses a female witch to assist Dorothy in finding the power she had all along as opposed to the male wizard, Oz coming to the rescue. The power of females is, therefore, emphasised as Baum places the potential for greatness with them. Butler supports the idea of role reversal and specifically the displacement of gender norms (*Undoing Gender* 89). It is the individual, not society, that holds the power to their gender and so both men and women are encouraged to act according to their personal beliefs and not those determined by the social order. Dorothy having the Silver Shoes and ultimately the power, signifies this role reversal as she no longer relies on the power of patriarchy for at the end of the novel she sends herself back to Kansas.

Baum's decision to create a female protagonist allowed female child readers to discover that they had the right to speak, think and embark on a journey of personal growth. Dorothy's representation as the novel's female protagonist illustrates the desire for and

capability of female leadership. Although the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman and the Lion embark on their own personal adventures, it is Dorothy's journey that they join. The decision to visit Oz has been selected by Dorothy and therefore the three male companions accompany her on the journey that she has chosen. When Dorothy meets each of her three friends, she suggests to them that they ask Oz for help. Surprisingly each male character listens to the female protagonist and without hesitation joins her on her journey. Dorothy becomes the leader of the group and, although her three companions prove helpful at warding off dangers, it is Dorothy who guides her followers to their destination. Throughout the text it is Dorothy who provides insight into their journey which is seen when the group is lost on their way back to the Emerald City and the male characters turn to Dorothy for a solution (Baum 94). Dorothy suggests finding the Queen of the Field-Mice who assists them in putting their journey back on track (Baum 94). In addition when the group is faced with the "Great and Terrible Oz" it is Dorothy who "takes courage" and speaks – once again indicating her position of leadership (Baum 70). Finally, at the end of the novel the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman and the Lion find themselves in positions of power as the Scarecrow has been made the ruler of the Emerald City, the Tin Woodman the leader of the Winkies and the Lion the king of the forest (Baum 140). The elevated status of these three male characters is primarily due to Dorothy and each comrade acknowledges this when they thank her for changing their lives (Baum 141). Dorothy is a powerful leader and by so doing has the potential to influence the lives of female child readers all over the world. Her determination, acts of heroism and independence represent a change in the

stereotypical portrayal of women in children's literature and signifies a change in society's traditional order.

3.1.2 Analysis of Secondary Female Characters

Baum not only uses his female protagonist, Dorothy to demonstrate the stereotypical ideologies of society regarding the inequalities in the representation of men and women, he carefully constructs secondary male and female characters to show this traditional thought as well as evidence of its changes. In Baum's introduction to *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* he provides a detailed discussion on how stereotypes of "the genie, dwarf and fairy" are to be eliminated in order for "modern" children's literature to be created, however, he still uses stereotypes himself especially in the portrayal of the secondary female characters of the good and bad witches. In Beauvoir's influential text, *The Second Sex* a substantial section of the book is dedicated to women's stereotypical roles in society. Beauvoir identifies two female roles, relevant to this study, that society has placed on women, namely, "The Married Woman", "The Mother" which focus on the idea that women are placed according to assigned destinies (447). In addition Beauvoir in her analysis of D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* identifies the opposing roles of women and how they are either portrayed as good or bad, no in between (520). This analysis coincides with the portrayal of the secondary female characters in Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as the good and bad witches play significant roles of opposing good and evil. No depth of development or level of normalcy is displayed as female characters are categorised according to their angelic or devilish behaviours. Dorothy, Aunt Em, Glinda, the Good Witch of the North, the Queen of the Field Mice and the princess made of china are all clearly "good" female characters. Their hearts are pure,

they have the best intentions for the people they meet and they will not deliberately harm anyone. The two wicked witches from the East and West represent the “bad” female characters in the novel. When the reader is first introduced to the idea of witches in the story, one is given the information of opposing classifications as “the two of them that live in the North and South are good witches... and those who dwell in the East and West are indeed wicked witches” (Baum 14). By using the directional points on a compass the differences in the witches are clearly displayed as it is evident that the good witches lie on one particular axis whereas the evil witches lie on the other. This signifies the opposition of these secondary female characters and specifically the invariable classification of the female characters in the text as a whole. Interestingly in accordance with Beauvoir’s identification of society’s good and bad female roles, instead of Baum allowing the wicked witches to change and become good, he has them killed. This pointed annihilation indicates the fixed categorisation of women and how one group cannot be linked to the other.

The secondary female characters that represent “good” women in the text possess characteristics that are traditionally considered to be feminine. Baum uses feminine discourse to identify his “good” female characters and this is first evident when the good Witch of the North is introduced to the reader as “a little old woman” with “a sweet voice” (Baum 14). Additionally the good witch, Glinda, who has hair that flows in “ringlets over her shoulders” and wears a “pure white” dress is explained as being “both beautiful and young to their eyes” and “kindly” (Baum 138). Irigaray comments on the power of discourse as a psychologically derived group of words that are used to maintain the structure of a patriarchal society as feminine words used to describe women reinforce

her “passivity”, whereas masculine words used to identify males reiterate their “activity” (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 15). Furthermore, Cixous sees language as being the foundation for female oppression; she explains that the women are either represented as “passive” or they are not represented at all (“Sorties” 349). Baum’s description of the good witches is filled with feminine discourse as the terms, “little”, “sweet”, “pure”, “beautiful” and “kindly” represent the stereotypical identification of women. Although Baum creates the characters of female witches which signifies an element of power, his witches appear to be powerless as none of them are able to help Dorothy return home. Glinda comes close to helping Dorothy, but it is her knowledge of the shoes that sends Dorothy home, not her personal expression of power.

In addition the first description of Aunt Em explains how she was once “a young, pretty wife” and how hard work and rough terrain had changed her appearance (Baum 8). This use of the feminine discourse “pretty wife” to illustrate Aunt Em’s initial appearance oppresses this secondary female character and once again demonstrates how traditionally women are described according to their feminine qualities of beauty and their social position of being a wife. Additionally the change in Aunt Em’s appearance is not seen as the natural process of aging, but instead something ominous and depressing.

Furthermore the Queen of the Field-Mice is also portrayed as a “good” secondary female character in Baum’s text. Upon first glance it seems as though Baum has created a secondary female character that represents virtue as well as the empowerment of women, however, although the female mouse is given some power in the form of her title as queen, she is still stereotypically portrayed as being “little” and in

need of saving by a man (Baum 55). When the reader is first introduced to the queen, she is in danger of being eaten by a wildcat when suddenly the Tin Woodman appears and rescues her, in a fashion comparable to that of a knight in shining armour (Baum 54). The queen is rescued by a male character indicating the stereotypical placement of women both in children's literature as well as in society. In addition the queen then becomes indebted to the Tin Woodman as she encourages her followers to "serve him and obey his slightest wish" (Baum 55). The power of this queen is, therefore, transferred to the Tin Woodman, once again indicating the male in the superior position of power and the female's inferiority.

Finally Baum's character of the princess made from china signifies the secondary position of females evident in the text. The princess is described as being "beautifully dressed" and when she sees the group she "speaks in a frightened little voice" (Baum 117). Additionally she explains that she cannot run away from them for if she falls she will break and then will no longer be "pretty" (Baum 117). The focus on beauty as an essential quality of a female indicates the power of feminine discourse in creating passive and superficial female characters. The fear ruling the princess' speech also signifies the inferior role that women play in society and how the emotion of fear, insecurity and anxiety is associated with women. Dorothy wants to carry the little princess home to Kansas and place her "on Aunt Em's mantelshelf" (Baum 128). This makes the princess very unhappy as she explains that in her world she is free to talk and move around as she pleases, but if she is taken away her joints will stiffen and she will be left to just stand and look pretty (Baum 128). This character alludes to the oppressed position of women in society as the china princess knows that where Dorothy

lives, women do not have the freedom of movement and unmonitored discourse; instead they are required to stand quietly and look pretty.

In contrast to the way in which the good female characters have been portrayed, Baum's wicked witches signify the change in polarity. The reader is never actually introduced to the Wicked Witch of the East as Dorothy's house kills her before the story has really even begun and therefore readers are not given a physical description of her (Baum 13). In J. K. Franson's article, "From Vanity Fair to Emerald City: Baum's Debt to Bunyan" the wicked witches in the novel are aptly described as "old, repulsive and tyrannical" (96). The personality and character traits of the Wicked Witch are further made apparent in the text when the good Witch of the North explains to Dorothy the abusive ways of the evil witch (Baum 13). "She kept the Munchkins in bondage for many years, making them slave for her night and day" (Baum 13). The powerful position of the Wicked Witch is evident as she was clearly the master of the Munchkins. In addition, the good Witch of the North explains how she could never destroy the Wicked Witch of the East as the good witch's powers were no match for those of the wicked witch (Baum 14). The information given to the reader about the Wicked Witch of the East signifies masculinity as opposed to femininity as her power and control over the Munchkins represents superiority, a quality associated with men.

Baum's description of the Wicked Witch of the West, given by the guardian of the gates, is that she is "wicked and fierce" and cannot be destroyed (79). Her "cunning" ways are also identified indicating a masculine description of this female character (Baum 87). Physically she only has one eye, yet it is considered to be "as powerful as a telescope" and when the monkeys are summoned to help her, it is explained how her "commands

shall be obeyed" (Baum 83). In addition the Wicked Witch speaks in a way considered harsh and severe (Baum 87). All these characteristics represent a masculinised female witch as physically she is not beautiful and her behaviour indicates strength and dominance which are commonly associated with the qualities of men. Baum creates the wicked witches to demonstrate a change in the social order as he combines the female biology of the wicked witches with the masculine performances of men and shows how this powerful position of women is viewed as ugly and wicked as it opposes the normality set by society.

Finally Baum's innovative creation of Glinda, the good witch's, female soldiers represents a clear reversal of roles – one that Butler promotes so clearly in her feminist literature (*Undoing Gender* 98). The position of a soldier is generally connected to males, however, Baum eradicates such stereotypical ideology by creating female soldiers. Tison Pugh identifies this occurrence in his article "There Lived in the Land of Oz two queerly made men": Queer Utopianism and Antisocial Eroticism in L. Frank Baum's Oz Series" as he explains how "traditionally male activities are often performed by women, notably the female armies that march around the country" that appear in Baum's novels (223). In addition Glinda's soldiers are described as being "dressed in handsome red uniforms trimmed with gold braid" (Baum 137) and it is this idea of women dressed in soldiers' uniforms that connects with Butler's approval of cross-dressing and how many authors of children's texts began using such a technique to challenge the construction of society's traditional gender roles (Paul 121). In addition the term "handsome" is considered to be associated with masculine discourse and by

using this word in the description of the female soldiers, Baum allows his female soldiers the opportunity to take on the male gender.

3.1.3 Analysis of Secondary Male Characters

Role reversal and the alteration of feminine and masculine discourse is most clearly seen in Baum's creation of the text's secondary male characters consisting of the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, the Lion and Oz. The Scarecrow is the male character in the text that is described as having no brains (Baum 23). In addition he finds himself in a rather unfortunate situation as he is trapped on a pole with no way of escaping, until Dorothy rescues him (Baum 22). Baum's description of the Scarecrow shows a male character being stripped of his masculine qualities as he has low self - confidence, lacks knowledge and is dependent upon a female character for survival. Generally, society portrays men as the epitome of strength, power and control, however, in the beginning of the novel the Scarecrow contains none of these masculine qualities.

The second male character that Dorothy meets along her journey is the Tin Woodman and once again Baum represents a male character who lacks masculine characteristics. When Dorothy discovers the Tin Woodman, he explains how he has been moaning for someone to come and help him for more than a year (Baum 31). This clearly indicates his helplessness and subordinate position as he needs to be rescued. Moreover the Tin Woodman's voice is described as melancholic and when he tells his tale he explains how when he was in love, he was the "happiest man on earth" (Baum 35). This description of the Tin Woodman shows his emotional qualities and, although he believes that he no longer has a heart, he is able to articulate his romantic feelings –

evidence associated with the heart. Baum's portrayal of the Tin Woodman is clearly related to feminine discourse as opposed to masculine discourse. The romantic ideology of being in love is an emotion most often connected to females in society and therefore a male character openly confessing such feelings signifies a reversal of roles in which a transformation of gendered terms and behaviour has taken place. Butler explains the importance of role reversals in challenging the stereotypical "gender normativity" of society and believes in the human rights of people and how they should be proud to project whatever gender they feel comfortable with (*Undoing Gender* 53). Baum's description of the Tin Woodman may be read as forward thinking as a change in the presentation of the male characters indicates a change in gender representation in society.

