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# KNIGHT LETTER

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*The Lewis Carroll Society of North America*



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*On the Front Cover:*

Mary Kline-Misol

*Hatter*, 1998

Acrylic on canvas

60" x 50"

*see p. 7*



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First, apologies for a “late” delivery (characteristic of a certain pigment-impaired lagomorph). This edition contains the first instance of reporting two meetings in one issue; we felt this was a better solution than to have another long delay before you could read about our recent Southern California confabulation.

Speaking of deliveries, it’s been a bit hectic here since the arrival of the newest member of our cult, Sonja Eames Burstein, born on April 7. I tried to name her Alice, Lily, Dinah, Kitty, Rose, Ada, Mabel, Isa, Xie, Louisa, or Carol or something somehow related, but my beloved wife Llisa wasn’t crazy about the idea. She herself came up with “Sonja” and imagine our surprise when, after hearing the news, Mariah Isakova revealed to me that Sonja (соня) was, in fact, the Russian word for “dormouse”! Even later, I remembered that *Соня в стране дива* (*Sonja in the Land of Miracles*) was the first Russian translation of *Wonderland* (in 1879). Curious how that worked out.

In this issue we welcome back Martin Gardner, who has bestowed upon us some further annotations; the long-awaited paper on folklore and mythology by Rick Lake (delivered to our society at our Spring 2004 meeting); Jenifer Ransom’s views on mushrooms; and the first part of a series on the evolving image of Alice by Victoria Sears.

Gotta run. Sonja is sneezing, and I don’t want her to turn into a pig.

Mark Burstein





# THE RECTORY UMBRELLA



## *A Gardner's Nosegay: Further Annotations*

MARTIN GARDNER



*The eternally productive Martin Gardner, in between editing a "heavily revised" edition of The New Ambidextrous Universe: Symmetry and Asymmetry, from Mirror Reflections to Superstrings (which contains many Carrollian references in regard to mirror reflections) and assembling a collection of essays on G. K. Chesterton, among other projects, still finds time to keep up with the latest in Carrollian scholarship. In KL 75, he added nearly thirty annotations; here are his latest contributions.*

### NEW NOTES AND CORRECTIONS

The page numbers are for "The Definitive Edition" of *The Annotated Alice* (Norton, 2000). Pagination is different in the Penguin British edition.

14. Add note 5a:  
Brian Sibley noticed that in Tenniel's picture (p. 22) of the White Rabbit trotting down the hall, no lamps are hanging from the ceiling.
15. Add a <sup>5a</sup> at the end of the top paragraph.
23. Add to note 4:  
See also "Alice in Mathematics," by Kenneth D. Salins, in *The Carrollian* (Spring 2000).
28. Add to note 10:

See Brian Sibley's delightful essay "Mr. Dodgson and the Dodo," in *Jabberwocky* (Spring 1974). He quotes Will Cuppy, "The Dodo never had a chance. He seems to have been invented for the sole purpose of becoming extinct and that was all he was good for."

36. Insert the following between the two paragraphs of Note 4:  
See "A Tail in a Tail-Rhyme," by Jeffery Maiden, Gary Graham, and Nancy Fox, in *Jabberwocky* (Summer/Autumn 1989), and its references.
48. Add to Note 2:  
See an earlier article, "Alice, Who Are You?" by Fred Madden, in *Jabberwocky* (Summer/Autumn 1988). He also mentions that Carroll owned a copy of MacKay's book, with its chapter on "Popular Follies in Great Cities."
64. Add to Note 4:  
John Shaw, writing on "Who Wrote 'Speak Gently?'" in *Jabberwocky* (Summer 1972), also gives a history of the controversy in which he played such a major role. He provides a bibliography of 56 publications of poems that begin "Speak

- gently." Carroll's parody, he concludes, "may well be an echo of all of them rather than any one of them."
- Carroll's parody has been set to music by Alfred Scott Gatty. The score, undated, is reproduced in *Jabberwocky* (Winter 1970).
65. Add to Note 5:  
Tenniel's picture of Alice holding the pig is one of his very few illustrations showing Alice full face, looking straight ahead. Note the foxgloves on the left.
68. Add to Note 10:  
Ferdinand J. Soto, in *The Carrollian* (Spring 1998) suggests that Alice left a straight road and for a short distance followed a circular path that put her back on the straight road. Of course the simplest explanation is that Tenniel failed to notice that Alice had "walked on."
120. Add to Note 2:  
Adams has denied that he had Carroll in mind when his computer Deep Thought answered the "ultimate question." It was no more than a joke—a random number that popped into his head. (See *Knight Letter*, Summer 2005.) For more speculations about 42, see the three articles on the topic in *Jabberwocky* (Spring 1993) and musings by Charles Ralphs and others in *Jabberwocky* (Winter/Spring 1989).
136. Add to Note 2:  
Many attempts have been made to justify the eccentric moves in Carroll's chess game. See "Looking-Glass Chess" by Rev. J. Lloyd Davies in the *Anglo-Welsh Review* (Vol.19, Autumn 1970) and "Looking-Glass Chess" by Ivor Davies in *Jabberwocky* (Autumn 1971). The most detailed analysis is A. S. M. Dickins' lecture "Alice in Fairyland," as edited and expanded in *Jabberwocky* (Winter 1976). The Fairyland is "fairy chess," a common term for variants of chess based on unorthodox pieces and rules. The article is cited again in Chapter 3, Note 1, and Chapter 9, Note 1. Incidentally, Bird's opening, mentioned earlier in this note, is pawn to king bishop's four.
137. Put a <sup>0</sup> after the chapter title.  
Add new note:  
An early draft of the table of contents for *Through the Looking-Glass*, located in the Houghton Library at Harvard University, shows that this chapter was originally to be called "The Glass Curtain"; Chapter V was once two chapters, "Living Backwards" and "Scented Rushes," most likely divided before the paragraph beginning "She looked at the Queen," (p. 200); Chapter VIII was called "Check!"; and Chapter XII was written in as "Whose Dream Was it?". See Matt Demakos's "The Annotated Wasp," *Knight Letter* (Winter 2003).
146. Add to Note 9:  
For some strange reason, not yet understood, here Tenniel gave the White King the same crown as worn by queens, as he did with the Red King in the previous picture! Were they simply blunders on his part? If so, why did Carroll, who surely knew that a chess king is topped with a cross, not object?
155. Add to Note 42:  
It is easy to write nonsense parodies of "Jabberwocky": simply substitute new nonsense words for Carroll's. More difficult is to substitute words that make a sensible lyric poem. For example, Harvard professor Harry Levin, in his fine essay "Wonderland Revisited" in *Jabberwocky* (Autumn 1970), does just this to produce the following lovely quatrain:  
'Twas April and the heavy rains  
Did drip and drizzle on the road:  
All misty were the windowpanes,  
And the drainpipes overflowed.
181. Add to Note 1:  
A much later jingle is worth quoting:  
A divinity student named Tweedle  
Refused to accept his degree.  
"It's bad enough to be Tweedle," he said,  
"Without being Tweedle, D.D."  
Note that "Fiddle" can be substituted for "Tweedle."
208. Put <sup>4a</sup> at the end of the first line below the poem.  
Add new note:  
4a. Alice's version of the nursery rhyme, with its faulty last line, actually appeared in an 1843 London book titled *Pictorial Humpty Dumpty*. See Brian Riddle's "Musings on Humpty Dumpty," in *Jabberwocky* (Summer/Autumn 1989). The jingle's final line is usually "Couldn't put Humpty together again."
226. Add to Note 8:  
See "Carroll, the Lion and the Unicorn," by Jeffrey Stern, in *The Carrollian* (Spring, 2000).
241. Add to the end of the fourth paragraph from the bottom (after "deep ditch") the numeral 8a.  
Add new note 8a:  
Frankie Morris, in *Jabberwocky* (Autumn, 1985) conjectures that the White Knight's inability to stay on his horse may have reflected the notoriously bad horsemanship of King James I.  
Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Fortunes of Nigel* said the king had a specially constructed saddle to keep him locked on his horse, and Dickens,

in his *Child's History of England*, called James I "the worst horse rider ever seen." In 1692, his horse stumbled and threw him into an icy river so that only his boots were visible. This may have inspired Tenniel's drawing of Alice rescuing the White Knight from a ditch.

260. At the end of the third paragraph from the bottom, after "thirty-times-three," add the numeral 13a:

Add new note 13a:

Three-times-three was and still is a popular way of ending a toast with  $3 \times 3 = 9$  cheers.

Tennyson, in the conclusion of "In Memoriam," writes:

Again the feast, the speech, the glee ...

The crowning cup, the three-times-three.

281. Add in the margin:

In 2005, at a Christie's auction in New York City, the galleys sold for \$50,000.

298. Add the following paragraph to the note given in my previous supplement:

See also a special issue of *Jabberwocky* (Summer 1978) devoted to the symposium. Although the consensus was that the "Wasp in a Wig" galleys were authentic, all agreed that in the episode, although it presented Alice in a new light, the writing was not Carroll at his best, and that Tenniel was justified in suggesting that it be excluded from the book. There was no agreement on where Carroll intended the episode to be placed.

308. Add to the end of bibliography:

*Artist of Wonderland: The Life, Political Cartoons, and Illustrations of Tenniel*. Frankie Morris, 2005.