The Lion is the final male character of the three companions to meet Dorothy and at first he seems to portray a ferocious male beast, however, upon closer inspection, the Lion is discovered to be a coward as Dorothy's assertive nature frightens him (Baum 40). A little while later a discussion ensues regarding the stereotypical role of a lion explaining how "the King of the Beasts shouldn't be a coward" and it is this conversation that identifies the reversed role of Baum's Lion (Baum 39). This male character illustrates Baum's challenge of the social order in society as the king of the jungle is supposed to be superior and in control, however, the Lion possesses neither of these traits.

Baum's initial portrayal of the male characters in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* consist of representations of emasculation. However it is interesting to note that, although Baum changes the role of the dominant male to one that consists of more feminine - like qualities, by the end of the novel he subsequently restores the stereotypical roles of the

male characters. Not only do Dorothy's three male companions realise that they have the qualities they so desperately believed they did not possess, their positions also change as each comrade is made a ruler of a particular area in Oz. The Scarecrow discovers that he has brains and therefore finds himself suddenly intelligent and when Oz leaves he has been chosen to rule Emerald City (Baum 139). It is important to note that during the Scarecrow's journey his feminine discourse and emasculation changed as he began making decisions and was suddenly described in more masculine terms. On the way to the Wicked Witch of the West, the Scarecrow kills the leader of the crows as well as destroys a swarm of bees, indicating his power and control in those situations. The Scarecrow's brave actions lead to him becoming responsible for saving Dorothy and this illustrates a return to tradition (Baum 81). In addition the Tin Woodman was given a heart which he believes gives him the ability to experience human feelings and he is made the leader of the Winkies (Baum 140). His attitude and behaviour also change and he becomes more aggressive and masculine as he rescues the queen of the field-mice and murders a pack of wolves set on the group by the Wicked Witch of the West (Baum 80). The active strength displayed by the Tin Woodman signifies the stereotypical representation of men in society. Finally the Lion found his courage and has been given a jungle in which to be the King of the Beasts (Baum 140). The return to his traditional role highlights what Cixous refers to as "the master's place is the position of power", in that whoever holds the place of the master is the one who has the power ("Exchange" 114). Baum's male characters are therefore given back their masculine power as they take on roles of leaders in their society.

Another interesting aspect when analysing the secondary male characters in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is the representation of the character of Oz. It is evident that Oz takes on the reversed role of the other male characters as in the beginning of the novel, he is the one with power, but by the end of the novel he has been exposed as a liar and a humbug. When the reader is first introduced to the idea of Oz the wizard, he is described as being more powerful than all the witches in the land (Baum 14). He is considered to be "great" and "terrible", masculine terms associated with male dominance (Baum 70). Oz has the ability to petrify his guests as Dorothy and her friends are intimidated by his powerful reputation and presence. He is the epitome of strength and independence in the text until suddenly it is discovered that Oz is no wizard at all but only a man. The theme of appearance versus reality connects with Butler's notion of role playing, role reversal and cross-dressing (*Undoing Gender* 98). Oz is not a powerful wizard who can transform himself into a Head, a lovely lady, a Beast and a Ball of Fire, instead he is a man who is knowledgeable with regard to trickery and so he uses these techniques to transform his appearance to make it look as though he has changed himself into different beings (Baum 75). His intelligence alludes to the idea of masculine discourse as he has been able to trick the people of the Emerald City for many years into believing that he is a wizard and a powerful being. Interestingly Baum's decision in making Oz transform into a "lovely lady" once again indicates cross-dressing in the text and specifically gender transformation (Baum 75). Butler would appreciate such distinctively modern ideology evident in a children's novel as gender transformation and the freedom of individuals to become transgendered is an important feminist belief that she holds (*Undoing Gender* 98). Baum's reasons for

including such an element in his story could signify the challenging of traditional beliefs about men and women's roles in society and how men and women should be allowed to be both equal and unashamed of their gender.

Baum's writing in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* highlights the stereotypical representations of women as well as the changes that were beginning to surface in the early twentieth century. His portrayal of Dorothy illustrates elements of gender stereotyping with regards to her appearance and feminine discourse, however, her role as the leader and heroine of the story indicate a transformation in the position of females in society – empowerment instead of subordination. Baum uses secondary female and male characters to reiterate the idea of transformation to undo the inequality of genders whereby society has traditionally presented women as weak and men as strong. Modern thought is evident as Baum scrutinises society's placement of men and women by challenging the stereotypical notion of feminine female characters and masculine male characters. Role reversal and gender transformation are elements used by Baum to signify the changes occurring during the early twentieth century.

3.2 ***Anne of Green Gables***

3.2.1 An Analysis of Anne

Just like Dorothy, Montgomery's portrayal of Anne Shirley is filled with elements that allude to the traditional roles of women in society as well as the female in society yearning for change in the social order. The first factor illustrating the traditional female and male roles in the text is Matthew and Marilla's discovery that Anne is not a boy. Matthew and Marilla want to adopt a male child. However, accidently they are sent

Anne (Montgomery 18). Anne is devastated at the realisation that her dream of having a family will not come to pass and this disappointment is seen when she voices her reaction: “you don’t want me because I’m not a boy!” (Montgomery 16). Matthew and Marilla want to adopt a boy to gain a farmhand for Matthew and Marilla reiterates this idea when she explains how a girl will be “of no use” to them (Montgomery 18). This incident identifies the inequalities amongst men and women as Anne, as a female, finds herself to be in an inferior position whereas the idea of a male child represents the superior. Beauvoir identifies this unequal ideology and explains how the “myth of women being biologically inferior to men and referred to as the weaker sex” needs to be eradicated (qtd in Borde and Malovany-Chevallier 440). When Mrs Blewett comes to meet Anne she directly addresses feminine behaviour as she explains to Anne that she must be “a good girl” as well as “respectful” (Montgomery 30). Marilla often coaxes Anne into behaving “as a good girl should” and how she has no “use for little girls who aren’t neat”, hence projecting the stereotypical acts of gender and feminine discourse to fashion her into a young lady (Montgomery 31). The use of terms such as “good”, “respectful” and “neat” indicate Montgomery’s use of feminine discourse, identified by Irigaray, in describing the acts of a young female. Harvey Newcomb’s book *How to be a Lady: A Books for Girls, Containing Useful Hints on the Formation of Character* (1850) encourages girls to act in a socially accepted manner as he explains that “to be a lady, one must behave always with propriety; and be civil, courteous and kind to all” (10). These feminine terms of description are what have moulded little girls into young women and reinforced their traditional roles in society. As in Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Montgomery too associates feminine language with female characters

and displays how the two are associated with one another. Cixous' "The Laugh of the Medusa" targets this idea of feminine discourse and how "the centrality of language" is responsible for the "construction of feminine identity" (qtd in Cordón 42). Therefore the continuous use of ideal qualities used to describe women's appearance and behaviour reinforces their subordinate position in society.

Montgomery's distinction between female and male children and the different qualities they possess also signifies a close similarity to the work of Butler as society's stereotypical belief in gender performativity and how biological sexes are connected to either a feminine or masculine gender is represented (*Gender Trouble* 9). Butler challenges this notion as she believes that "sex remains a constant but any gender can be transformed to a particular person regardless of their biology" (*Gender Trouble* 9). Yet, it is not believed that Anne, as a female, would be capable of doing physical labour on the farm and therefore her position as a female and the belief in her feminine qualities reinforce the idea of her passivity and inferiority.

Both Anne and Dorothy are orphans and it is their journey and desire for family that further depicts their feminine positions. Dorothy's desire from the very beginning of the novel is to return home to her Aunt Em and Uncle Henry and Anne longs to be accepted into a family. When Anne first meets Matthew, she tells him how she has never had a real home and that it gives her a great "pleasant ache" to think that she will finally have a "really true home" (Montgomery 13). According to Berg "Anne desperately wants to belong" (125). This desire for love and protection in the form of the family and home illustrates a deeper connection to their female roles. Domesticity is a part of women's lives and is considered to be specifically feminine as women are associated with the

home. Marion Harland's book *Common Sense in the Household: A Manual of Practical Housewifery* (1872) addresses the importance of women's competence in the home as she states "that every young woman should, before fixing the wedding day, be compelled by law to exhibit to inspectors a prescribed number of useful articles" such as "bed-linen made by her own hands and to add to these proofs of her fitness for her new sphere a practical knowledge of housework and cookery" (15). Beauvoir explains how society has carefully defined women's accepted roles as "the married woman" and "the mother" (440). Both these roles are connected to the home and family and therefore it is evident that by Dorothy and Anne pining for these aspects in their lives, they indirectly long for their placements as traditional women.

At more than one point in the novel Anne's stereotypically female role is discussed as she is asked by Marilla whether she is able to wash dishes and Anne explains that she can wash dishes but she is better at looking after children (Montgomery 23). At one point in the novel, Anne explains how she wishes she was given the chance to call her "mother" as she believes that this classification is "sweet" (Montgomery 27). Anne herself acts as a mother in the text as she is able to treat Diana's little sister when she falls ill and it is this act that contributes to the novel's representation of the traditional role of women as mother (Montgomery 92). In addition Marilla ponders the idea of keeping Anne and justifies her thinking with the fact that Anne is a "nice, teachable little thing" (Montgomery 28). This pertains to the idea that Anne can be taught the ways of being a women and this coincides with Beauvoir, Butler, Irigaray and Cixous' works relating to the role of the female not as natural or genetic, but rather socially constructed. Throughout the text, Marilla teaches Anne to pray, do patchwork, cook and

feed the hens and by the end of the novel Anne is described as being “reliable”, steady” and a “tall, serious-eyed girl of fifteen, with the thoughtful brows and the proudly poised little head, in her place” (Montgomery 158). Anne’s gendered performances represent the traditional roles of women and highlight her preparation as a young girl in becoming a wife and mother. In the beginning of the novel, Anne sees the blooming cherry tree and dreams of a bride all dressed in white and Anne hopes that some day she “shall have a white dress” (Montgomery 10). Although Anne has not had a traditional upbringing, she is aware of the traditional roles placed on women by society as she longs to be a bride and dramatises the idea of her best friend, Diana one day leaving her to get married (Montgomery 76). Anne is significantly excited when she receives a letter that is specifically addressed to “Miss Anne Shirley” and she is elated by the female title of “Miss” (Montgomery 114). Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* reveals the different yet categorised roles by which women are classified (285). She believes that there is “no difference in the attitudes of girls and boys” when they are young and that it is socialisation that moulds men and women into their particular gendered roles (283). Montgomery provides the reader with many instances whereby Anne participates in duties of domesticity – performances that indicate a women’s “destiny imposed on her by society” (Beauvoir 294). Additionally, Beauvoir believes that women are “enslaved to the home, to their husbands, enslaved to men, enslaved to housekeeping” (Simons and Benjamin 341).

Although Montgomery endows Anne with qualities beyond traditional womanhood, Anne displays many characteristics considered to be classically feminine. Her emotional reactions, deep seated desire for romance and love of beauty emphasise her female

position. When Anne discovers that she is unwanted she is overcome by emotion the same way in which Dorothy is filled with sorrow at the realisation that she is trapped in the land of Oz and cannot return home (Baum 16) When Anne learns of the mistake she hysterically voices her disappointment and then bursts into tears (Montgomery 16). In addition when Marilla questions Anne as to why she is not eating her dinner, she dramatically responds with the statement that she "is in the depths of despair" (Montgomery 18). These emotional eruptions are deeply associated with her position as a female. Irigaray's *Speculum of the Other Woman* deals with this stereotypically societal representation of women and how women are envisioned as being emotional, dependent and weak (3). Anne's emotional act of overwhelming despair reiterates her female role in society.

A second characteristic of Anne's that reinforces her traditional role is her romantic mind. Romance is connected to the idea of emotions and Anne's romantic obsession with objects, literature and events strengthens her traditional female position. When Anne introduces herself to Matthew and Marilla, she insists on being called "Cordelia" because "it's such a perfectly elegant name" and her real name, "Anne" is terribly "unromantic" (Montgomery 17). Additionally, Anne renames places and things as she believes in giving them beautiful references. On her way to Green Gables, Anne refers to the Avenue as being more than just "pretty" or "beautiful" and renames the area the "White Way of Delight" (Montgomery 13). Anne's act of renaming objects can be viewed in accordance with Irigaray's theory on the use of feminine discourse. Just as the stereotypical actions of a young girl are displayed using feminine discourse so are the actual responses from the female protagonist. Anne's feminine ideas and discourse is

evident when she often dreams about being the “heroine in a book” and does not shy away from her personal belief in being romantic (Montgomery 26). Anne’s imagination often takes her to places whereby the oppression of females is evident. On one occasion, Anne daydreams of being an “enchanted princess shut up in a lonely tower with a handsome knight riding to my rescue on a coal-black steed” (Montgomery 104). In the same way in which Dorothy places her trust of being saved through the intervention of the magical wizard, Anne dreams of acquiring freedom at the hands of a brave knight. Female reliance on male heroes is an ancient stereotypical belief that many children’s texts utilise, yet Montgomery challenges this as by the end of the series Anne releases herself from romantic imprisonment through her intelligence and diligence.

Finally Anne’s concern about her appearance and her longing to look like other girls indicates her stereotypical beliefs in the female form. When Anne says her first prayer at Green Gables she asks God to make her “good-looking” when she grows up instead of being “a freckled...girl” (Montgomery 34). After going to school for some time Anne still insists that she would “rather be pretty than clever” (Montgomery 70). In addition when Marilla has dresses made for Anne, Anne is disappointed as the dresses are not “pretty” (Montgomery 51). She explains how she would rather look ridiculous with puffed sleeves and fit in than look sensible and be an outcast (Montgomery 51). At one point in the novel Anne decides to dye her hair in order to rid itself of its red colour; however, this act is unsuccessful and her hair ends up turning green (Montgomery 137). Anne is mortified by what has happened to her hair and admits that it was all for the sake of becoming a beautiful little girl (Montgomery 137). Anne’s desperate desire to fit in with

the other girls of Avonlea and to achieve physical beauty indicates the stereotyping of females and how women desire certain physical characteristics that reinforce their identity as women and attractiveness to men. This indicates Anne's awareness of the female's exterior and how women are supposed to exude beauty, a feminine quality. In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* Dorothy's physical beauty and feminine appearance is displayed when she is described wearing "a pretty frock" and a "pink sun bonnet", the same way in which Anne envisions the perfect female form (Baum 18).

Although Montgomery uses the stereotypical representation of women in her characterisation of Anne, she also portrays qualities in Anne that challenge societal norms and standards. When the reader is first introduced to Anne, she is extremely outspoken and more precocious than other acceptably passive little girls. The station master explains to Matthew that "she has a tongue of her own" and this acts as the introduction to Anne's vocal ways (Montgomery 8). Upon meeting Anne, Marilla explains to Anne that she talks "entirely too much for a little girl" (Montgomery 23). Anne's confidence and independence is expressed by Montgomery's portrayal of her outspokenness. In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy exhibits new found female self governance the same way in which Anne represents the possibilities for female emancipation. It is clear that Dorothy makes the decisions in the group and is the one who is unafraid of speaking to Oz. Similarly, Anne chooses her path and holds no fear when it comes to speaking her mind. The difference between Anne and other little girls is evident when Marilla expresses how if she was to choose an orphan girl to adopt, Anne is not "the style" she would pick out (Montgomery 20). This illustrates Anne's deviant behaviour as she is unable to remain quiet at times and this reinforces the idea

of her being an untraditional and hence unattractive, even unacceptable little girl. One incident relating to Anne's forthright nature is when she tells Marilla about her first day at school and how she does not care much for her male teacher (Montgomery 69). Marilla scolds Anne and explains to her that it is inappropriate to "criticize the master" – reinforcing a female's subservient position and indicating Anne's opposing actions to this traditional placement (Montgomery 69). This incident also alludes to the way in which men are not to be challenged and how Anne is not concerned by such standards in society. Butler argues about the importance of sex being a fixed entity and gender being interchangeable and this idea is evident in the way that Anne fails to act according to society's standards. When Anne directly refers to Mrs Blewett as a "gimlet" and refuses to go and live with her, the idea of a little girl speaking to an adult in such manner in the early twentieth century indicates a sudden change in the representation of women (Montgomery 31). Upon meeting Mrs Rachel Lynde, Anne assertively defends herself when she is openly insulted (Montgomery 42). Anne refuses to give in to society's moral codes and instead defends herself by telling Mrs Lynde that she is a "rude, impolite, unfeeling woman" (Montgomery 42). Montgomery's representation of Anne as a strong, opinionated little girl encourages the ability of women to be independent, forthright and able to rely on their own minds to express themselves and make decisions. In the novel, Anne often speaks her mind without worrying about whom she has offended or whether she is acting in accordance with her socially prescribed female role. The same way in which Dorothy is determined to reach her destination of home, Anne is determined to obtain her goals and dreams. When Marilla tells Anne that she will not be allowed to go to the picnic unless she confesses to stealing Marilla's

brooch, Anne who never did steal the brooch, confesses (Montgomery 66). Anne's actions are not about her acting in a submissive manner, but in ensuring that she is able to go to the picnic at whatever cost. Her constant speaking and wild imagination is uncharacteristic of a young girl living in the early twentieth century and this showcases Montgomery's openness to the subversion of the subjugation of women.

Although Anne is aware of the traditional roles of women and more than often is supportive of such positions, she often challenges the stereotypes society uses to classify women. Firstly, Anne herself does not take on the role of the "good little girl" and is immediately cast out of the categories given to females as girls are socially expected to be well-behaved (Montgomery 47). Additionally she does not embrace the domestic duties instilled on women by society. When Marilla tells Anne to continue with her patchwork she expresses her hatred for patchwork and how it allows no "scope for the imagination" (Montgomery 59). Further Anne's obsession with imagination represents her desire for female empowerment. In Temma Berg's article, "A Girl's Reading of Anne" the "feminism in the novel" is apparent in the description of Anne having "extraordinary imaginative powers and on the way imagination can empower women…" (125).

Additionally Anne is intelligent – a trait that is usually associated with males. Her teacher, Mr Phillips, tells Matthew that Anne is the "smartest scholar in school" and does not qualify her position according to her gender (Montgomery 89). Anne believes in her ability and does not see why boys must be placed in certain positions and not girls and by the end of the novel Anne is inspired to become a teacher (Montgomery 189). When Mrs Lynde tells Anne that she has enough education for a woman and that

going to college is frowned upon, Anne responds by saying that she is excited to study "Latin and Greek" and that she shall thrive on her education (Montgomery 189). Anne's intelligence and formal schooling represents a change in the social order and how women too have the ability to achieve great things in spheres beyond the home.

Montgomery not only uses Anne's education to challenge patriarchal views of female domesticity, she additionally uses Anne to directly question the position of women in society. This is evident when she asks Marilla why women cannot be ministers as she believes that "women would make splendid ministers" and disagrees with Mrs Lynde's idea that it would "be a scandalous thing" (Montgomery 156). Anne's desire to see women serving in roles previously prescribed to men indicates Montgomery's belief in the emancipation of women not only on the personal front, but in their professional capacity as well. At the beginning of the novel Anne's view on marriage is seen as a sort of dreamy fashion as Anne imagines what it is like to be a bride. However, towards the end of the novel Anne and Diana have a series of serious discussions which include the possibility of neither of them marrying and instead living together forever (Montgomery 150). This alludes to the modern idea of women's awareness that living apart from men has the potential to release them from their traditionally bound roles of wife and mother. Berg argues that "Anne does not rebel by attacking authority – religious of educational – directly, but by bewitching others into recognizing their own covert dissatisfaction with the institutions they have always overtly abided" (127). Similarly the way in which Anne removes herself from the idea of marriage can be compared to Beauvoir's belief that marriage is the "destiny traditionally offered to

women" and that it acts as a form of oppression which is precisely why women must fight against it (453).

Anne is the heroine of the novel as it is she who not only discovers herself, but holds the power to change the people around her. Matthew becomes more outspoken, confident and loving, Marilla develops a maternal connection with Anne and becomes what Rachel Lynde likes to call "mellow" and the whole of Green Gables seems to thrive on being introduced to Anne's vivacious personality (Montgomery 189). She ultimately rescues Matthew and Marilla as she changes their hearts and lives for the better. Montgomery uses Anne's positive influence in changing Green Gables as well as the secondary characters in the novel, but additionally introduces the female child reader to the power of women in creating new opportunities for independent thought and behaviour.

3.2.2 Analysis of the Secondary Female Characters

Montgomery not only uses the character of Anne to challenge the stereotypical roles of women, she also incorporates this representation in the creation of her secondary female characters Marilla, Mrs Rachel Lynde and Diana. When the reader is first introduced to the character of Marilla, it is evident that she does not portray the role of a stereotypical woman from the early twentieth century. Firstly, Marilla is unmarried and this highlights the contrast between her role and the traditional feminine role, as one of the classified positions considered to be of great importance in a woman's life is her placement as a wife. As Beauvoir envisions marriage to be an oppressive institution, by Montgomery creating Marilla as an unmarried woman the subordination of women is

ultimately rejected and replaced with female emancipation. In addition, at the thought of adopting a child, Marilla does not envision this act to be influenced by some secret desire to be a mother, but instead Marilla plainly expresses the adoption of a boy to provide Matthew with some much-needed help on the farm (Montgomery 5). When they decide to keep Anne, Marilla refers to the process as an "experiment" – one in which she has no idea what the outcome might be (Montgomery 32). Marilla rejects the role of mother and in the beginning of the novel provides no evidence of having a maternal instinct. Beauvoir identifies the role of mother as one that should be a choice and women should have the right to become a mother or not (518). Montgomery exercises this right with the characterisation of Marilla.

Additionally Marilla is described as being a "tall, thin woman with angles and without curves" and whose hair is always pinned "with two wire hairpins stuck aggressively through it" (Montgomery 4). Montgomery does not portray Marilla as a stereotypically beautiful woman; instead her description contrasts that of a traditional woman and the use of the term "aggressively" to identify her hairstyle indicates masculine discourse – further alluding to her altered position. Cixous discusses the concept of opposites in her essay "Sorties" and explains how masculine and feminine discourse oppose one another, masculine indicating all terms that indicate dominance and feminine signifying subordination (350). Marilla does take on the role of the dominant adult at Green Gables as it is she that makes the final decision regarding Anne's adoption and insists on letting Matthew know that she will be disciplining the child (Montgomery 32). Marilla insists that Matthew avoids interfering with her methods in training Anne as she believes that even though "an old maid doesn't know much about bringing up a child... she knows more

than an old bachelor" (Montgomery 32). However, this interesting statement suggests that Marilla believes that as a woman she is biologically wired to be better at child rearing.

Even though the character of Marilla contrasts with the stereotypical role of women, many elements within her portrayal allude to the deep seated oppression faced by females in society. Although Marilla is displayed as being independent and dominant, she still practises performances considered to be specific to women. In the beginning of the novel, Rachel Lynde comments on how Marilla's yard and house is "always neatly swept" and when Rachel goes into the house, Marilla is "knitting" (Montgomery 4). Sweeping and knitting are duties considered to be primarily associated with women and, although Marilla's personality differs from that of the conventional woman, she still performs domesticated duties. These household duties coincide with women's traditional roles of being mothers and wives. Marilla not only participates in women's performances alluding to the traditional position of woman as wife, she also allows her position of woman as mother to become apparent. Towards the end of the novel when Anne makes Marilla proud of her accomplishments, Montgomery describes it as "something warm and pleasant" inside Marilla's heart that connects to "a throb of maternity she has missed" (Montgomery 50).

Montgomery's characterisation of Rachel Lynde is extremely important in emphasising the stereotypical female position and the need for change in the form of freedom and empowerment. Montgomery's portrayal of Rachel features her belief in modern women and that traditional women's roles were changing. Rachel is defined as always priding herself on "speaking her mind" (Montgomery 6). When she discovers that Marilla and

Matthew are adopting a child, she is appalled and is not afraid to let Marilla know what she thinks (Montgomery 6). Later when Rachel meets Anne she does not hold back her disapproval of Anne's physical appearance as Rachel looks at Anne and says "Well, they certainly didn't pick you for your looks, that's sure and certain" (Montgomery 42). Rachel's direct and hurtful statements indicate masculine discourse as nowhere in Rachel's speech is there any evidence of a submissive and compassionate woman. Anne refers to Rachel as an "unfeeling woman", an interesting oxymoron as women are usually considered to be able to emotionally connect with others (Montgomery 42). In addition Rachel's spouse is often referred to as "Rachel Lynde's husband", signifying her more authoritative position in the marriage (Montgomery 3). Such an identification intimates a role reversal as by giving the husband the title of his wife's name, the dominant role has been given to the woman, illustrating Rachel's non-stereotypical power.