Mary Kline-Misol  
Oracle, 2003  
Acrylic on canvas  
70" x 24"

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# You Really Ought to Give Iowa a Try

MARK BURSTEIN

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It is difficult indeed to think of Iowa without humming “Seventy-Six Trombones” or another of the fine songs from native son Meredith Wilson’s *The Music Man*. In some ways, our fall meeting could have been in that River City in 1912 he so idealized: the sun was shining brightly on the cornfields as we arrived; it was “Discover Victorian Iowa” week, with its attendant festivities; and we dined in Edwardian splendor at a mansion on Saturday. But I am getting ahead of the story.

Friday afternoon saw the Maxine Schaefer Reading at the Willard Elementary School, where fourth-graders were initiated into the world behind the looking-glass with a dramatic reading by Pat Griffin of the “Humpty Dumpty” chapter, and seemed delighted to receive their copies of the book.

We met in the Iowa State Historical Building on a sunny Saturday, October 15, in downtown Des Moines (“The Monks,” though none were visible). Actual biplanes were hanging from the ceiling, and exhibits ranged from the accomplishments of famous Iowans to the somewhat surreal display of objects that had been swallowed or coughed up, from the collection of a local bronchologist.

First up was a welcome from our president, Alan Tannenbaum, to the forty-two or so souls gathered in a meeting room, and a few announcements, by and large bemoaning the nondelivery of two packages of books: Frankie Morris’s *Artist of Wonderland* (p.38) and Charlie Lovett’s *Lewis Carroll Among His Books* (KL 75:29). (They never did show up.) Alan also reported on a most cordial visit he had with Martin Gardner, who happens to live on the route betwixt Austin and Des Moines.

David Schaefer, a charter member of our society and one whose Carroll collection began with his mother in the 1890s, treated us to complete or partial showings of nine *Alice* films, only two of which are commercially available. Movies were beginning to be shown in London as early as 1896, often at the end of

theatrical presentations, so it is possible, although unverifiable, that our Mr. Dodgson actually saw one. It has been speculated that he perhaps shunned them as lower-class entertainment.

“Electric palaces” (“nickelodeons” in the U.S.) soon flourished, and Cecil Hepworth’s silent *Alice in Wonderland* came out in 1903. David had the good fortune to meet Hepworth’s daughter, who gave him some stills from the missing scenes, the correct colors in which to tone and stain the film, and an advertising soundtrack, promoting the then radically long ten-minute film (the audience’s attention span was gauged to be three minutes), which proclaimed it to have “no pantomime or stage effects.” The actors were recruited from Hepworth’s film crew. David’s “colorizing,” achieved digitally, had the consequence of making the film a bit contrasty and lacking in detail, but it did convey to us a sense of how it must have



looked to the *fin de siècle* audience. (See KL 72:40–41 for details. The film is commercially available.)

Next up was the production by Thomas Edison’s company, shot in the Bronx in 1910, and long believed lost. This one was rather charming, and many of the characters were portrayed by young children. (Except Alice, of course. The tradition of actresses of teenage or later years playing her was unbroken until Irwin Allen’s casting of Natalie Gregory, then nine, in his 1985 production.) Costuming was particularly outstanding, and the entire movie unfolds like animated illustrations.

A 16mm film released in 1930 of an “Alice in Wonderland” dance sequence from the United Artists picture *Putting on the Ritz*, with music by Irving Berlin, was next. One of the lyrics said it best, “through the looking-glass into Wonderland.” It was a very acrobatic ballet, with its star, Joan Bennett, used to her best advantage, that is, neither singing nor dancing,

but just mugging occasionally. One odd bit of business had the Lion propositioning the White Rabbit.

Commonwealth Pictures of Fort Lee, New Jersey, put out what was called “the first sound talkie for children” in 1931, a year before the better-known Paramount effort. The actress portraying Alice (who must have been in her thirties) sounded more than a bit like Lina Lamont (who, in *Singing in the Rain*, utters the immortal line “Whaddaya think I am, dumb or sumpm?”).

We were then shown the newsreel footage of Mrs. Hargreaves’ arrival in New York in 1932 for the centenary celebrations. Her welcoming committee consisted of the head librarian of Columbia, and the head of the chemistry department, surely no irony to the legions of her fans thirty years hence.

A 1955 Popeye cartoon, *Sweet Pea Through the Looking-Glass* led into a Three Stooges animated cartoon from the same year. Moe was depicted as the White Rabbit, the March Hare, the King of Hearts, and three “Moe-m” Raths. Larry was the caterpillar, the dodo, and several others. Dialog was of the “I’m the Queen of Hearts, you stupid fuzzball” caliber. A 1967 cartoon, *Abbot and Costello in Blunderland*, with the voices of Bud Abbott and Stu Erwin, followed the characters through a slapstick farce as they avoided Hopalong Tragedy, a 40-foot rabbit. Lines such as “I’m not the Queen of Hearts, I’m the Queen of Clubs (boink!)” ensued. Last up was the fabulous Betty [Boop] in *Blunderland*, from the Fleischer Studios in 1933, widely available.

Although the café in the building was unexpectedly closed, fortune smiled upon us in the form of “World Food Day,” whose venue was a three-block festival of food booths from all over the planet. I passed on the suitably Carrollian deep-fried *Schweineflügel* (pig’s wings), and found myself—outdoors on a sunny day in Iowa—listening to a live band from Central America while munching on pad thai and spanikopita, sipping freshly brewed tea from China. Not what I was necessarily expecting.

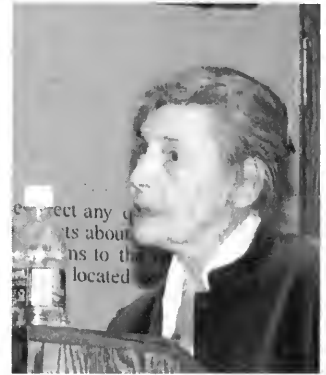
We also had time to wander among Mary Kline-Misol’s stunning retrospective of paintings (more on that below). As I mentioned, it was “Discover Victorian Iowa” week in Des Moines, sponsored by the State Historical Society, and a parlor had been set up within the exhibition, such as might have been in a Midwest home in 1880. There was a (suitably costumed) storyteller for children, and printed suggestions of readings, games, and activities were available.

After lunch, Dr. Genevieve Brunet Smith (above right), our erstwhile secretary and longtime member, the artistic director of *Histrion*, a Washington, D.C., theater performing French plays, spoke next, although “spoke” is too mild a verb for her performance. The talk, “Portrait of an Artist,” a fascinating look at Dodgson/Carroll through seven facets, was

an utter delight, as Dr. Smith pulled out all the stops from her acting training, and gave an extraordinarily animated, flamboyant, fabulously theatrical reading of her paper, which contained a recitation of the young Dodgson’s poem “My Fairy.” The facets, for the record, were “a man of God,” “a man of science,” “a man of letters (pun intended),” “an illustrator,” “a photographer,” “an inventor and a composer,” and “an indefatigable walker.”

After we’d settled back into our seats recovering from the wild ride, Dr. Frankie Morris (below) took the lectern. A Ph.D. in Art History, an experienced commercial artist and portraitist, and the author of *Artist of Wonderland: The Life, Political Cartoons, and Illustrations of Tenniel* (reviewed on p. 38), she engaged, in a talk largely drawn from her book, in what she termed “myth breaking,” portraying Tenniel as an actor, a sportsman, and a fun-loving socialite, who was healthy and athletic into his nineties despite the childhood loss of the use of his right eye. Tenniel, historically important for his political cartoons for *Punch*, which were said to have “precipitated wars and destroyed cabinets,” is so entwined in the public consciousness with our society’s namesake that in her talk Morris once accidentally referred to them by a portmanteau, “Carriel.” She discussed, with great knowledge and insight, the relationship of the two men (e.g., Tenniel lowered his usual fee for illustrations to £138 for the complete set of 42 drawings), the engraving process of the Dalziels and Tenniel’s contributions to the art of the woodblock, and other related matters.

After a short break and a trading-and-selling frenzy among the attendees, Morris presented her second talk, “Attitudes, Misery, and Purring When You’re Pleased.” This fascinating, free-wheeling talk is slated to be published as an essay in *The Carrollian*, so we can only go over highlights here. She spoke to *Parables from Nature* (1855–1871), a five-part series for children by Dodgson’s friend Margaret Gatty, and their influence on the *Alice* books: “Anglo-Saxon at-



titudes” in relation to the theatrical term “attitudes” in Dodgson’s time (also called *tableaux vivants* or *poses plastiques*), which she illustrated with some occasionally hilarious slides of British matrons in their “uplifting” poses; and discussed echoes of Percy Bysshe Shelley in Carroll’s early, “melancholic” poems.

Three collectors then presented aspects of their collections via PowerPoint slides, as prelude to a panel discussion. First, August Imholtz chose to discuss just one small corner of his collection, one occupied by Russian translations. Although he regrets that he does not possess the first translation (1879), he has great depth in his holdings. He began *in medias res* talking about Nina Demurova, who was approached in 1967 to translate a Bulgarian edition into Russian. Being of a practical mind, she inquired whether it wouldn’t be a bit more appropriate to translate it from the English into Russian, which she so successfully did. August proceeded to show us mainly illustrated covers of the books, which he categorized among the “traditional, primitive, crude, cutesy, fanciful, stylized, hideous, brilliant, or merely grotesque.” Demurova’s 1978 retranslation for the science publisher Nauka also contained annotations and essays, one by the chief trainer of cosmonauts!