Although Rachel's personal actions defy social norms, she is a traditional woman by heart. The first description that is presented to the reader of Rachel displays her as being "a notable housewife" who knits and runs "the Sewing Circle" (Montgomery 3). This account of Rachel clearly depicts the socially acceptable roles of a woman. Her domestic duties are mentioned as well as her actual role and profession of being a "housewife", a term connecting a woman both to the home as well as her husband (Montgomery 3). In addition, Rachel also believes in traditional roles as she agrees with society's notion that women cannot be ministers and discourages Anne from studying further as she considers it is to be inappropriate for girls to be too educated (Montgomery 189).

Another secondary female character that Montgomery uses to highlight the position of women in society is Anne's best friend, Diana Barry. Before Anne meets Diana, Marilla describes her as being "a very pretty little girl" who is also "good and smart" (Montgomery 38). Diana's qualities expressed by Marilla indicate the use of feminine discourse as terms such as "pretty", "little" and "good" illustrate the feminine form. In contrast the description of Diana being "smart" opposes the idea of the traditional girl, however, its inclusion in this text alludes to the changing times and the emancipation of women. Just like Anne, Marilla and Rachel, Diana also exudes both sides of the female position, the traditionally submissive side as well as the free modern side. First and foremost Diana is a polite, moral girl with good intentions. When she firsts meets Anne, Anne suggests that they swear to be friends forever and ever. Such a discussion shocks Diana who explains that swearing is wicked, indicating Diana's tendency to behave as a little girl who willingly conforms to instilled societal values (Montgomery 56).

In accordance with Diana's strong moral code she also believes in tradition. Just like Anne's romantic stories which are filled with female heroines acting as the submissive woman who relies on a man to save her, Diana considers romance to be a highlight in a woman's life. Diana is far more interested in boys than Anne is and this is seen when she is the first person to mention that Gilbert Blythe is handsome (Montgomery 70). In addition Diana is interested in the latest styles and fashions, suggesting a desire to promote beauty and femininity. When Diana and Anne get ready for a hotel concert, Diana helps Anne dress like a feminine woman as she encourages Anne to wear the "soft and frilly and clinging" organdy dress accessorised with braided hair and pearls

(Montgomery 166). Diana's ministrations help Anne fit the stereotypical feature of female beauty found in the traditional roles of women.

3.2.3 Analysis of Secondary Male Characters

Montgomery's representation of the secondary female characters in *Anne of Green Gables* alludes to both the stereotypical portrayal of women as well as their deep seated desire for emancipation. It is interesting to note that instead of Montgomery displaying the male characters as strong and dominant beings, she emphasises their subservient behaviour, illustrating a reversal in the male and female roles in society. Male characters in Montgomery's text are scarce which once again contributes to the idea of female significance and power as the novel does not rely on the dominance of male leads. The two secondary male characters that play the most important part in the text with reference to male representation are Matthew Cuthbert and Gilbert Blythe.

The portrayal of Matthew significantly highlights the change in female and male positions at the turn of the twentieth century. At the beginning of the novel the reader is struck by Montgomery's description of Matthew as he is said to be "the shyest man alive" who "hated to have to go among strangers or to any place where he might have to talk" (3). The terms used to describe Matthew signify passivity which is associated with feminine discourse as opposed to activity which is associated with masculine discourse (Cixous, "Sorties" 350). To add Irigaray explains how masculine discourse is often used to identify men and it stereotypically pertains to characteristics of dominance, power, independence and confidence (Klages 106). Montgomery portrays Matthew as a submissive brother to Marilla; he does not interfere with Marilla's decision-making and

instead keeps quietly to himself. The reader first notices Matthew's shy and subservient nature when he fetches Anne from the train station. When he realises that a girl has been left there for him to collect instead of a boy, he wishes that Marilla was "at hand to cope with the situation" and he finally decides to take Anne home so that Marilla can be the one to tell her that there has been a mistake (Montgomery 9). Matthew, in general, is a man of few words as he spends much of his time quietly listening to Marilla's conversations. Whenever he wants to give his opinion, he gently mentions it in a discussion and then waits to see whether Marilla approves or not. When he tries to encourage Marilla to let Anne stay, he realises that his argument has been ill-received and he gives up: "Well, now it's just as you say, of course, Marilla" (Montgomery 20). This statement further illustrates the subservient nature of Matthew and Marilla's domination of him. When Marilla decides to keep Anne, she expresses clearly to Matthew that he is not to interfere with the way in which she raises this child to which Matthew immediately agrees. Role reversal is evident in the text as Marilla takes on the dominant adult role at Green Gables, whereas Matthew is the submissive other. This identification is rather interesting as Marilla possesses elements of the masculine gender and Matthew illustrates characteristics comparable with those of the feminine gender. It is this possibility of role reversal and gender transformation that Butler offers is the key to equality amongst the sexes as men and women should be encouraged to behave in a way that they feel comfortable and not in a way that society demands (*Undoing Gender* 100). Therefore, Montgomery's use of this technique in her writing of the characters of Matthew and Marilla indicates potential change in the social order.

Although role reversal is a principal element evident in the portrayal of Matthew and Marilla, as the story continues Matthew's transformation is evident as he changes from being a totally silent secondary character to having more of a say in important discussions. Matthew, who for years has been subservient, begins to speak his mind and this is first apparent when Marilla tells him about Anne's disastrous meeting with Rachel. Matthew uncharacteristically exclaims: "It's a good thing Rachel Lynde got a calling down; she's a meddlesome old gossip" (Montgomery 46). It is important to note that although Matthew becomes more outspoken as the novel progresses, it is only associated with the protection of Anne and therefore it is his need to look after Anne's interests that allows this change in him and not his personal desire for independence. Matthew becomes Anne's ally more than a parent and often goes behind Marilla's back to ensure that Anne is happy. When Anne refuses to apologise to Rachel, it is Matthew's guidance that encourages Anne to change her mind. Matthew quickly explains that Marilla must not know that he influenced Anne to apologise as it would look as though he was "putting his oar in" (Montgomery 47). In addition when Anne is so saddened by not having a dress with puffed sleeves, at the end of the novel, Matthew insists on Anne getting a puffed sleeved dress (Montgomery 124). Although Marilla believes that the way in which she is teaching Anne is moulding her into a proper little girl, it is Matthew's secretive instructions that additionally influence Anne's progress. Matthew, however, maintains his reversed role as he does not take on the role of the strong, powerful, governing parent, but instead remains Marilla's subordinate.

The second male character that Montgomery uses to illustrate the changes that can take place in society with regards to traditional roles and patriarchy is Gilbert Blythe. At

first Gilbert seems to take on the stereotypical role of a strong and dominant male character as he is first in the class. However, a softer, gentler side of Gilbert is exposed as the story progresses. The first description of Gilbert addresses his physical appearance in that he is “handsome” (Montgomery 70). The term “handsome” can be clearly classified as masculine discourse as it is a common adjective used to describe men, just as “pretty” is an example of feminine discourse used to identify women (Cixous, “Sorties” 351). Other descriptions of Gilbert further illustrate his masculine physical qualities and behaviour. He is referred to as being “bold”, “teasing”, “tall” and “mean”, terms stereotypically used to define a male person (Montgomery 71). In addition Gilbert teases Anne because he is amazed at the lack of attention she is giving him, therefore indicating that Gilbert is used to being the centre of attention of the young girls (Montgomery 71). Towards the end of the novel, Anne finds herself in danger as she is stranded in the middle of the river and it is Gilbert who saves her, therefore fulfilling the role of the masculine hero. Although Gilbert is Anne’s male hero she fails to thank him in a feminine way and instead once again refuses to accept Gilbert’s apology (Montgomery 142).

However as the story continues, Gilbert’s softer, more caring side is apparent. When Anne retaliates after being teased by Gilbert and finds herself in trouble with the teacher, Gilbert takes the blame explaining that it was his fault (Montgomery 72). Gilbert’s protection of Anne can at first be interpreted as a male character indicating dominance and resisting fear in favour of punishment, however, Gilbert’s sincerity is associated with more gentle and passive qualities. As Anne leaves the school building he intercepts her and says “I’m awfully sorry I made fun of your hair, Anne... Honest I

am" (Montgomery 72). Diana is quite shocked at Gilbert's reaction as she explains to Anne that often Gilbert teases the girls but he never apologises (Montgomery 73). In addition Gilbert gives Anne a pink candy heart as a token of his apology, although Anne destroys it (Montgomery 74). Role reversal is once again present as Gilbert takes on the position of the gentle, kind and concerned figure, whereas Anne is portrayed as angry and stubborn. Furthermore Anne manages to achieve higher results than Gilbert in the end of the month examinations, indicating this shift of power (Montgomery 88). Finally Gilbert sacrifices his opportunity to teach at the Avonlea school, so that Anne is able to take his place and be close to Marilla (Montgomery 189). With the death of Matthew, Gilbert's kindness is once again evident as he insists that Anne stay in Avonlea and he leave. This compassionate gesture contrasts with the stereotypical dominating man who seeks the upper position and signifies the changing positions of power and how women's and men's roles are in the process of transformation.

Montgomery carefully creates her characters to not only represent the traditional standards of society, but to also highlight the possibility for change in the social order. Men and women's roles, although traditionally contrasted, need to be altered in order for modernity to take place. In *Anne of Green Gables* Montgomery addresses the traditional roles of women in society by focusing on the woman as wife and mother. These elements are seen in all of the female characters in the text as the domesticated duties performed by them illustrate the societal standards imposed upon women for centuries. Montgomery uses the female protagonist, Anne, as well as secondary characters of Marilla, Rachel and Diana to signify the potential for change in women's positions. In comparison to Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Montgomery's *Anne of Green*

Gables utilises the dominant and independent characteristics given to the female characters to denote this desire for transformation. In a similar way the secondary male characters in both *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and *Anne of Green Gables* indicate this change as they are considered to be deviant from the norm in their submissive, surrendered nature. Role reversal and the acceptance of transformed gendered acts in both children's novels can be identified as a form of insight into what the twentieth century began to produce by means of the women's movement and an overall move to the modern twenty first century way of living.

3.3 ***The Secret Garden***

3.3.1 Analysis of Mary

Just as Baum and Montgomery used a powerful, female protagonist to represent their stories, Frances Hodgson Burnett uses the influential female lead, Mary, to illustrate the position of the female in the early twentieth century. Although women were still subordinate to their male counterparts, a transformation had begun to emerge with the founding of the Suffragette movement and an increase in women's writing. Burnett understood the position of the subjugated female too well as she "was encouraged by her widowed mother to cultivate genteel and ladylike manners" (Keyser 10). Burnett's writing began as a way of financially supporting her family and later it became a rather "unselfish service" that allowed her to express her autonomy with self-assertion (Keyser 10). Even though consolidated efforts at female emancipation were in the embryonic stages, Baum, Montgomery and Burnett represented pioneering views in their creation of assertive female characters. Similar to Dorothy and Anne, Mary exhibits strong,

independent, qualities and it is through her liminal journey and personal transformation that the discovery of the modern woman takes place. In the beginning of the novel Mary is described as being different to other girls; she is “disagreeable-looking” with a “sour expression”, a description which is deviant to the norm of the beautiful, pleasant, passive woman (Burnett 2). There is no feminine discourse used to identify Mary in the beginning and this immediately suggests that Burnett intends to change stereotypical thought of female appearance and behaviour. Furthermore Mary is portrayed as being extremely “self-absorbed”, angry and demanding which defy the social behaviour and gender performances associated with a young lady (Burnett 6). Both Montgomery’s Anne and Burnett’s Mary are displayed as outspoken. When Mary first meets Martha she calls Martha a “daughter of a pig” to which Martha replies that such language is no way “for a young lady to talk” (Burnett 16). In addition Mary is contrasted to her mother in that her mother was “beautiful” with “pretty manners” and that “perhaps if her mother had carried her pretty face and pretty manners oftener into the nursery Mary might have learned some pretty ways too” (Burnett 7). This statement represents the traditional belief that women learn their behaviour and gender from their mother and teachers in society as Beauvoir argues in *The Second* Sex (354). Keyser explains how Mary “is not vain of her appearance” like her mother and that when her features do improve, Mary sees it as a sign of health and strength, not beauty (9). Mary, in contrast to her mother, signifies the change in the social order and development of women as she rejects the dependence on feminine beauty that shaped female ideology previously.

As the story progresses Mary finds out interesting details about herself and her features begin to alter. Instead of being a rather unattractive girl, Mary becomes pretty and

happy (Burnett 38). Although Burnett's description of Mary changes and feminine discourse is suddenly used to describe her, Mary still represents a comfortable combination of characteristics classified to be both masculine and feminine. Even though her physical appearance begins to resemble that of a pretty girl, her sense of adventure and risk-taking breaks from the stereotype, appealing to the potential for women to move beyond their gendered boundaries. Beauvoir encourages women to not completely reject feminine discourse or their traditional roles, but instead persuades them to utilise freedom of choice when determining their position (518). Even though Mary adopts more feminine behaviour, she enjoys spending time outdoors and getting full of dirt in the secret garden. In addition Mary remains assertive and outspoken and, although she may look more like a traditional little girl, she never loses her candid personality. When Colin expresses his fear of dying to Mary, she is "unsympathetic" and explains to him that he is not dying and that his entire illness is in his mind (Burnett 85). Although this angers Colin, Mary's forthright demands save Colin and not only promotes her own growth, but his as well.

Mary is the heroine in Burnett's novel, the same way Dorothy and Anne are the heroines in their respective texts. Dorothy saves the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman and the Lion from their lonely, unfulfilled lives and provides them with hope and new beginnings. Additionally Anne transforms Marilla and Matthew from their reserved, one dimensional lives to people who are filled with love, laughter and a sense of family. In the same way Mary, as heroine, alters Misselthwaite Manor by restoring the secret garden to its former glory and assisting in Colin's physical and psychological rescue. Mary saves Colin from being a frail and ill tempered boy and actively helps in his

transformation into an energetic and optimistic young man. These female protagonists hold the power of change in all three children's novels, signifying the influential and dominant roles women may play in the lives of not only male characters in a book, but of men in society.

It is Mary's stubbornness and unsympathetic nature that propels Colin to recovery. He is intrigued by the foreign and unladylike behaviour that Mary displays and once again it is Mary's deviation from prescribed female subordination that sets about change in the novel. Colin will not allow anyone to command him with instructions. However, Mary finds the strength to influence Colin's development and is able to direct Colin according to what she believes is best. Mary is the only person at Misselthwaite Manor who refuses to tolerate Colin's tantrums and discourteous behaviour. The dominance of one young girl is evident as Colin seeks Mary's approval, even though he will not admit it. Role reversal is apparent as Mary is portrayed as being strong, intelligent and independent, qualities most often associated with males as outlined by Irigaray in *Speculum of the Other Woman* (15).

Just as with Dorothy and Anne, Mary's parents die leaving her orphaned, a situation in which each female protagonist finds herself. It is specifically Montgomery and Burnett who deal with the idea of female abandonment and results in their female protagonists' battle to receive love and acceptance from the adoptive families. Reynolds and Humble argue that the use of the figure of the orphan in children's novels was specifically attractive to female writers as "orphanhood exaggerated their own dependency and the constraints it imposed" (27). Mary's traditional desire for family and a home emphasises this dependency as in the beginning of the novel she wonders why "she had never

seemed to really be anyone's little girl" (Burnett 8). Although Mary's need seems to be linked to the traditional placement of women in the home, Burnett uses Mary's desire to promote her personal development. It is her isolated position that contributes to her journey of self-discovery as Mary is able to develop self-reliance as a direct result of her enforced solitary circumstances. Baum, Montgomery and Burnett use this theme of belonging and the search for home and family as a way to ultimately encourage young female readers to take part in a journey of resilience and self-reliance. Dorothy learns a great deal about herself by being removed from a supportive family unit and is elated when she returns home as she has discovered her self-governing abilities. Similarly, Anne goes through a complete transformation in order to discover her beliefs, personal opinions and most importantly, herself. In comparison, Mary's exploration of the outdoors and the discovery of friendship and family change her from the unhappy and angry little girl that first arrived at Misselthwaite Manor. Gwyneth Evans' "The Girl in the Garden: Variations on a Feminine Pastoral" explains how "a form of pastoral, the sense of enclosure, seclusion and secret labor is essential to the process whereby the girl finds meaning and value in life through close contact with nature" (20). The change in all three female protagonists signifies the future transformation in women's positions and how every female - child or adult - should take an active role in crafting their lives by embarking on a journey of self discovery.

Although Mary gains independence and confidence as the story progresses, in the beginning of the novel she is dependent and unable to perform simple tasks for herself. This is seen when she arrives at Misselthwaite Manor and Mrs Medlock has to carry Mary's luggage as she is unable to do so (Burnett 11). In addition Martha is appalled at

Mary's inability to dress herself when she says "Canna' tha' dress thysen!" (Burnett 15). The change in Mary from being dependent to independent illustrates the ability for women's transformation in society. By reading Mary's story, the female child reader can see her power in rejecting her limited, socially conceived role and focus rather on her ability to be self-reliant.

The goals and dreams that Mary begins to set out for herself are quickly realised and this is not due to her spoilt nature but her independent determination. All three female protagonists exude a bold confidence that is rare when compared to the gendered mandate for the female child of the early twentieth century. Dorothy's desire of returning home is achieved at the end of the novel as she never gives up hope. Anne's dreams of having a home, family, a bosom friend, authoring novels and an education are realised as she too refuses to relinquish her heart's desires. Similarly Mary's aspirations of restoring the secret garden, meeting Mrs Sowerby and Dickon as well as being a part of a loving family are fulfilled as the strength of her determination never fails. Mary's willpower is evident when she wants to meet Dickon and encourages Martha to write a letter to him requesting that he visits Misselthwaite Manor (Burnett 48). Mary is rarely disappointed in the text as her outspoken and confident nature allows her to obtain her heart's desires. Mary's personal gains further illustrate her developmental process and the power that she has in determining her future. Irigaray suggests that the emancipation of women lies in their belief that a "woman's discovery of herself can only signify the possibility of not sacrificing any of her pleasures..." (*This Sex Which Is Not One* 388). Baum, Montgomery and Burnett illustrate this idea of women's ability to

pursue dreams and desires to the female child reader in the hopes that she will find her own power and ability to accomplish her aspirations.

Mary's determination is once again seen when she confidently asks Mr Craven whether she could have a bit of earth for her secret garden (Burnett 68). This request for a piece of land alludes to the modern ideology of women taking ownership. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women's roles were rigidly categorised according to the standards of a patriarchal society. Women's rights were basically non-existent and therefore they were not given the opportunity to own anything of great importance. Burnett's inclusion of Mary asking for a "bit o' earth" highlights women's future and the potential for change (68). Baum and Montgomery use a similar element in their children's texts as Dorothy, who lives on a desolate farm, claims the wicked witch's silver slippers and Anne possesses her own bedroom and her very first puffed sleeved dress. The inclusion of ownership in all three texts provides the female child reader with the idea that she too can possess personal belongings beyond her original expectations.

Burnett's portrayal of Mary's unusual characteristics with reference to her masculine behaviour is evident though her friendships formed with the opposite sex. Throughout the novel, Mary does not seek comfort in the companionship of other women, but instead forms a specific closeness with the male characters in the story. Mary's first friends are in the figures of a male robin redbreast and an older male gardener, Ben Weatherstaff. Mary associates herself with these two male characters as they have a great deal in common. Mary connects with the robin when she hears his story from Ben Weatherstaff about how his family flew away leaving him alone (Burnett 22). Mary can

relate to the robin's abandonment and almost instantly wants to be his friend. Ben also tells Mary of his own loneliness and says to Mary how "tha' an' me are a good bit alike" (Burnett 24). Mary finds friendship with the robin and Ben as she sees herself in them. In addition Mary then befriends Dickon, although they have very little in common, Mary is intrigued by this boy who communicates with animals as she herself has had trouble in developing warm relationships (Burnett 54). Her friendship with Dickon occurs on the basis that Mary is inspired to be like him. Mary's desire to no longer be isolated involves her wanting to be loved by animals and understand nature. Dickon's optimistic outlook attracts Mary and she begins to believe that she is capable of possessing such qualities.

Mary is not displayed as a traditional young lady who learns how to cook, clean, look after children and sew; instead she wants to play outside in the garden in the same way Dickon does. On one specific occasion in the novel, Mary receives a parcel from Mr Craven and wonders whether he has sent her a doll and also wonders "what she should do with it if he had" (Burnett 100). Mary's unimpressed reaction to receiving a doll clearly illustrates her rejection of feminine performances. Mary's connection with the outdoors signifies her acceptance of the masculine gender and when she helps Colin to develop into a healthy boy she is only able to do so because she is aware of what it is that boys do. Mary defies what Butler refers to as "normative gendered performances" and is most happy when participating in male activities (*Undoing Gender* 53).

In comparison to the previous children's texts, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and *Anne of Green Gables*, the feature of the female protagonist embracing male friendships is clearly seen. Dorothy's three companions are all male, once again connecting to the

idea that women and men possess equal abilities when partaking on a journey as their physical strength and capabilities do not differ. Dorothy is envisioned as being just as capable as her male counterparts. In addition from the very beginning of the novel Anne befriends Matthew as she loves the way he allows her to speak while he listens. This idea of role reversal and gender equality amongst the sexes is emphasised in all three children's novels, illustrating the challenge placed on stereotypes and patriarchy.

Although Burnett's representation of Mary signifies change and emancipation of women in society, certain aspects of the text as well as Mary's characterisation allude to the traditions set out by society's patriarchal order. When Mary befriends both Dickon and her cousin, Colin, she finds herself in the middle of Colin's possessiveness. Colin wants to possess Mary and keep her to himself and at first he discourages her friendship with Dickon and refers to him as "a common cottage boy off the moor" (Burnett 98). Beauvoir explains this as the objectification of women and of how females are unfortunately "never anything more than the scene of more or less rival exchange between two men" (*This Sex Which Is Not One* 389). Burnett's inclusion of Colin's jealousy of Mary's friendship with Dickon illustrates the traditional standards of women being classified as mere objects. Colin wants to have Mary all to himself as though she is some commodity and not a human being with freedom of choice.

Burnett does, however, also highlight women's traditional roles, as Mary takes on the nurturing role of mother to the invalid Colin, comforting him and singing him to sleep (104). At this point in the novel, Mary adopts the stereotypical female role as her gendered performances are associated with being traditionally feminine. Mary's mothering of Colin can be seen as her deep seated awareness of the traditional

standards imposed upon women by society. Beauvoir identifies the role of woman as mother as being a form of oppression as it enslaves women to the home and to their husbands (Simons and Benjamin 341). According to Beauvoir Mary's act of nurturing Colin illustrates her oppression as a female within the social order, as motherhood imprisons the woman in her stereotypical placement (518).

Mary's loneliness and feelings of isolation and abandonment are evident as in the beginning of the novel, Burnett portrays Mary as a forgotten little girl whom no one seems to know or care about. For instance when one of the officers steps into the bungalow to assess the damage from the cholera outbreak, he exclaims: "she has actually been forgotten" (5). Mary has no support as her parents, even before they die, give her no attention and leave her friendless. Her isolation highlights the subordinate position of women in society as they were considered to be passive, secondary and insignificant. Evans argues that female characters such as Mary who recreate or "create gardens do so out of a profound loneliness and sense of alienation stemming largely from the loss of a relationship with their mothers" (21). Mary's poor relationship with her mother and then her mother's death contribute to her position of being lost as she is unable to learn her traditional female role in society. Beauvoir explains how women exert female chores and domesticated duties onto their female offspring in order to repeat the oppressive cycle and teach the female child her position in society (354). Mary is unable to perform the tasks of a woman and it can be argued that this further explains her deviant and aggressive behaviour not considered to be feminine in form.

Finally the traditional placement of women in society is once again evident as Burnett displays a change in focus in her novel. At the beginning of the book all concern and

spotlight is centred on the female protagonist, Mary However, as the story progresses the direction of attention changes and Colin's restoration is portrayed as being more important than hers. The female child reader follows Mary's journey of self discovery, yet when she finds her cousin, Colin, locked up in one of the mansion's rooms the pace of Mary's personal growth is reduced as the male character's recovery becomes the focal point in the story. From the very first moment that Mary discovers Colin and he instructs her to take a step closer, Mary loses her dominant role (Burnett 74). The rest of the story is filled with Mary visiting Colin to make him happy, nurturing him so that he does not have another tantrum and making him believe in his abilities. The focus has subtly shifted as Mary's restoration of the garden becomes secondary to her restoration of Colin. According to Rudd, the transfer of attention from Mary to Colin "is an example of a relative operation of agency as Mary has fought to gain agency from a subjugated position, only to find it diminished when she enables Colin's agency" (142). Burnett's inclusion of Colin and his demanding nature represents the male dominance in society. Keyser aptly puts it in her article, "Quite Contrary": Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*" as "the more conventionally attractive that Colin grew, the more he came to dominate the book" (3). It is important to note that Mary's development does not come to a sudden halt when Colin is introduced to the reader, instead her growth takes on a more gradual pace. Burnett's change in focus, however, ultimately poses the feminist problem of removing Mary's position of power for a more socially accepted and traditionally male dominated one.