“Hello, my name is Joel and I’m an *Alice* collector,” began the second talk, by former president Joel Birenbaum, who quite rightly compared us to a group of “*Alice*-holics Anonymous.” “Hello, Joel!” we properly replied. He echoed the sentiments of all collectors, saying that he felt, like *Alice* in the White Rabbit’s home, that his house was shrinking as his holdings grew. He began by discussing “*Alice* in Popular Culture” (Booker’s recent book of the same title barely glanced the surface, Joel feels), as “all things *Alice*” have infiltrated and permeated our everyday lives. He next talked about “*Alice* in the News,” illustrated by his July 1992 discovery, in the church in Croft where the senior Dodgson had been rector, of a stone carving of a cat’s head, floating in the air a few feet above the floor, just like the Cheshire Cat. A small story in the *Northern Echo* was picked up nine days later by the *Chicago Tribune*, giving it front-page coverage, under pictures of the Pope and George Harrison. From there it went to the wire services, NPR, *Readers’ Digest*, and so on throughout the known universe.

“*Alice* in Advertising” showed our heroine hawking insulation, light and power, tomato juice, Philco refrigerators, Ford cars, Guinness beer, and so on throughout the years. *Alice*, he speculated, is the most recognized icon outside of Mickey Mouse, and, as she is out of copyright, a lot easier to tie one’s product to. “*Alice* in Packaging” showed her on tea and toffee tins, clotted cream fudge, and so on; he narrated a small digression on how, on his first wedding anniversary, he and Debbie found themselves in an otherwise empty cow pasture in Lyndhurst where *Alice* once had lived. “*Alice* in Cloth” showed her portrayed on pillowcases, bedspreads, curtains, and the omnipresent t-shirts; “*Alice* Here, *Alice* There, *Alice* Everywhithere,” a miscellaneous category showed her on posters, cards, stamps, rulers, and even goth dolls; and, finally, “It’s in the Cards, *Alice*” displayed greeting cards. Joel finished by saying he did not have time to even begin to show all his other ephemera: political cartoons, games, toys, etc. Joel’s talk is on the Web at [www.lewiscarroll.org/meeting/2005fl/popweb/popculture.html](http://www.lewiscarroll.org/meeting/2005fl/popweb/popculture.html).

The present writer took the microphone for “My Life with *Alice*: A Scrapbook,” the story of his collection from 1928 (when his grandmother put *Alice* wallpaper in the nursery of his father, Sandor), through their serious collecting years from the mid-’70s to the present. Sandor, a former Society president, traces his love for Carroll back to the first grade, when he was in love with his teacher, a Miss Kathleen Sherman. She happened to be playing *Alice* in a local production, and he became enchanted. This tale had a charming follow-up in 1983,

when our local paper had an article on the collection, and Sandor shortly thereafter received a call from a Mrs. Reno Biagini, whose maiden name was—Kathleen Sherman. They had a lovely reunion, fifty years later.

One of the things that is particularly uncommon in this day and age is that our entire collection, now numbering over 3,000 books and 1,300 objects, was assembled the old-fashioned way, without using the vast power of the Internet in search engines such as eBay or Alibris. Photos of some of the more rare items were shown: Chepmell’s *A Short Course of History*, Lawrence Melnick’s unique hand-illustrated and calligraphed *Looking-Glass*, some fine hand-bindings, *The Holy Land* by Reverend Canon Duckworth, Car-



roll's own cribbage board and Alice Liddell's accordion, now fully restored.

Other collectors had sent in slides of various items from their collections: David Schaefer's unique, original puppet of the Hatter from the 1951 Bunin film; a 100-foot roll of "Alice in Picnicland" (a runner for a supermarket display); lawn statuary, jewelry, and on and on.

A short Q&A panel discussion, moderated by Alan Tannenbaum, followed: the most memorable question being about the fabled *Protocols of the Elders of Wonderland*.

Our gracious and talented hostess, Mary Kline-Misol (right), spoke next to the central reason we were in Des Moines: her *Alice Cycle*, a retrospective of 42 paintings from 1988 to date. Her work began two decades ago at Drake University, where her thesis show involved drawing a "visual narrative," and her theme was the *Alice* books. To see her paintings together for the first time was extraordinarily moving, both for the artist and those of us privileged to be in attendance. (For those who were not, she has most generously offered to send them, without charge, the stunning, full-color catalog!)<sup>1</sup> Her exquisitely rendered, powerful paintings (many are quite large, the biggest 50" x 80") celebrate Carroll's characters in an exuberant, yet personal way: e.g., a giant Duchess (seen from Alice's diminutive perspective); images of transformation and growth, often based on photographs of Alice Liddell; a diptych called *Nemesis* (Alice and the Queen of Hearts). Two of these images grace our cover and page 3.

"I have always been drawn to acrylics and continue to work with them today. My paintings develop with images often spontaneously unfolding as the work progresses. Figures and objects appear, only to be hidden under subsequent layers of paint as I attempt to catch that elusive moment that will communicate my inner vision. My techniques include scumbling (painting thin layers of opaque light color over dark colors, which gives a broken color effect) and glazing (brushing a transparent paint over another, thoroughly dried layer of opaque paint). These techniques mix the colors optically rather than on the palette, and the result is a shimmery, opalescent surface, creating a unique 'shine-through' stained-glass effect that cannot be achieved with a direct mixture of paint. The technique of glazing came out of the Northern Renaissance, where it was used to give more dimension to egg tempera paintings. Flemish painters perfected the technique."

It is difficult to imagine a more enchanting, magical, and masterly collection of artworks around this theme. Please send for her catalog and/or visit her Web site, [www.angelfire.com/art/MKMisol/](http://www.angelfire.com/art/MKMisol/).



We then moseyed over to the Salisbury House for an elaborate banquet hosted by Mary and her husband, Sinesio. The House, an official "national treasure," is a mansion of 42 (of course) rooms, right off 42nd (of course) Street, modeled after the King's House in Salisbury, England. Built between 1923 and 1928 for Carl and Edith Weeks and situated on a ten-acre landscaped garden, it was designed and built to look like a centuries-old English manor and, as such, incorporated elements from Gothic, Tudor, and sixteenth-century British buildings, including the ceiling from the White Hart Inn in Salisbury, where Shakespeare's troupe is believed to have performed.<sup>2</sup> Some of our older members may have recalled the fireplace in the dining room as the spot from which Vincent Price hosted *The Chevy Mystery Show* in 1960. Tours of the house were available, and the eclectic collections of paintings, rare books and documents, and rugs and tapestries were on view, although many of us chose to remain in the foyer, among the hors d'oeuvres and the exceptional paintings of the six wives of Henry VIII by one Mary Kline-Misol. After that, it was "all feasting and fun" long into the evening. Mary, who put the entire program together, and Sinesio are to be congratulated, roundly commended, and thanked for a most enjoyable and unforgettable day, and their exquisitely generous hospitality. We're delighted to have given Iowa a try.

<sup>1</sup> Write to her at 1660 NW 120th St., Clive IA 50325, sending \$2 cash or check to cover postage. Email: [smkmisol@mchsi.com](mailto:smkmisol@mchsi.com).

<sup>2</sup> [www.salisburyhouse.org](http://www.salisburyhouse.org)



# Folklore and Mythology in the Alice Books

FREDERICK C. LAKE

Critics have pondered the books' magic and tried to explain it. What are they all about, they ask, and why so universally successful? What is the key to their enchantment, why are they so entertaining and yet so enigmatic? What charm enables them to transcend language as well as national and temporal differences and win their way into the hearts of young and old everywhere and always?

— Morton Cohen, *Lewis Carroll: A Biography*

The fantasy classics of the nineteenth-century Oxford don, mathematician, cleric, and photographer, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, writing under the name Lewis Carroll, are among the most popular books in the world. Do the disciplines of folklore and mythology—the study of mankind's most timeless and universal tales—help to explain why these works are so universal and enduring?

Folklore was, perhaps, among the first critical approaches ever suggested for these books. The idea is in a letter to the author himself, from a fellow academic pointing out the parallels between the *Alice* books and classic world myths:

Are we to suppose, after all, that the saga of the Jabberwocky is one of the universal heirlooms which the Aryan race at its dispersion carried with it from the great cradle of the family? You really must consult Max Müller about this. It is probable that the *origo originalissima* may be discovered in Sanskrit, and that we shall by and by have a *Iabrivokaveda*. The hero will turn out to be the Sun-God in one of his *Avatars*; and the Tumtum tree the great Ash *Yggdrasil* of the Scandinavian mythology.<sup>2</sup>

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*This article was first presented as a talk at The Lewis Carroll Phenomenon: An International and Interdisciplinary Conference on April 3, 1998, at Cardiff University of Wales, as adapted and abridged from "Folkloristic Aspects of Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass," presented to the Committee on Degrees in Folklore and Mythology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of bachelor of arts, with honors, from Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, on March 21, 1980. This talk was later given at a meeting of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America at Harvard on May 8, 2004, and adapted for print by the author.*

Robert Scott, Dean of Rochester, wrote the letter in 1872, shortly after the publication of *Through the Looking-Glass* and seven years after *Wonderland* had first seen print. Under a pseudonym, Dr. Scott published a German translation of "Jabberwocky," and suggested that his rendering was the Germanic original from the dark past. Carroll good-naturedly sent Dr. Scott a supposedly older version of the poem, a Latin translation by Carroll's own uncle.<sup>3</sup> Both Scott and Carroll sensed the link between traditional narratives and the two *Alice* books. But that was that. Neither man elaborated further. Here we continue the task.