3.3.2 Analysis of Secondary Female Characters

Within Burnett's writing of *The Secret Garden* it is apparent that the secondary female characters represent the conventional roles of women living in Britain in the early twentieth century. This traditional social order in the text is represented through Martha (the maid), Mrs Susan Sowerby (Martha's mother) and Mrs Craven (the deceased mother of Colin). Martha is the first secondary female character to come into contact with Mary and it is her shock at Mary's undisciplined behaviour that highlights her traditional beliefs. Martha defines Mary's aggressive outbursts as unladylike talk and discourages such language from a young girl (Burnett 16). In addition Martha's physical description is noticeably filled with feminine discourse as she is defined as being "rosy" and "good-natured-looking" (Burnett 15). These terms are traditionally used to describe females as the term "rosy" alludes to the colour pink, a feminine shade, and "good-natured-looking" refers to her homely beauty. Cixous sees feminine discourse as the foundation for female oppression ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 878) and Irigaray connects the subordination between language and the human body, explaining that "male and female bodies are associated with masculine and feminine discourse" (Klages 106). Therefore Martha's traditional role is reinforced by the discourse used to describe her.

Furthermore, Martha's feminine appearance is not the only factor that reiterates her position as a traditional woman; her gendered performances seen throughout the text reinforce her subordination. When Mary first meets Martha she glances at her and watches as Martha is "kneeling on the hearth-rug raking out the cinders" (Burnett 14). Martha is also displayed as "cheerfully polishing the grate" and "knitting", actions that

show the duties performed by women (Burnett 16). Author Jane Austen's works highlight the duties performed by women stressing the importance of sewing as women's work (Sullivan 60). In *The Secret Garden* when it rains and Mary cannot go outside, Martha encourages Mary to do something feminine by asking whether she can knit or sew further re-enforcing the idea of the traditional woman and her engendered obligations.

Interestingly, in accordance with the idea of the traditional woman, Martha often refers to her own mother's teachings, further reinforcing the role of the woman as mother in grooming the young girl to act in accordance to the position bestowed upon her gender by society (Burnett 16). In addition Martha tries to teach Mary how to conduct herself in an appropriate fashion by using her own mother's instructions. As the novel progresses, Mary reflects on the stories Martha tells "of what "mother" said or did" and how "they always sounded comfortable" (Burnett 30). The comfort associated with her mother's stories indicates the effortless way in which women prescribe certain roles and behaviour to their female offspring. When Mary wonders where her black clothes from India have gone, Martha explains that Mr Craven disapproved of the idea of a child wearing black and that Martha's mother agrees with this notion as she "always knows what a body means... she doesn't hold with black herself" (Burnett 17). Martha therefore takes on the role of mediator between her mother's teachings and Mary's learning of them.

The influence of Burnett's secondary female character, Mrs Susan Sowerby, is especially important. She represents the traditional female position as supported by Burnett's description of her using terms such as "kind", "good-hearted" and

"respectable" (68). The use of this feminine discourse alludes to her stereotypical role in society which is emphasised further by her characterisation in the text. With only a few physical appearances in the text, Mrs Sowerby's effect on Mary and other characters is yet profound. From the moment Martha mentions her mother, Mary is intrigued by the thought of such a knowledgeable and caring woman and how "she doesn't seem to be like the mothers in India" (Burnett 49). This is evident as Burnett writes on how "Mary was most attracted by the mother...", indicating a change in how Mary had initially experienced the effects of women as mother (30). Mrs Sowerby and her principles encourage Martha to be a hard-working housemaid, Mary to become healthy and Mr Craven to become a responsible adult. Her role of mother reaches beyond her own twelve children. Mrs Sowerby is able to adjust Mary's ways without even meeting her. On one particular occasion, without having seen Mrs Sowerby, Mary tells Martha that she likes her mother (Burnett 35). This confession illustrates Mrs Sowerby's powerful influence over Mary and how she provides Mary with a much needed mother figure. Mrs Sowerby's concern for Mary's development illustrated when she explains to Martha how Mary should be learning her books and should have a woman to look after her (Burnett 40). Additionally Mrs Sowerby instructs Martha to encourage Mary to play outdoors even when it rains and to dress up warm (Burnett 41). The inclusion of Mrs Sowerby's interest in Mary's development indicates how she embraces the concept of the traditional woman and her motherly role. In order for young girls to grow into womanhood, they must be taught by their female mentors, their mothers and teachers, who dictate the prescribed roles in society. This principle of young girls being taught their female positions by older women alludes to Beauvoir's infamous statement of how

"one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (301). Society's stereotypical female roles are repeated and reinforced by the traditional women who practise and preach the assigned domestic duties. Mrs Sowerby is dedicated to her role as mother and this is apparent as even though she has very little money she buys Mary a skipping rope to assist with her physical development from an ailing little girl to a healthy young woman (Burnett 40). Therefore Mrs Sowerby's influence is essential for Martha and Mary in order for these young girls to grow and not deviate from the acceptable placement of women.

In addition Mrs Sowerby's influence on Mr Craven represents the stereotypical roles of women as mother and wife. At one point in the novel Mrs Sowerby boldly approaches Mr Craven and instructs him not to get Mary a governess until she has adjusted to Misselthwaite Manor and has spent sufficient time outdoors (Burnett 67). When speaking to Mary for the first time Mr Craven says to Mary that Mrs Sowerby "knows about children" (Burnett 67). It is apparent that Mr Craven's acceptance of her advice highlights his belief in Mrs Sowerby's ability as a mother. Furthermore Mrs Sowerby not only acts as an indirect surrogate mother for Mary, but she is concerned about Colin's development as well. With the death of Colin's mother, it is Mrs Sowerby who has Colin's best interests at heart. Towards the end of the novel she writes to Mr Craven and instructs him to come home at once, appealing to him saying: "I think your lady would ask you to come if she was here" (Burnett 163). Mrs Sowerby's stern letter illustrates her female desire to restore the Craven family as by watching Colin and Mary's progress she has extended her mother role to the Craven family.

Finally the secondary female character of Mrs Craven, although deceased, represents the importance of motherhood as well as the woman's role as wife. Her absence in Colin and Mr Craven's lives signifies the destruction that can occur with the absence of a woman carrying out her traditional role. Colin is unable to look at the portrait of his mother as he believes that the reason he is ill is because of his mother's death. Although the reader knows that this cannot possibly be true, Burnett creates Colin's belief on the understanding that the role of the woman as mother conveys healing and without Mrs Craven this restoration cannot take place. The role of woman as mother is absent from the Craven household and this negatively affects both Mr Craven and Colin. However with the arrival of Mary and the nurturing of the secret garden, Mrs Craven's spirit is an active participant in the healing of Colin and Mr Craven. The secret garden belonged to Mrs Craven when she was alive and it is the place where she falls, leading to her death, therefore her connection to the garden is unmistakeable. In addition Mrs Sowerby suggests Mrs Craven is "about Misselthwaite many a time lookin' after Mester Colin, same as all mothers do when they're out o' th' world" (Burnett 125). When Mr Craven is away in Switzerland he dreams of his deceased wife and the secret garden and it is this incident paired with Mrs Sowerby's letter that encourages him to return home. Phyllis Bixler writes in her article "Gardens, Houses and Nurturant Power in *The Secret Garden"* that the garden is an "image of powerful motherhood" as the way in which the flowers and trees are brought to life and nurtured are compared with the woman as mother and how she brings her children to life and nurtures them thereafter (212). Mrs Craven's connection with the secret garden and motherhood contributes to Colin's transformation. In addition when Colin is better he awakens one night to see the

cord of the curtain, the one that covers his mother's portrait, illuminated by the moon and he therefore decides to expose his mother' picture (Burnett 153). When he retells the story to Mary he explains how "she looked right down on" him and how he thinks "she must have been a sort of Magic person" (Burnett 153).

Mrs Craven's magical connection to the garden additionally represents Burnett's personal belief in the religion of Christian Science. The founder of the Christian Science Church, Mary Baker Eddy, stated: "We have not much authority for considering God masculine, as we have for considering Him feminine", as God is believed to be a "feminine spirit or the Motherly side of divinity" (qtd in Swensen 76). This feminine spirit connected to God is represented by the abstract character of Colin's mother. As Christian Science rejects the concept of healing using conventional medicine and instead opts for healing through prayer and nature, a direct link between Mrs Craven's spirit and Colin's improved health is evident ("Christian Science" 1066). The more time Colin spends in the garden, originally owned by Mrs Craven, the more he comments on the magic that he feels whilst being outside and it is then that Colin begins to reject modern medicine and the treatment that Dr Craven tries to administer. When Colin exclaims "it's the magic... you see the scientific experiment has succeeded", it can be identified as Burnett's exact understanding and belief in Christian Science as Colin attributes his well-being to the magic in the garden, that Burnett connects to Mrs Craven's spirit, and not to the modern medicine he has been taking (Burnett 154). In addition while standing among the trees and bushes in the secret garden Dickon sings: "praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise Him all creatures here below, praise Him above ye Heavenly Host, praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen" (Burnett 155).

After the hymn has been sung, Colin guesses the meaning of the song and finally says: “it means just what I want it to mean when I want to shout out that I am thankful to the Magic”, indicating a direct link between Christian prayer, the female spirit of Mrs Craven and healing (Burnett 155).

The effect that Mrs Craven’s death has on Mr Craven also indicates the possible problems posed with the eradication of traditional female roles in society. Once Mrs Craven dies, Mr Craven abandons his role as father in raising his son, Colin. In addition Mr Craven leaves Misselthwaite Manor as he is unable to function without his wife. The removal of her kind and caring persona results in Mr Craven’s emptiness. This highlights the importance of women’s positions of wife and mother in maintaining the family structure and that her loss destroys the family. The secret garden is not only a symbol of motherhood, but of Mr and Mrs Craven’s love and marriage. With her death, their union is demolished and therefore the garden is locked and the key buried (Burnett 28).

Mrs Craven’s deep connection to the secret garden and the description of her appearance represent the femininity found in the traditional woman. The stereotypical presentation of women connects with the idea that women should possess an element of eternal beauty in order to be seen as a woman. George Weaver’s book *Aims and Aids for Girls and Young Women on the Various Duties of Life* (1856) dedicates an entire chapter to desires of female beauty as he states: “Woman, we regard as the most perfect type of Beauty on earth” (26). In *The Secret Garden* Mrs Craven is described as being “a pretty young lady” and when Colin shows Mary his mother’s portrait it is defined as having a “soft rose-coloured silk curtain” hanging in front of it (Burnett 77).

The portrait itself shows an image of a girl with “bright hair tied up with blue ribbon”, signifying a traditional picture of a woman (Burnett 78). The words “pretty”, “lady”, “soft”, “rose-coloured” and “silk” are examples of feminine discourse as they are associated with women. Women are invariably described as being “pretty” as their beauty reinforces their desired physical appearance. In addition the term “lady” refers to a woman’s feminine performances and behaviour relating to the word “ladylike.” The texture, colour and fabric of “soft rose-coloured silk” that hangs in front of Mrs Craven’s picture illustrates the femininity associated with her. The use of such words reinforce not only the femininity of Mrs Craven, but her passivity of being a woman as Irigaray’s *Speculum of the Other Woman* discusses the connection between the passive feminine and the active masculine (15). The term “soft” connects to the notion of weakness and the opposing idea of strength. By using this term in the description of Mrs Craven, Burnett highlights the societal passivity of traditional female roles.