In the first stanzas of the prefatory poem of *Looking-Glass*, Carroll twice calls the book a "fairy-tale," and concludes the poem by reminding us of that. "Fairy tale" may signify any fantastical, nonsense story, as the two books patently are. But, as critics acknowledge, Carroll's nonsense, like the fairy tale, harbors ideas of sober worth. Thus we ask, is the label only a metaphor, or does it more exactly define the works on their formal models in English narrative tradition? Are they "folk fictions of which magical or supernatural episodes are a necessary part,"<sup>4</sup> called "Ordinary Folk-Tales" by Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson in their monumental index of tale types?<sup>5</sup>

Whether or not it was Carroll's conscious intention to do so, circumstances surrounding *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass* suggest that they were effectively modeled on folktale. Specifically, Victorian attitudes towards the folktale and children's literature, women in the European bardic tradition, and traditional storytelling all influenced the *Alice* books.

As the nineteenth century progressed, an increasing number of Victorians came to believe that folktale was particularly appropriate for children, and that being so, tales for children should be folktales. Thus, protest was heard when, early in the century, English children's literature turned to facts and moralizing, and away from the traditional imagination.<sup>6</sup> In a letter to Coleridge, Charles Lamb asked, "Is there no possibility of averting this sore evil? Think what you would have been now, if instead of being fed with tales and old wives' fables in childhood, you had been crammed with geography and natural history?"<sup>7</sup>

Since domestic authors at the beginning of the nineteenth century did not meet the demand for the sort of literature Lamb and others admired, England looked elsewhere. In the stories of Hans Christian Andersen, a reviewer found “one notable and delightful exception. ... On the quaintness of author—only approached or excelled by those of Hawthorne—we need not descant now.”<sup>8</sup> In 1823, Taylor produced the first English rendering of the German folktales collected by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm; similar works would follow.<sup>9</sup>

In his youth, Carroll showed his distaste for the standard fare for children. Some of his early poems parody the conventional, pietistic middle-class children’s literature.<sup>10</sup> He also began to bring folklore into his writings. Other poems were reworkings of such folk ballads as “The Twa Brothers.”<sup>11</sup> The opening verse of *Useful and Instructive Poetry*, the first of the family magazines written by the young Carroll to entertain his large family, was titled “My Fairy.” Written when Carroll was thirteen, its first line was prophetically, “I have a fairy by my side,” a harbinger for this master of fairy tales to be.<sup>12</sup>

By the time Carroll published *Wonderland*, Victorians were more susceptible to the study of folklore. The works of the philologists, such as Max Müller, were objects of keen interest.<sup>13</sup> Although a few English authors, Kingsley (in *The Water-Babies*) and Thackeray (in *The Rose and the Ring*), for instance, moved in the direction of the fairy tale, *Wonderland* embraced it. A crowd of emulative children’s works followed Carroll, with authors frequently assimilating fairy tales and folk material into their writing.

Carroll stood apart from other writers who were interested in traditional tales; additionally, he adopted the legendary poses of the unlettered storytellers. We may look, for example, to Homer as a model of these figures, whose methods were decoded in *The Singer of Tales*, Albert Lord’s monumental work describing the techniques of oral epic poetry as well as storytellers’ techniques from oral tradition.<sup>14</sup> Homer’s invocations to the muse are familiar. The spirit of the muse is the bard’s inspiration; the poet is merely made clairvoyant by her. The goddess herself is the source of the tale, and Homer calls on her spirit to tell it through him.<sup>15</sup>

Alice Liddell was Dodgson’s muse. “The sole medium of the stories is her pellucid consciousness,” wrote Walter de la Mare.<sup>16</sup> Carroll’s photographs of her reveal an ethereal character, as does the terminal poem of *Looking-Glass*:

Still she haunts me, phantomwise,  
Alice moving under skies  
Never seen by waking eyes.<sup>17</sup>

In *Wonderland*’s prefatory verses, which depict the now famous boat ride, a pantheon of muses governs the author:

Imperious Prima flashes forth  
Her edict “to begin it”:  
In gentler tones Secunda hopes  
“There will be nonsense in it.”  
While Tertia interrupts the tale  
Not *more* than once a minute.<sup>18</sup>

The storyteller is indebted to a feminine model not only for inspiration, but also for preserving his tales. The English folktale, as it has survived to modern times, is in large part a tradition of stories told by older women about younger girls. Rather expectedly, most of the informants listed in Katherine Briggs’ *Dictionary of British Folk-Tales* are women.<sup>19</sup>

At *Wonderland*’s conclusion, Alice recounts her dream adventures to her older sister, who then falls to dreaming. A grown Alice replaces the teller of tales in this vision. Like the man, Carroll, who precedes her, she gathers young children to hear her stories. In the passage, the older girl “pictured to herself how this same little sister of hers would, in the after-time, be herself a grown woman ... and how she would gather about her other little children, and make *their* eyes bright and eager with many a strange tale, perhaps even with the dream of Wonderland of long ago.”<sup>20</sup>

The scheme for the transmission of oral tales, ultimately derived from oral literature, frames the creation of *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass*. A female muse (the child Alice) inspires the male bard (Lewis Carroll). The bard entrusts his tales—about girls and maidens (the fictional Alice)—to an older woman (the mature Alice of her sister’s dream), who passes his stories to yet other children. Carroll’s muse, unlike those of Virgil or Milton, is not a literary device. In fact, it could be said, no muse more liberally bestowed her blessings on a storyteller. One woman, in her real and fictional form and in her two ages, fulfills all the necessary roles.

With his own words, the author calls us down a folkloric rabbit hole. In addition to his bardic pose, aspects of Dodgson’s personal behavior resemble that of the oral traditional storyteller. The materials of the oral *conteur* are preexisting.<sup>21</sup> The same world is accessible in every retelling of the story, and the *conteur* can imaginatively, even playfully, manipulate his materials.<sup>22</sup> Unlike print, the oral medium is not static, and thus we find multiforms of traditional stories. The tales he told “were not entirely new. Sometimes they were versions of old stories; sometimes they started on the old basis but grew into new tales.”<sup>23</sup> Carroll wrote down the original narration of Alice’s adventures merely to accommodate those who insisted that he preserve his oral story.

The parallelism of the *Alice* books suggests that they resemble each other, as do the multiforms of an oral traditional tale. The topical details vary, but the motifs they represent remain. In the duad, the same heroine leaves on a dream journey. The kings and queens of *Wonderland's* game of cards correspond to the kings and queens of the chess game in *Looking-Glass*. At the end of her first set of journeys, Alice gains a towering stature, and at the end of her second she becomes a queen. Both stories conclude with the chaotic degeneration of their respective worlds and a rude awakening for the heroine.

More importantly, however, the books appear to be multiforms of tales from oral tradition itself. They exhibit story patterns that have been discovered in the imaginative traditions of many groups, narrative patterns encompassing both lore and myth. The analysis of the disciplines of folklore and mythology has many approaches, ranging from historical through psychological and semiotic. "Folk and myth" studies may also be multidisciplinary and include comparative literature or religion. There are some approaches that would be familiar to those not in the field: Jungian analysis could reveal the universal archetypes of human thought; mythic analysis could illustrate how they are another incarnation of what Joseph Campbell calls mankind's great monomyth: "always the one, shape-shifting yet marvelously constant story that we find, together with a challengingly persistent suggestion of more remaining to be experienced than ever will be told."<sup>24</sup>

We will not attempt an encyclopedic foray into the mythic elements of the *Alices* here; such a task awaits a future scholar. The works are infused with the essence of folklore and mythology—completing such a scholarly venture would open the narrative and symbolic elements of the *Alices*, like a prism revealing the spectrum of colors within its white light of imagination. The spirit of Dodgson would be amused by such exegesis. However, here we shall start narrowly, and find or identify the inextricable links between the *Alice* books and a select number of timeless girl-tales found in traditions worldwide. As creating tales for the amusement (not betterment) of little girls was the author's original intent, we will defer to his spirit.

A simple folkloric method will serve to start. The *Alice* books, among other things, are a literary transformation of interrelated classes of tales from oral tradition, which convention describes as the Substituted Bride,<sup>25</sup> the Search for the Lost Spouse, and, most familiar to us all, Cinderella. This broad classification suits the structure and heroine of the books, although their details reveal links with a diverse range of traditional materials. A literary rendering of these tales was not new: a version of the Substituted Bride is found in *Genesis* in the story of Jacob and his mar-

riages to Laban's two daughters.<sup>26</sup> Classical antiquity offers Apuleius' "Cupid and Psyche." In fact, "Cupid and Psyche" is the folklorists' synonym for the tale of the Search for the Lost Spouse, which frequently combines with elements of the two others. Literary adaptations of the Cinderella story are numerous. Most know the story by way of Perrault's seventeenth-century retelling, although some of the embellishments and details in his version are unknown in oral tradition.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, the *Alices* are not mere retellings of tales heard elsewhere. They are a manifestation of basic imaginative designs that are virtually worldwide narrative currency.

The similarity between the structures of *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass* is more apparent when they are compared to the Search for the Lost Spouse. What distinguishes that tale is the breaking of a taboo: The heroine fails to follow the instructions of an enchanted husband or other member of her family. After the violation she embarks on a journey. In her travels she endures tasks and experiences associated with maturation. At the journey's conclusion, she may reunite with her husband or family or acquire a new status. Often, the heroine becomes a queen, since her previously enchanted husband proves to be a prince.<sup>28</sup>

Disobedience is implicit at the start of both of Alice's adventures. In the opening scenes of *Looking-Glass*, Alice is curled up in an armchair playing with her kitten. Because of the cat's mischief, Alice's talk turns to the subject of punishment: "'Suppose they saved up all *my* punishments?' she went on, talking more to herself than the kitten. 'What *would* they do at the end of the year? I should be sent to prison I suppose, when the day came.'" Or, if the punishment was to go without dinner, at the end of the year she could skip the meal for quite a while. "'Well,' Alice says, 'I shouldn't mind *that* much!'" But the violation that begins her journey is associated with the looking-glass itself. After she passes through the mirror, which hangs over the chimney-piece, she discovers that the house on the other side of the mirror also has a fire in the fireplace. When she enters Looking-glass House, "The very first thing she did was to look whether there was a fire in the fireplace. ... 'So I shall be as warm here as I was in the old room,' thought Alice: 'warmer, in fact, because there'll be no one here to scold me away from the fire. Oh, what fun it'll be, when they see me through the glass in here, and ca'n't get at me!'"<sup>29</sup>

As for *Wonderland*, Alice would never have gotten there if she had not been disobedient or, at least, impetuous. She is sitting by her older sister, very tired, when the White Rabbit first runs by. The narration implies that Alice should have been corrected for not thinking about following a talking rabbit. "When she

thought it over afterwards, it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this."<sup>30</sup>

It is remarkable, however, that the details Carroll uses in his tales of maturation are like those in the variants of the Search for the Lost Spouse. The motif of the glass mountain or glass house is associated with a variety of traditional girl-tales in diverse cultures.<sup>31</sup> A typical labor for the heroine on her search for her lost spouse is to climb a glass mountain. The first time she tries, she fails. Only after a period of service is she worthy of the task. In the first chapter of *Wonderland*, Alice grows shorter after drinking a potion. She wants the gold key on the glass table in order to open the door to the garden, yet she is so small she cannot reach it. She tries to climb one of the glass table's legs, but it is too slippery. Only after the social rigors of *Wonderland* can Alice move on to the next level of maturity. At the beginning of her next journey, she easily accomplishes the climb up to and through the looking-glass.

In the story of the Substituted Bride, the heroine confronts a rival. A key motif of the story persists: when the heroine comes to take her rightful spot, she is, at first, unrecognized. Alice, too, faces a similar problem at the conclusion of *Looking-Glass*: Alice's long march down the chessboard ends when she crosses the last brook and becomes a queen. A golden crown appears on her head, and the other queens, Red and White, appear at her side. Alice knows she is a queen; she has discovered a crown on her head. The others are not so quick to see it. In fact, the Red Queen insists on treating Alice like a child: "Speak when you're spoken to!" Only after the Red Queen realizes that Alice calls herself a queen, she breaks off, thinks a while, and then protests to Alice: "What right have you to call yourself so?"<sup>32</sup>

The story of the Substituted Bride is complete when the heroine vanquishes the rival and wins her husband. On her last turn in the chess game, Alice captures the Red Queen and checkmates, or "mates," the Red King.

Alice's actions are like those of the heroines in the tales of the Substituted Bride and the Search for the Lost Spouse, but in character she more resembles the unpromising heroine of the Cinderella story. The features that distinguish the cinder-girl remain in powerful associative orbit about the tale. As a rule, Cinderella is the youngest daughter; she must also overcome "shiftless habits,"<sup>33</sup> and her place is by the ashes of the hearth. Alice is all of these. In *Wonderland*, she is the youngest sister. She is also less industrious. Her sister reads while "Alice was beginning to get very tired ...of having nothing to do."<sup>34</sup> Similarly, an idle Alice in *Looking-Glass* tells her cat that she has been watching the boys collect wood for a bonfire. Most striking, however, is Alice's continual association with hearths and ashes. When she passes through the mir-

ror into Looking-glass House, one of the first things she notices is the chess pieces among the cinders. She proceeds to pick up the White King and dust off the ashes. Finally, during one of *Wonderland's* growing incidents, Alice gets so tall her feet go almost out of sight. She says she will have to send them boots every Christmas by carrier. The address:

*Alice's Right Foot, Esq.*  
*Hearthrug,*  
*near the Fender,*  
*(with Alice's love)* <sup>35</sup>

The architecture of the books becomes clearer when they are viewed with other stories in oral tradition. In fact, some things are apparent only when viewed with their folktale counterparts. The structure of events in *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass*, for instance, is discernible when compared with widely scattered versions of the Search for the Lost Spouse. Alice's attack on the Red Queen is not just an obligatory conclusion of the chess scheme, although the commonfolk women from whom related stories were collected in the British Isles would be likely to understand the Red Queen's fate. What she signifies derives not only from the text of Carroll's tale, but also from the multiforms of the comparable tales in oral tradition. Each oral tale reinforces the next, and their seemingly incomprehensible elements gain meaning through their repeated association. Oral tales explain, through the recurrences of tradition, what is happening in each other.<sup>36</sup> In relation to the oral tradition of comparable tales, Alice's fall down the rabbit hole is not an isolated or chance event. Rather, it is a necessary first step in the fantastic journey undertaken by countless girls in their transformation, in fable, to adulthood. Following something down a well is a familiar means by which a traditional tale initiates such a journey.

More broadly, the descent into the underworld is a universal mythic motif found in Sumerian, Norse, Greek, Latin- and North American Indian myth, to name just a few ancient traditions originating long before Dante wrote of his descent into the inferno.<sup>37</sup> In each case, the culture creates its own details relevant to its world and beliefs.

The case of "the best known of all folktales," as Stith Thompson calls Cinderella, demonstrates the topical variety a story pattern may exhibit.<sup>38</sup> Not all of the Cinderella-type stories have identical features. The abusive stepmother fails to appear in every telling of the tale. Like Proteus, daimon servant of the god of the sea, the tale "will assume all manner of shapes of things that move upon the earth"<sup>39</sup> and stay the same underneath.

Thus, what distinguishes folktales or myths is not their particular manifestation, but the energy they bring to bear. The natural world offers a fitting an-

alogue, as modern physicists are struck by their frequent inability to distinguish matter from energy. A tale or mythic archetype can shed its narrative matter, change guises, and still retain its essence. This occurs in folktale, and in the works of Lewis Carroll. The examples presented here are only several among the numerous parallels with folklore and mythology that can be discerned in the *Alice* books. No wonder that a century after the author's death, readers have been haunted by an energy, a text fraught with meaning, which escapes identification.

In the rendering of Carroll's books, the folk and myth model bears the Victorian trappings well. Tales in the oral tradition or from the mythic realm must always adapt to contrasting contexts. The folktale is a remarkable imaginative tool that succeeds in all sorts of applications and still remains the same, a story about what makes a socially competent woman survives different uses, despite parochial twists. Although layers of detail, like a view through a kaleidoscope, transform our view of the essence of the story, comparison and close scrutiny reveal that the timeless and universal tale is still there.

- <sup>1</sup> Epigraph. Morton N. Cohen, *Lewis Carroll: A Biography* (New York: Knopf, 1995), 135.
- <sup>2</sup> Robert Scott to Lewis Carroll, 1872, quoted in Robert Phillips, *Aspects of Alice* (New York: Vintage, 1971), 377.
- <sup>3</sup> Carroll to Robert Scott, February 27, 1872, in Morton N. Cohen, with the assistance of Roger Lancelyn Green, *The Letters of Lewis Carroll* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 172.
- <sup>4</sup> Katherine M. Briggs, *A Dictionary of British Folklore* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), Part A, 1:133.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:133.
- <sup>6</sup> Donald Rackin, "Corrective Laughter: Carroll's *Alice* and Popular Children's Literature of the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Popular Culture* 12 (1972): 244.
- <sup>7</sup> Charles Lamb to Samuel Coleridge, October 23, 1802, in Rackin, "Corrective Laughter," 244–5.
- <sup>8</sup> Anonymous, "Children's Books," *The Athenaeum* 1900 (December 16, 1865), 844, in Phillips, 83–4. Anderson's tales were not true folktales, but his own invention.
- <sup>9</sup> Dennis Butts, "The Beginnings of Victorianism" in Peter Hunt, *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 86.
- <sup>10</sup> Rackin, "Corrective Laughter," 247–8.
- <sup>11</sup> M. A. Baxter, "The Twa Brothers: The Original of the Two Brothers," *Jabberwocky* 8, no. 2 (Spring 1979), 43–5.
- <sup>12</sup> Cohen, *Lewis Carroll*, 12–4.