3.3.3 Analysis of Secondary Male Characters

The secondary female characters created by Burnett illustrate the stereotypical gender roles imposed on women by the patriarchal society of Burnett’s novel. Burnett’s representation of the secondary male characters in *The Secret Garden* display a similar typecast traditionally placed on men, therefore, indicating the socially accepted standards which both men and women have been compelled to accept. Burnett uses the characters of Mr Craven, Colin Craven and Dickon Sowerby to indicate the patriarchal male roles and the possibility of transformation in the social order. Throughout most of the novel Mr Craven is traditionally portrayed as an aggressive, “sour” old man (Burnett 10). When he first speaks, his tone is described as “short” and

"cold", therefore emphasising the masculine discourse associated with men (Burnett 8). By using these terms, Burnett illustrates Mr Craven's unemotional and brusque nature reiterating his masculinised position as these are qualities connected with men. His position of dominant male is further maintained as Mrs Medlock explains to Mary that Mr Craven will not want to see her and that she is to avoid "wandering and poking about" as he will not stand for it (Burnett 10). Mr Craven's distant and disconnected response to Mary's arrival and neglect of his son indicates the absence of paternal qualities. On one occasion he admits to Mary that he has forgotten to get her a governess and he then alludes to the fact that he is not very good at being a parent (Burnett 66). He admits honestly that he is a poor guardian for any child as he cannot give her any time or attention, suggestive of the male's abdication of parenting to the female (Burnett 68). When Mary first meets Mr Craven he seems to be far less aggressive than what the stories about him have indicated, however, when Mary speaks to Mr Craven she is described as gathering "a scrap of courage" further illustrating his authority and power (Burnett 67). To add the mere fact that he is the owner of Misselthwaite Manor signifies his position of superiority as he not only possesses a mansion but has a team of people managing his estate.

Interestingly it is the restoration of the garden and the memory of Mrs Craven that rescues Mr Craven from his ill-temperedness. The darkness found in his soul is lifted and replaced with light and happiness as if "he was coming alive with the garden" (Burnett 162). The dream of Mrs Craven calling Mr Craven from the secret garden propels him into a state of peace and tranquillity. It is during Mr Craven's enlightenment that he realises his selfish ways and how he should not have been angered for years by

the birth of his son and the death of his wife. He becomes aware of the neglect that he has exhibited in abandoning his son and decides at that point to change and be a better father and guardian (Burnett 164). Ulf Boëthuis discusses the importance of Mr Craven's transformation as in the beginning of the novel "he is criticised for being selfish and not caring about his own child" as it seems as though he "he has forgotten his home and his duties", however, when the garden is restored Mr Craven too is altered and given new life (192).

The second male character Burnett uses to emphasise the stereotypical behaviour of men is Colin Craven. When the reader is first introduced to Colin it is evident that he is a wealthy young boy and is aware of his powerful position and acts as a dominant, feared male patriarch. At first he commands Mary to take a step closer so that he can see her better and then he explains to her how "the servants are not allowed to speak about" him (Burnett 73). In addition Colin continues to tell Mary how "everyone is obliged to please" him and that he would make them tell him anything that he wants to know (Burnett 75). Colin's governance over the staff at Misselthwaite Manor illustrates his powerful male position and because of his illness and his masculine role he has been able to command people and get whatever his selfish heart desires. This initial encounter with Colin illustrates the dominant position of men in society as it is at this point in the novel that Colin becomes the focus of Mary's attention and the narrative's centre.

Although Mary comments on Colin's spoilt nature, she acknowledges his senior position in the house with total understanding. She tells Martha that as long she does whatever Colin tells her to do, she cannot lose her job as "everybody is ordered to obey him"

(Burnett 81). When Martha is called to speak to Colin she is described as “shaking in her shoes”, indicating the fear this small boy has managed to instil in the estate’s staff (Burnett 83). On one specific occasion in the story Mary does not visit Colin and instead enjoys herself in the secret garden. This angers the young boy as he is used to getting his own way (Burnett 97). Colin and his superior attitude have met their match in Mary. Mary’s determination is evident through her friendship with Colin as she is angered by the way he speaks to people. Ironically, this is the same way that Mary used to treat people, but she now sees the disrespect apparent in such behaviour. Colin’s attitude and behaviour is indicative of the gendered performances given to him by society’s standards. According to Riley, Butler explains society’s belief in “gender normativity” and that aggression and dominance is considered to be socially acceptable behaviours of men.

From Colin’s very first meeting with Mary, he dominates the text as well as her development as once he has first laid eyes on Mary he attempts at all costs to control and objectify her. This is evident when Colin discovers Mary’s friendship with Dickon and he threatens her by saying that he will not allow Dickon to come to Misselthwaite Manor if she sees Dickon instead of visiting him (Burnett 97). Colin is jealous of the way Dickon makes Mary happy and therefore he fuels this imaginary competition for Mary’s attention. Irigaray explains this rivalry as a man’s vital need for the possession of a woman and how women are viewed as a commodity who are only to satisfy men’s pleasure; Women are displayed as “the beautiful object” (*This Sex Which Is Not One* 385). In addition Colin’s objectification of women is reinforced as Martha tells Mary that even if Colin gets angry with her and she does not want to see him “he’ll have thee if he

wants thee" (Burnett 82). The use of the term "have" illustrates this idea of possession and therefore by Colin having Mary indicates female objectification and male domination.

As the story progresses Colin learns to be more polite and respectful, however, his dominant attitude does not vanish completely. The staff at Misselthwaite Manor continue to obey Colin's commands, especially his request regarding not contacting Mr Craven, and this reiterates his traditional position of power. In addition when Ben Weatherstaff shouts at Mary for entering the secret garden, Colin's authoritative attitude is once again evident as he is "filled with a power he had never known before" and therefore reprimands Ben (Burnett 128). Finally at the very end of the novel when Colin comes face to face with Mr Craven he tells his father that he is able to beat Mary in a race, therefore supporting the idea of his superior position over women. Burnett's creation of Colin addresses the inequalities imposed upon males and females by society and how men are allowed to be more dominant and controlling.

The final secondary male character that Burnett reveals in *The Secret Garden* is Dickon. Dickon's role in the text is to represent the possibility of gender role reversal and equality amongst the sexes in society. He is contrasted with the character of Colin as the only dominance that he demonstrates is over animals, which is infused with gentleness and not aggression. When Colin throws one of his infamous tantrums, Mary tells him how different he is to Dickon (Burnett 83). Further when Mary first meets Dickon she is intrigued by his warmth and friendliness as he speaks to her as though they have been friends forever (Burnett 54). As Mary has heard many stories about Dickon from Martha and in return Dickon has heard various reports on Mary the two

share an immediate connection. At first Mary feels shy when she meets Dickon, but as the afternoon progresses she forgets about her feminine feelings because Dickon seems to be incredibly carefree. Dickon and Mary's companionship is filled with equality and growth as their partnership is based on the mutual goal of restoring the secret garden. Dickon with his knowledge of animals and nature, and Mary with the key to the secret garden form an equal partnership indicative of a change in the stereotypical relationships of men and women. Although Dickon is presented as being exceptionally intelligent, he never makes Mary feel as though she is not and instead takes the opportunity to teach her as much as he knows. This attitude represents the role reversal and transformation of gendered norms that Butler so aptly discusses in her texts *Gender Trouble* and *Undoing Gender*. Butler highlights the importance of role reversal and the idea that men and women should be free to select whichever gender they feel most comfortable with and defend it (*Undoing Gender* 98). Dickon's connection with nature can be classified as feminine due to nature being associated with motherhood and the act of nurturing. In this it is evident that "Burnett undermines nineteenth century constructions of gender and maternity throughout the novel" as to her "maternity is non-gendered: both men and women can mother" (Silver 193). Dickon nurturing the garden and taking care of animals that have lost their mothers can be associated with feminine tendencies that support Butler's argument relating to the change in society's traditional representations of gender. Both Dickon and Mary's interests are similar indicating the removal of specific gendered performances and the acceptance of modern thought relating to men and women's roles in society.

Burnett's careful creation of her male and female characters in *The Secret Garden* demonstrate both the stereotypes evident in the early twentieth century as well as the feminist ideology of a need for change in women's roles and subordinate position. Like Baum and Montgomery, Burnett's awareness of the traditional social order is evident through her stereotypical representation of characters such as Mr Craven, Colin and Martha and Mrs Sowerby. Mary and Dickon, on the other hand, symbolise the potential for change in the conventional classification of men's and women's roles.

Conclusion

Since their conception classic children's books have acted as both educational tools as well as entertainment for children. The specific texts selected for the purpose of this study are well-written, thought-provoking children's novels that not only contain elements consistent with teaching children their traditional roles in society, but also allow the child reader imaginative freedom and excitement. Lyman Frank Baum, Lucy Maud Montgomery and Frances Hodgson Burnett painted vivid pictures of their female protagonists, secondary characters and the setting of each of their stories with words suitable for young minds. Chapter One of this project has illustrated how their personal contributions to the creation of their children's texts originated from the personal experiences that influenced their lives. Baum's journey to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago influenced his creation of the Emerald City in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as well as the text's original title. Additionally he named his granddaughter Ozma after his created characters from the Oz series. Montgomery's personal experience of abandonment and living on Prince Edward Island in Canada contributed to the realistic portrayal of orphaned Anne Shirley and the setting of *Anne of Green Gables*. Finally it was Burnett's personal experience of dealing with her son, Lionel's death and her belief in Christian Science that underlies the healing process of both Mary and Colin in *The Secret Garden*.

Chapter One continued with an interrogation of the history of children's literature with specific reference to American, British and Canadian children's literature. American and British children's literature developed from the religious and secular books that children were compelled to read during the seventeenth century such as John Cotton's *Spiritual*

Milk for Boston Babes and John Newbery's *A Pretty Little Pocket-Book*. Canadian children's literature began as a genre by publishing children's texts during the twentieth century.

When reading and researching the selected children's books, the idea of utilising feminist literary theory became apparent as within all three novels similar elements of female oppression, male domination and the desire for women's liberation were visible. Chapter Two focused on the theoretical framework of feminist literary theory as well as the movements of the three waves of feminism. The prominent figures: Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous and Judith Butler were discussed according to their relevant contributions to this field of study and the concepts originating from their works were explored in preparation for the analysis of the selected works. When analysing the first volume of *The Second Sex* it was discovered that Beauvoir's belief lies in the concept that the subordinate position of women is created by cultural practices and beliefs as opposed to any biological basis. Her disapproval of Sigmund Freud's theories relating to the absence of women's destiny in the field of psychology and the discussion of women being perceived as objects concluded the first section of Beauvoir's prominent text *The Second Sex*. The final section of the text dealt with women's roles and how society issues women with subjugated positions. Beauvoir has identified these stereotypical roles as the married woman, the mother and the prostitute. The categories of married woman and woman as mother are evident in the three selected books and indicate the traditional destiny offered to women by society and how women are oppressed by their societal roles.

Luce Irigaray's *Speculum of the Other Woman* and *This Sex Which is Not One* were analysed according to the elevation of masculine knowledge and the psychological oppression of women through discourse. *Speculum of the Other Woman* deals specifically with the idea of passivity being used to identify women and activity being used to identify men. The sexual development of a female is explored within the text and indicates the similarities between male and female children that are often overlooked in order to impose the feminine position onto the young woman; factors apparent in the texts selected for this study. Irigaray's second text *This Sex Which is Not One* explores the relationship between language and bodies and shows how women are viewed in relation to their position to men, especially surrounding the discussion of sexuality. Therefore, Irigaray believes that the aspiration of women is to defy their subjugated position as object and rather become their own subject, an element seen in the portrayal of the female protagonists.

Hèléne Cixous' "The Laugh of the Medusa" and *The Newly Born Woman* were interrogated according to women's writing, a need for change and masculinity versus femininity. "The Laugh of the Medusa" addresses Cixous' desire for women to exude enough confidence to write as women. The centrality of language is targeted in this text with regards to language being the foundation for female oppression and examples of this female subjugation through discourse is apparent in the selected texts. Cixous' second text *The Newly Born Woman*, explored within this study, focuses directly on how masculine and feminine discourse reinstates women's inferior position in society. Cixous believes that in order for women to be truly liberated they need to write

rebelliously as women, avoiding the male master-discourse that signifies masculine power.

Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and *Undoing Gender* were discussed according to gender performativity and undoing normative conceptions of sexually relegated choices of behaviour and life. *Gender Trouble* highlights the idea that gender is a cultural creation and has no real connection to biology as masculine and feminine characteristics are determined through gender performances and not an individual's sex. In this text psychoanalysis is once again criticised by Butler who explains that the analysis given on sexuality is incomplete. An analysis on the power of language and how society uses language to engender people concludes the text. Butler's *Undoing Gender* was then explored and her belief in the acceptance of alternate gender normativity such as transsexuals, intersexuals and homosexuals was explored. It was further articulated that Butler believes in freedom of choice and role reversal and encourages people to live according to their personal choices of gender and not the ones set out for them by society. Butler's concepts of freedom of choice and role reversal are clearly seen in all three children's texts selected for study.