- <sup>13</sup> Robert D. Sutherland, *Language and Lewis Carroll* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), 43–6. Müller held a professorship at Oxford from 1868 to 1876, and was a Christ Church colleague (and photographic subject) of Carroll's. See also Cohen, *Lewis Carroll*, 76, 162, and 390.
- <sup>14</sup> Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (New York: Atheneum, 1971).
- <sup>15</sup> For example, at the beginning of the *Iliad*, the poet invokes the muse to sing: "Sing, Goddess, the anger of Achilles..."
- <sup>16</sup> Harry Levin, "Wonderland Revisited," in Phillips, *Aspects of Alice*, 179.
- <sup>17</sup> Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* (London: Macmillan, 1871), 223.
- <sup>18</sup> Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (London: Macmillan, 1865).
- <sup>19</sup> Cf. these British variants of the Cinderella, Substitute Bride, and Search for the Lost Spouse tales: "Catskin II," "The Green Lady: I," and "Glass Mountain." Briggs, *A Dictionary of British Folklore*, 179, 286–9, 273–4.
- <sup>20</sup> Carroll, "Which Dreamed It?" in *Wonderland*, 192.
- <sup>21</sup> Barre Tolken, *The Dynamics of Folklore* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), 32.
- <sup>22</sup> David E. Bynum, *The Daemon in the Wood* (Cambridge, MA: The Center for the Study of Oral Literature, 1979), 97.
- <sup>23</sup> Quoted in Roger Lancelyn Green, "Alice," in Phillips, *Aspects of Alice*, 14.
- <sup>24</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (Princeton: Bollingen, 1973), 3.
- <sup>25</sup> The Substituted Bride story is that in which a sister or stepsister, usually aided by her mother, takes a wife's place without the knowledge of the husband and banishes the wife.
- <sup>26</sup> Genesis, 29: 16–28.
- <sup>27</sup> Stith Thompson, *The Folktale* (Berkeley: University of California, 1977), 127.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 49. Also, Jan-Ojvind Swahn, *The Tale of Cupid and Psyche* (Lund: Gleerup, 1955), 27–36.
- <sup>29</sup> Lewis Carroll, "Looking-Glass House," in *Looking-Glass*, 12–3.
- <sup>30</sup> Carroll, "Down the Rabbit-Hole," in *Wonderland*, 2.
- <sup>31</sup> Swahn, *The Tale of Cupid and Psyche*, 28, 245.
- <sup>32</sup> Carroll, "Queen Alice," in *Looking-Glass*, 186–7.
- <sup>33</sup> Thompson, *The Folktale*, 125.
- <sup>34</sup> Carroll, "Down the Rabbit-Hole," in *Wonderland*, 1.
- <sup>35</sup> Carroll, "The Pool of Tears," in *Wonderland*, 16.
- <sup>36</sup> Bynum, *The Daemon in the Wood*, 65.
- <sup>37</sup> Robert W. Brockaway, *Myth from the Ice Age to Mickey Mouse* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993), 109. Originally published in *Dalhousie Review*, January 1983.
- <sup>38</sup> Thompson, *The Folktale*, 128.
- <sup>39</sup> Homer, *Odyssey*, IV, 11, 417–8.



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## ABOARD THE TROJAN HORSE

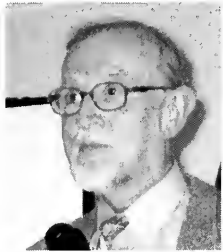
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MARK BURSTEIN

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The spring 2006 meeting of our Society took place over several days in the Los Angeles area, in conjunction with a two-day conference, “Lewis Carroll and the Idea of Childhood,” hosted by the University of Southern California (USC, home of the Trojans). Jim Kincaid (below), Professor of English at USC and author of many books in Victorian and sexuality/childhood studies, including *Child Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* and his send-up of criticism, *Annoying the Victorians*,<sup>1</sup> was the coordinator and, in many ways, the *raison d'être* for this conference. His warm, witty style and irreverent attitude toward some of the pretensions of academia were a welcome relief to those of us who had been worried about the likelihood of such a conference being “the driest thing I know.” Kincaid’s selection of speakers (and hilarious introductions to them) reflected a great sense



of humor. Let us also praise Tyson Gaskill, Director of Programming/Information Services; Diane Waggoner (below); Andrew Wulf, Exhibitions Manager; Melinda Hayes, Curator of the USC Carroll Collection; and the great generosity of the sponsors of this conference, Dr. George Cassady and Linda Parker. There were probably upwards of 200 people who came to one or more of the events, although no more than 60 at any given time.

The festivities began with a Maxine Schaefer reading on March 30. Herewith, a report from Andrew Sellon:

“On Thursday, an intrepid band of LCSNA regulars visited the Norwood Street School in Los Angeles to present the Maxine Schaefer Memorial Reading. We were warmly welcomed by principal Francis Goldman, who gave a brief tour of the 1940s Art Deco facility before we settled into the modest but charming library. Two stuffed pink flamingos lurked in an aisle, as if hoping to participate. A number of us were heartened when Ms. Goodman noted that she had opted not to participate in the “Accelerated Reader” program (*KL* 74:10–11), as she did not feel it would encourage the children to see the library as a welcom-

ing place. At the appointed time, about fifty extremely well-mannered students filed into the library.

“Alan Tannenbaum spoke briefly about the Society, and David Schaefer explained the history of the readings and the memorial bookplate. I then read ‘A Mad Tea Party’ to the very responsive audience. The question and answer session afterward was, as always, lively and surprising. The dormouse ranked as their favorite character (possibly resulting from the singular sound effect, which had somehow emerged from my mouth, of his being suddenly awakened). The students were very much in tune with Alice’s predicament of finding herself in a world of rude adults ordering her about; one clever student even surmised that Alice might have met with additional resentment as a result of being the Dean’s daughter. As they filed out, each child was given his or her own copy of the beautiful Books of Wonder edition of *Wonderland*, and their delight was palpable. Afterward, the LCSNA members agreed that, going forward, one of the members will write down the highlights of these discussions, as some of the comments are remarkable and well worth sharing at meetings and on the Society’s Web site.”

Friday’s events took place within the Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library of USC’s University Park Campus, a stately, Romanesque building completed in 1932. It began with a welcome from our president, Alan Tannenbaum, and Jim Kincaid, jokingly proclaiming this “the most significant gathering of Lewis Carroll notables in history,” declaring we “would not be hamstrung by what others think sane,” and promising to “lessen our dimwittedness.”

First up was Hilary Schor (below), Professor of English, Comparative Literature and Gender Studies at the USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences, and author of several books on Victorian fiction, whose enthusiastic delivery of her paper “Realism’s Alice: Making the Heroine Curiouser” made for a lively opening session. Her thesis was that the Alice books belong more to the world of realism than fantasy, a curious



idea. In fact, she began with a disquisition on the word “curious” and how often, and where, it occurs in the text (for the record, including “curiosity,” 26 times in *Wonderland* alone) and the double meaning of Alice’s being called a “very curious child.” The nineteenth-century Oxfordian Matthew Arnold was quoted from his *Culture and Anarchy* (1882): “I have before now pointed out that we English do not, like the foreigners, use this word [“curious”] in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. With us [English] the word is always used in a somewhat disapproving sense. A liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind may be meant by a foreigner when he speaks of curiosity, but with us the word always conveys a certain notion of frivolous and unedifying activity.”

Defining the genre with a recitation of first lines from other Victorian novels with female protagonists (*Emma*, *Portrait of a Lady*, *Middlemarch*, *Jane Eyre*), she began at the end of *Wonderland*, musing on the debunking by the bank, which contradicts all that has gone before: the ordinary world is reasserted, as is so characteristic of Gothic novels. *Wonderland* is “recognizable as our world, just a bit off,” a dream novel perhaps, yet its setting is everyday life—tea parties and other familiar things, somehow dreadfully out of place.

Schor stated that the essence of this novel is to be found in transformations of size (the chapters not involving size changes were all added after *Under Ground*, she noted), as Alice measures herself against dreamworld objects. Confusion of the meanings of the phrase “growing up” is central. How does Alice know it is she who is transforming, and not the objects and characters in the environment? We were shown the opening scenes of the Hepworth movie and Tom Petty’s *Don’t Come Around Here No More* video, as Schor spoke more on “tricks of vision being the heart of this curious world.”

At the end of her presentation, she candidly admitted that not only did she dislike the Alice books, but that the premise for her talk was “not particularly true, but I knew I could talk about it for forty-five minutes anyway.” Her frank confession, wit, and great sense of absurdity made for a most entertaining discourse.

Ah, now what can one possible say about a Professor of English Literature and Feminist Theory at the University of Connecticut and advisor to the Library of Congress who is also the author of a multitude of humorous books such as *I’m with Stupid*, *They Used to Call Me Snow White... But I Drifted*, and *Perfect Husbands (& Other Fairy Tales)* and whose comedic stylings and improvisations mock the myth of the desiccated academe? In two words: Gina Barreca (above).<sup>2</sup>



Her talk, “Alice and Dorothy: Why These Two Babes in Boyland Don’t Surrender,” was a disquisition on female independence and authority, emphasizing that these two girls did not submit, surrender, nor sacrifice themselves. (Incidentally, the line “Surrender, Dorothy” comes from the film, not the book.) In speaking of the aggressive nature of these heroines, Gina read a synopsis of *The Wizard of Oz* movie from the *Marin Independent Journal*: “A girl leaves home, kills the first person she sees, and teams up with three complete strangers to kill again.”

Characters, especially in a dream landscape, cannot be separated out and must all be seen as aspects of the dreamer’s (Alice’s) character. The men in these books, such as the White Knight, tend to be “pathetic yet powerful”; there are no cute little boys, just aged male figures or “hybrids.” These two little girls at the heart of mythopoeic quest narratives rescue themselves, much as Frankenstein’s creature figures out the world by reading books and alienating people (“the academic life,” commented Barreca).

Barreca also discussed the differences in the books: Alice woke up from a dream while Dorothy’s world has simply moved on without her; Dorothy is humble, Alice arrogant; Oz is futuristic rather than nostalgic; Alice falls down and in, Dorothy flies up and out; Alice varies physically, while the only thing Dorothy changes is her shoes (“my kind of girl!” – GB); Dorothy’s motivation is not exploration, but return. “Alice and Dorothy, more heroes than heroines, are not passive creatures enacting their own survival: they both go places to make trouble, and refuse to drown in lakes of their own tears.”

Much of the audience was dissolving in tears—of laughter—by the end of Professor Barreca’s talk.

After a short break, Catherine Robson (below), University of California at Davis Professor of English and author of *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman* (KL 67:26), presented “Reciting Alice: What Is the Use of a Book Without Poems?”. Through much of history, including the last few centuries, schoolchildren have been charged with memorizing and reciting poems, often “uplifting” ones filled with moral pieties, such as those of Isaac Watts so “transgressively revised” by Carroll. Carroll, in his deft mocking of Watts, retains the form but mangles the contents. Watts’ *Divine Songs for Children*, the first text for memorization, intended not just as a pedagogical exercise but as a means to ward off temptations caused by an idle mind, retained a hold on middle- and upper-class nursery life from 1715 to at least 1850. Children were exposed to it and asked to recite poems even before learning to read.



Watts' poems were so much a part of the age that not only do satires appear in Carroll, but the "Busy Bee" poem is also referred to in Dickens' *The Old Curiosity Shop*, Emily Dickinson's poem "Sic Transit," and at least three burlesques in *Punch* (one starting "How doth the dizzy Disraeli..."). Carroll's satires, of course, have far outlasted the originals.

Robson reinvigorated the term *prosimetrum*, the "fabulous monster" that is a work in both prose and verse. Poetry has often been part of the novel, not just in epigraphs or valedictory verses, but employed within a story's context for a "dizzying variety of reasons." These might include interpolated poems, versified interludes, riddles, spells, prophecy, original or nonce compositions by characters, and so on. But here Robson analyzes the *formal recitation* of a poem by a character, which occurs thrice in both *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass* (the other poems arise under various other pretexts).

There is an interweaving of the three recited poems in *Wonderland*: as Alice admits to the Caterpillar that she has misrecited "Busy Bee," it "causes the obdurate grub to demand she recite 'You Are Old, Father William.'" In reporting her failure to recite "Father William" to the Gryphon, she is made to recite "'Tis the voice of the Lobster" and mangles it, a further confirmation of the failure of her mind under the circumstances.

Robson also traced the history of the prosimetrum, particularly in nineteenth-century novels such as those by Sir Walter Scott. Is it any wonder, she inquired, that when Edison chose the first sound in history to be recorded, he selected what was most accessible to him, the oft-recited "Mary Had a Little Lamb"?

We then had a break to view "The Curious World of Lewis Carroll," an exhibit of items from the G. Edward and Margaret Elizabeth Cassady Collection, donated to USC in 2000 by alumnus George Cassady (their son) and his companion, Linda Parker. The Collection, begun in the same year with about a hundred books and a few ephemera, has been added to since then by Dr. Cassady and Ms. Parker and now contains more than a thousand items. In the main public room were items showing the continued worldwide fascination with Carroll, in cases and signage matching the dark red of the first edition of *Wonderland*. Two large kiosks presented some of Carroll's games and puzzles, and another a montage of scenes from Alice films. Most of the articles on display were aimed at the general public, but one, a set of etchings commissioned by Ms. Parker from Alp Ozberker, was new to this writer.

However, George had kindly set aside for us in an upstairs room some of the more esoteric items, such as the storyboard from the Paramount movie (*KL* 59:4), signed by many involved in the film, including

Dmitri Tiomkin and Gary Cooper; Alice's own copies of books, recently purchased from the Faletta collection (p. 34); presentation copies inscribed to Ellen Terry and Xie Kitchen; and a book sculpture by Gloria Helfgott. Outside the library was a case of objects entered into the USC Wonderland Award student contest last year (mixed media, CD-ROMs, books, and so on—see *KL* 75:35; this year's contest is under way). This award, too, is underwritten by the magnanimous Linda Parker.

Simultaneously, Jeffrey Eger gave a short presentation about his book *Dodgson at Auction 1893–1999*.<sup>3</sup> The work traces the lives of 3,000 individual volumes—generally autograph and inscribed material, including the original *Under Ground* manuscript—through the hands of dealers and collectors, gleaned from compilations of auction records. (The catalogues from which this work was constructed were all purchased by Cassady and are now also in the USC Collection.) Five separate indexes inform this newly minted form of bibliography. Jeffrey's humorous presentation ("Nothing is more driven than a collector in heat") was most edifying.

Robert Polhemus (right), Professor of English and erstwhile Chair of the English Department at Stanford, author of *Comic Faith: The Great Tradition from Austen to Joyce* (a chapter of which is devoted to *Looking-Glass*) among many others, has addressed our Society once before, in San Francisco in the spring of 1984. Here, "Lewis Carroll and the Idolatry of the Child" looked at Carroll's photography and fiction as means for "exploring, expressing, and satisfying the longing for secular faith."



Religious desire and concerns were of paramount importance to our Mr. Dodgson. The idolatry of a girl-child in image and word can be seen as a holy fetish: the desire for aesthetic representation and its prohibition due to heterodox consequences. The monotheistic godhead is forbidden to be portrayed by Abrahamic religions, a protection against diffusion of divinity into objects. Contrasting this is the deification of forms of beauty. Orthodoxy needs to preserve its superiority by being beyond the realm of the senses, yet there is an irrepressible human need to look upon the sacred, to find evidence of eternal life.

Polhemus discoursed on the ineluctable eroticization of images, by their nature sensual. Much Biblical imagery, from the Renaissance through the Pre-Raphaelites, enjoyed a certain erotic enchantment, as Dodgson's glorification of holy innocence ultimately gave ammunition to accusations of pedophilic exploitation.

Polhemus revealed the apotheosis of the conflict, the making of the golden calf, Aaron's attempt as an artist to keep religion alive. The patriarch's original act, and subsequent depictions of it, are "sensuous valorizations merging holy and profane pleasure." Idolatry leads to sensuousness, orgiastic behavior, violence; the golden calf was finally liquefied and drunk, internalized.

Aestheticizing of children pioneered a new form of graven images, seemingly of divine origin. Dodgson's art had a "messianic streak in how he worshipped fresh, unspoiled beauty."

Another focal point of Polhemus' discussion was Bernini's sculpture "The Ecstasy of Saint Theresa" with the angel holding a flame-tipped arrow as so vividly described in her spiritual autobiography. Polhemus compared this image to Carroll's passage in Chapter 19 of *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, when the narrator first hears Sylvie's voice in song and speaks of a piercing pain when beholding unearthly beauty.

Like Aaron, Dodgson, High Priest of the Victorian Cult of the Child, found his faithful religious self being endangered by his own images, such as that of Alice as "The Beggar Maid" of Tennyson's eponymous poem. Polhemus suggested that the reason Dodgson gave up photography may have been his realization that these photographs were a form of idolatry.

That Professor Polhemus was treading close to blasphemy seemed to be confirmed by the uncanny timing of room lights mysteriously turning on and off, and voices from above.

### THE HUNTINGTON OF THE SNARK

Saturday's venue was the spectacular Huntington Library, Art Collection, and Botanical Garden in nearby San Marino, founded in 1919 by Henry E. Huntington on his 207-acre estate, 120 of which now encompass the breathtaking gardens. His art collection, one of the most comprehensive in this country of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art, features Gainsborough's *The Blue Boy* and his eternal companion, Sir Thomas Lawrence's *Pinkie*. The research library holds six million items of "Anglo-American civilization," including the Ellesmere manuscript of *Canterbury Tales*, a Gutenberg Bible on vellum, the double-elephant folio of *Birds of America*, and significant early editions of Shakespeare.

To start off our gathering on April Fools' Day, we were treated to a comedy skit, "Saint Peter interviews C. L. Dodgson," wherein Jim Kincaid portrayed Saint Peter as an irascible, whiny, self-doubting, foul-mouthed Brooklynese carny who keeps addressing a bemused "Mr. Dodhead" or "Mr. Dodhill" (impersonated by Gina Barreca). A case of mistaken identity was the premise of the skit, wherein Pocahontas was running things in Heaven in His absence. A fine farce, indeed.

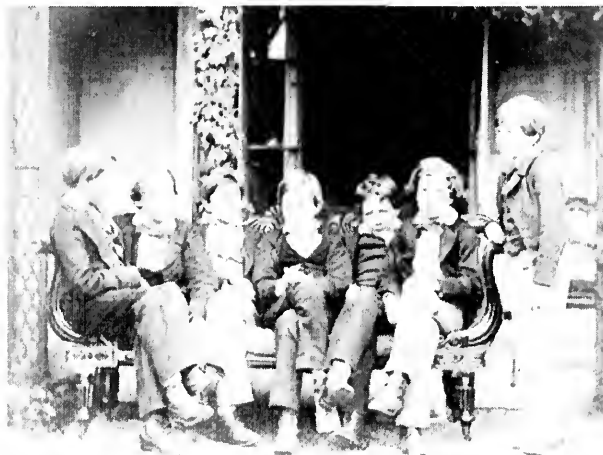


More soberly, Diane Waggoner (left), Assistant Curator of the department of photographs of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, spoke on "Little Men: Lewis Carroll's Photographs of Boys." Beginning with an analysis of "Hiawatha's Photographing" as "a

backwards metamorphosis of adult masculinity," she discussed the "myth of Dodgson's attitude to young males." In fact, some 20 to 25 percent of his child photographs are of boys, most often the sons of adult friends or brothers of female sitters. For example, he photographed Harry Liddell *before* getting his now famous sisters to sit for him.

Much of her fascinating talk involved a series of photographs of schoolboys Dodgson took at the Twyford School in 1859 (below), in the company of Reginald Southey. Waggoner first put the pictures in the context of education at the time, particularly the changing definitions of masculinity exemplified in Dr. Thomas Arnold's reforms at Rugby, which Dodgson also had attended, a world preserved forever in Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Arnold emphasized the development of manliness, characterized by discipline, self-reliance, and moral strength of character, in the school's pupils.