Feminism and the genre of children's literature are connected as the majority of nineteenth century children's texts illustrate female characters in their traditionally subordinate roles whereas twentieth century children's books portray an element of independence and liberation in the representation of female characters. With the exploration of feminism in the selected children's literature, it became evident that feminist literary theory is an important theory that can be used when analysing the works from this genre. The traditional female roles evident in early children's texts

portrayed female characters as being weak, dependent, beautiful and homely, whereas, the traditional male characters were presented as strong, courageous, active beings. With the change in women's societal position came a change in the representation of female characters in children's literature. Baum, Montgomery and Burnett selected a female character to play the role of their particular texts protagonist and with this came other changes such as role reversal and even cross-dressing as a form of liberation and alternation of men and women's stereotypical roles.

Chapter Three of this study provided a close textual feminist analysis of the female protagonists beginning with Dorothy. Through extensive examination of Dorothy it was discovered that although Baum uses her to represent change in the social structure, certain elements within her creation allude to the traditional roles set for women by society. Dorothy's physical appearance, concern for hygiene, desire to return home and the act of placing her faith in one male wizard connects with the traditional position of women. The use of feminine and masculine discourse in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was analysed according to Irigaray and Cixous' feminist works. The concept of emancipation in Dorothy was then explored considering Dorothy's position as the protagonist. Although Dorothy thinks that she is the one who needs saving, she is actually the heroine of the story as she saves all three of her male companions. She additionally kills both evil witches, never changes her mind regarding her goal to return home and exudes self-efficacy throughout the text. Baum's portrayal of Dorothy illustrates the traditional appearance and roles of women in society and the move away from such stereotypical ideology.

In addition the secondary female characters were analysed such as the wicked witches, Aunt Em, the Queen of the Field-Mice, the princess made from china and Glinda's female soldiers in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. The portrayal of the secondary female characters in Baum's text highlights Beauvoir's classification of women's roles as either good or bad. Baum's use of feminine discourse when describing the good secondary female characters reinforces their position as traditional women in society. Cixous' work on feminine and masculine discourse was once again used to emphasise female oppression in the text. Aunt Em is described according to her feminine appearance, the Queen of the Field Mice is small and in need of rescuing and the princess made from china is identified according to her pretty dress. In contrast the dominance and strength associated with the wicked witches connects with masculinity and the position and uniform of Glinda's soldiers further illustrates Baum's desire for role reversal, a concept interrogated through Butler's work.

The portrayal of the secondary male characters such as the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, the Lion and the wizard Oz and their apparent patriarchal identification was investigated. The dependence of Dorothy's male companions on her further indicates role reversal and the idea that the male characters lack the dominance and typical strength associated with their gender. The Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman and the Lion show signs of weakness, emotion and fear which are characteristics traditionally found in women. With Dorothy's guidance the male characters do develop and become more masculine by the end of the book. Oz, however, begins as a traditionally dominant man, but later transgresses to a weak humbug. It is Oz's physical transformation that was also analysed according to Butler's contributions to feminist literary theory as at one

point in the novel he presents himself as a woman, once again suggestive of Baum's desire for role reversal and the acceptance of transgendered individuals.

Chapter Three continued with an analysis of Montgomery's protagonist, Anne. In comparison to Dorothy, Anne's representation is filled with both elements that allude to the stereotypical position of women as well as the innate desire to change this social placement. In the beginning of the novel Anne is rejected by Marilla and Matthew because she is not a boy, a moment of great significance in the text as Anne is viewed as not being handy enough to contribute positively to the Cuthbert family. As the story continues Anne is constantly criticised for not behaving like a little girl, which led to the analysis of the use of masculine and feminine discourse in the text. Beauvoir's work on women's roles was utilised when critically analysing the encouragement received by secondary characters regarding the desire for Anne's feminine behaviour. Anne's own obsession with beauty and romance illustrates her desire to be feminine and traditional. However, Montgomery purposely introduces the reader to a protagonist who, although she may dream of femininity, has very little herself. Anne's confidence, intelligence and desire to speak her mind are characteristics usually associated with male characters. Anne challenges society's rigid positioning of people according to gender and instead speaks freely about how women should be ministers or teachers if that is what they want to do. In comparison to Dorothy, Anne is the heroine of the text as she changes not only herself but the people around her.

An analysis of the secondary female characters Marilla Cuthbert, Rachel Lynde and Diana Barry from *Anne of Green Gables* was conducted with reference to feminist literary theory. Montgomery uses Marilla and Rachel to defy social norms as both

women lack the maternal sensitivity typically associated with traditional women. However, as the text progresses it becomes clear that Marilla and Rachel's gendered performances of knitting and sewing alludes to the stereotypical placement of women in society. Further analysis of the secondary female characters in the text focuses upon Anne's friend, Diana who represents tradition and the subjugated role of women in society. Diana's strong moral code and beautiful appearance reinforce her position as a stereotypical woman.

An exploration of the secondary male characters in *Anne of Green Gables* indicates Montgomery's contribution to role reversal as the male characters are represented as subservient individuals. Matthew Cuthbert avoids confrontation and lacks the dominance stereotypically associated with men in society. Butler's view on role reversal appears in the text as Marilla takes on the role of leader and Matthew is the submissive other. The second male character analysed was Gilbert Blythe and it is clear that his physical appearance is described as masculine and his behaviour at one point in the novel connects with the idea of him being the stereotypical male hero as he rescues Anne from danger. However, Montgomery writes Gilbert with an emotional side, once again indicating role reversal. Gilbert is sensitive to Anne and gives up his own dream of teaching at Avonlea in order for Anne to be close to Marilla. This sacrifice once again highlights the concept of role reversal and how a change in the social order is possible.

An analysis of the protagonist Mary in *The Secret Garden* provided similar findings to the exploration of Dorothy and Anne as Mary's characterisation is evident of the traditional and oppressed position of women as well as the desire for liberated transformation. Like Anne, Mary's dominant attitude and unattractive physical

appearance is considered to be deviant to the norms associated with women in society. She is stubborn and recalcitrant and it is this masculine behaviour of hers that influences the healing of her cousin, Colin. Similar to Dorothy and Anne, Mary is the heroine of her text as she restores her cousin and uncle as well as the secret garden.

All three protagonists are orphans, which intimates a deep connection to belong and encourages their personal journey which leads to the persuasion of the female child reader to embark on her own journey of self-reliance and resilience. Although Mary is strong and determined, on several occasions she is placed in the inferior position of the traditional woman. This is evident as Mary becomes the object of rivalry between Colin and Dickon, highlighting Irigaray's work on the objectification of women. Mary's mothering of Colin and the secret garden additionally alludes to the stereotypical role of woman as mother and nurturer and with the increased strength of Colin comes the decreased power of Mary, signifying the traditional placement of women as other when men are restored to their position of power and significance.

The secondary female characters Martha, Mrs Sowerby and Mrs Craven in *The Secret Garden* were also analysed. Martha's feminine appearance and performances reinforces the ideology of women's traditional roles in society. Martha's retelling of her mother's stories signifies the way in which young girls would be taught their oppressive positioning by their mothers. Burnett's portrayal of Mrs Sowerby additionally highlights the stereotypical placement of women as feminine discourse is used to not only describe her appearance but her maternal instinct as well. The final secondary female character discussed was Mrs Craven, a character created out of Burnett's following of Christian Science as the belief in the mother and the healing power of nature are

apparent. Discussions surrounding the memory of Mrs Craven are filled with feminine discourse highlighting her traditional position as a woman. The deceased character is additionally presented as the magical motherly healing evident in the secret garden as Burnett illustrates the destruction of the family with Mrs Craven's absence. The secondary female characters in *The Secret Garden* represent the traditional role of woman as mother and the stereotypical performances that reinforce their position.

The secondary male characters in *The Secret Garden* were analysed according to feminist literary theory as their creation signifies the traditional gender roles placed on men and women during the twentieth century. Mr Craven is displayed as a dominant, aggressive and aloof man; masculine discourse used to illustrate his stereotypically male position. Colin Craven is demanding and aware of his powerful position as the estate owner's son. Even though both Mr Craven and Colin are transformed, their traditionally dominant positions are not eradicated. The male character of Dickon, however, is where Burnett illustrates the modern ideology of role reversal as Dickon contrasts the dominant and aggressive Colin. Dickon is warm and friendly; he considers himself equal to Mary and displays the position of mother by nurturing abandoned animals and the neglected secret garden. Through the analysis of Burnett's secondary male characters it is evident that the patriarchal order of society during the twentieth century is apparent, however, the desire for alteration of the social arrangement is shown through role reversal.

The comparison of these children's classics by Baum, Montgomery and Burnett provide insight into the selected works of all three writers, especially through the lens offered by feminist literary theory. As a comparative study of these three texts has not yet been

conducted, there is a significant opportunity for contribution to this actual field of study. Further study of these selected texts could include an analysis of the change in gender stereotyping from the twentieth century to the twenty-first century with the inclusion of racial representation.

In conclusion this study analysed Baum, Montgomery and Burnett's similar utilisation of female protagonists in children's literature during the early 1900s. A thorough understanding of not only the oppression of women, as exemplified in literature during this era, was highlighted but also the comprehension that women's liberation and emancipation were evident in these early children's novels.

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Abstract

The primary aim of this project is to provide a close contextual and textual analysis of the selected children's classics: *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Secret Garden* using the feminist literary theory. From this perspective I have shown how the selected works of Lyman Frank Baum, Lucy Maud Montgomery and Frances Hodgson Burnett's writing have contributed to women's stereotypical roles within society and perpetuated their subjugated position. I have also conducted an examination of the extent to which the female protagonists attempt to emancipate themselves from gender oppression. A comparative study of the selected children's texts has not yet been conducted and therefore this project serves as a significant contribution to this field of study. An exploration of the historical background of the authors and children's literature is conducted to provide an overview into the inner workings of the writers' lives and the historical significance of children's literature as a genre.

The theoretical framework of feminist literary theory is used in the analysis of the selected texts. The connection between feminist literary theory and children's literature is highlighted and provides further understanding of the purpose of this study. The history of feminism as both a movement and a contemporary literary criticism is explored. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* is used when analysing the texts' characters and how they are based on society's stereotypical gender roles. Luce Irigaray's *Speculum of the Other Woman* and *This Sex Which is Not One* is examined to aid in an exploration of psychological female oppression through feminine and masculine discourse evident in the creation of the novels' female and male characters. Hélène Cixous' "The Laugh of the Medusa" and *The Newly Born Woman* is interrogated according to the stereotypical ideology surrounding the terms

masculinity and femininity and how these terms are interpreted in the selected works. Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and *Undoing Gender* are additionally explored to assist in the understanding of the concept of gender performativity and through the lens of Butler's interpolation of gender the move towards the emancipation of women is seen in the selected children's texts.

The close textual feminist analysis focuses on the female protagonists: Dorothy, Anne and Mary as well as the secondary female characters: the wicked witches, Aunt Em, the Queen of the Field-Mice, the princess made from china, Glinda's female soldiers from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*; Marilla Cuthbert, Rachel Lynde and Diana Barry from *Anne of Green Gables* and Martha, Mrs Sowerby and Mrs Craven from *The Secret Garden*. The portrayal of the secondary male characters are additionally explored according to feminist literary theory: The Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, the Lion and the wizard Oz from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*; Matthew Cuthbert and Gilbert Blythe from *Anne of the Green Gables*' and Mr Craven, Colin Craven and Dickon Sowerby from *The Secret Garden*.

The comparison of these children's classics by Baum, Montgomery and Burnett provides insight into the selected works of all three writers, through the lens offered by feminist literary theory. Through the interrogation of these representative female protagonists found in early children's literature, an understanding of not only the subordination of women, as evident in literature during this era, is illustrated but also the comprehension that women's liberation was foreshadowed in these early children's novels.

Key Words: Children's Literature Lyman Frank Baum Lucy Maud Montgomery Frances Hodgson Burnett The Wonderful Wizard of Oz Anne of Green Gables The Secret Garden Feminist Literary Theory

Declaration:

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts at the University of Fort Hare. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

_____

Bonnie Becker

_____day of _____ , 2013.

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Sincerely,

Bonnie Becker

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