Visits to Twyford, whose student body included Harry Liddell and Edwin Dodgson, and whose headmaster was George Kitchin, Xie's father, began for Dodgson in December 1857. Waggoner "compared and contrasted" Dodgson's photographs of groups of girls and groups of boys.<sup>4</sup> The boys' postures and facial expressions reflected institutional relationships, not familial poses. Her ability to "read" photographs was remarkable, revealing for us the representation of student-master relationships and the consciously "manly" and public postures of the schoolboys as they posed for Dodgson's camera. Dodgson's photographs of girls reveal a world more private and personal, revealing in childhood; boys were on their way to man-



hood. This talk was part of a longer chapter of a book currently in progress for publication.

Robin Lakoff (below), Professor of Linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley, spoke next, to “Who Wrote *Sylvie and Bruno* (and Why Did He Write It?).” Her initial response to the books she described as “visceral, and very negative.” Beginning with some statistics from Amazon.com (“from whence all scholarship emerges these days”) in an attempt to quantify her response, she compared complexity and readability indices to those of the Alice books, reinforcing how different they are in style as well as content. Her thesis was that these heavy-handed books involving death, religion, romance, and politics are “not entirely suitable for children” and therefore that the authorship attributed to “Lewis Carroll” was a marketing ploy, and the true, “aleithonymic” author was C. L. Dodgson, “boring Oxford don.”



Lakoff looked deeper at the differences: Alice was impolitic, unkind to animals; a normal, feisty seven-year-old “bad girl,” the “old” Martha Stewart. Sylvie was saccharinely sweet, nice, cheerful, the “new” Martha Stewart. Alice is growing up; Sylvie is getting younger throughout. We see adult figures through Alice’s eyes; Sylvie is seen from an adult perspective. Alice is deeply subversive to the monarchy, justice system, etiquette, and language; Sylvie unquestioning and accepting of values of religion, morality, and logic.

Professor Lakoff confessed to being “scared” by *Sylvie and Bruno*, calling it “Christian kitsch” like that produced by the Nazis. *Wonderland* she actually liked: obviously written by one who knew children, the book was first vetted by them, and has a protofeminist post-modern heroine.

Mr. Dodgson was known to be ambivalent about education for girls, was politically conservative and a monarchist, and hence the most likely author of this “antiplagiarism.” In the twenty-year hiatus between the books, his world-view had changed; he was older and sadder—“Lewis Carroll” had ceased to exist.

After lunch, we were given a view of some of the Huntington Library’s Carroll collection, which included what Selwyn Goodacre calls “the most perfect of the red-cloth 1865 *Alices*,” a copy once belonging to the brothers Dalziel, which contains a letter from Tenniel complaining of the quality of the printing; an 1897 letter to E. Gertrude Thompson with a lovely trompe l’oeil drawing (reproduced in *KL* 59:4); and Dodgson’s own annotations to *Symbolic Logic*.

Next Carol Mavor (above right), professor of art history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel



Hill and author of *Pleasures Taken: Performances of Sexuality and Loss in Victorian Photographs* and other texts, gave a lively address, “For-getting to Eat: Alice’s Mouthing Metonymy.”<sup>5</sup> Mavor’s areas of interest include photography, and theories of sexuality, boyhood, girlhood, and adolescence.

After another showing of the Hepworth scene in which Alice and the carrot-associated Rabbit move through a vaginal tunnel (the filmmaker’s wife portrays the White Rabbit, she noted), Mavor began her talk with a discourse on Dodgson’s sparse, self-denying eating habits. The appetites of children filled him with alarm, and she quoted several letters to that effect. The title of her talk came from the well-known “lessons in forgetting” letter to Agnes Hull,<sup>6</sup> and her theme involved the “hedonistic emphasis on food and the sensuality in forgetting, that is, *not* devouring it.”

Mavor spoke to the many examples in the books of “anorectic hedonism,” going through the motions of eating, yet never consuming food: from Alice pretending to be a hungry hyena (a bone “feeds hunger of a different order,” in that one only nibbles and bites it) through the empty jar of marmalade, nonexistent wine, inedible treacle, “jam yesterday,” the consequences of being introduced to your dinner, the bite out of the teacup (“a metonymic surface of desire and displacement”), and the unconsumed tarts at the trial. Her talk was well illustrated with photographs, often by Dodgson, but including such objects as Meret Oppenheim’s fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon. Is the chiasmus of “I see what I eat” here literally the same as “I eat what I see”?

Cats, she declared, are a metonymy for remembrance, and the “anorectic hedonism” also applies to forgetting, a hole in memory. Death is not a loss of the future so much as a loss of the past; photography is a form of immortality.

Mavor also talked to Carroll’s many letters about licking and kissing (again, activities of the mouth that involve no nourishment) and the innate classism of the luxury of being able not to eat. Her talk left us, er, hungry for more.

Speaking from in front of an Audubon flamingo, the redoubtable Selwyn Goodacre (below) delivered “Towards an Analytical Commentary on *Alice’s Adventures*” in his inimitably and inevitably jocund manner. He first came to Alice’s defense, as several of the previous speakers had called her “rude”—he prefers the term “feisty.” Goodacre spoke to *Wonderland* as a pioneering work of



children's literature for a dozen different reasons [KL 58:7, also quoted in *All Things Alice*], spoke of Carroll's merchandizing genius, and referred somehow to something called *Worzel Gummidge*.

Goodacre said that although a number of fine annotations are available (Martin Gardner's, James Kincaid's, Richard Kelly's, Peter Heath's, and the "schoolbook" ones) to tell us what cucumber frames are, what he proposes is an almost word-by-word textual exegesis. To demonstrate, he spent a good deal of time on just the first sentence, mentioning the "country gentleman's garb" of the White Rabbit, the narrator's immediate empathy with the heroine, the poetry of the phrase "sleepy and stupid," the fact that only at age seven does one have the proper thickness of fingernail to make a daisy chain, and the like. To get through the rest of the book in his allotted time, he reluctantly picked up the pace a bit.

Goodacre spoke much of a muchness, including Alice's slow fall, with familiar items comforting to school-age readers; the overheard conversation involving Bill on the roof as "an apotheosis of punctuation skills"; the caterpillar as university lecturer interrogating a student; the accuracy of a dialogue between a middle-class Victorian child and a gardener; and the three characters at the tea party sitting at the head like Oxford dons at table. He noted how the Duchess's reappearance reassures child readers; that the impact of a mythical monster such as a Gryphon is softened by having him asleep; and how the last chapter can be viewed as attending a theatrical presentation. And how, he inquired, did the Gryphon manage to go to school (the same one, we are told, as the Mock Turtle) *under the sea*?

The eight speakers then sat at a large table and became a panel.

The first question, "Would Lewis Carroll like you?" was answered by Gina with an image of him screaming and running away from "loud-mouthed women." The second question was "What does it tell us about twenty-first-century academia that five of the eight speakers quoted Alice's remark about Mabel's 'poky little house'?", initiating a discussion of classism and how concerns for our current "political correctness" override legitimate nineteenth-century attitudes. Other discussion revolved around unanswered questions, whether *Sylvie and Bruno* was Dodgson's attempt to recompense society and convention for the damage done them with the Alice books, what the similarly subversive media of today might be, and, inevitably, a long, heated discussion of the issue of Dodgson's sexuality, climaxing with a comment on the relation between our interest in the work of an artist and his life: "It's like enjoying pâté and insisting on being introduced to the duck."

We then climbed aboard various vehicles to find our way to an exhibition at the Caracola Gallery, by

Cuban artist Victor Huerta, of Alice paintings "contextualized within the demise of the Cuban revolution." The paintings (below), replete with nudity and political suggestiveness, were skillful if unorthodox renderings.<sup>7</sup> We thanked gallery owner Dermot Bagley for his hospitality and walked up the alley to Barbara's at the Brewery for a festive valedictory dinner.



<sup>1</sup> *Child Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (Routledge, 1992); *Annoying the Victorians* (Routledge, 1995)

<sup>2</sup> ginabarreca.com

<sup>3</sup> *Dodgson at Auction 1893–1999*, compiled by David Carlson and Jeffrey Eger, forewords by Charlie Lovett and Jay Dillon. Obtainable from the publisher, D & D Galleries, Box 8413, Somerville, NJ 08876; dndgalleries.com; 908.874-3162; 908.874-5195; carlson@dndgalleries.com or Jeffrey Eger, 42 Blackberry Lane, Morristown, NY 07960; (973) 455-1843; thepen@jeffreyeager.com. Hardcover octavo volume bound in red cloth, \$75. Deluxe limited numbered edition bound in blue cloth with a matching slipcase and including an original leaf from the first edition of the 1865 *Wonderland* (obtained by deconstructing an 1866 Appleton edition), \$225. If the leaf includes an illustration, \$275. Postage within the U.S. is \$9.

<sup>4</sup> Many of these can be seen in the Princeton collection at [libweb2.princeton.edu/rbcs2/portfolio/lc1/index.html](http://libweb2.princeton.edu/rbcs2/portfolio/lc1/index.html).

<sup>5</sup> *Metonymy* is a rhetorical term, a figure of speech consisting of the use of the name of one thing for that of another of which it is an attribute, or with which it is associated, e.g., "The pen is mightier than the sword," or "The White House" when referring to the president and his advisors. It is distinctly different from the term *metaphor*.

<sup>6</sup> December 10, 1877

<sup>7</sup> Most of the paintings can be seen at [www.caracolagallery.com/images/VictorHuerta/VictorHuertaGallery/index.htm](http://www.caracolagallery.com/images/VictorHuerta/VictorHuertaGallery/index.htm).



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# EVOLUTION OF A DREAM-CHILD

## IMAGES OF ALICE & CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF CHILDHOOD

VICTORIA SEARS



### PARTS I & II

#### I. INTRODUCTION

In 1865, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was published with the illustrations of Sir John Tenniel. Icons of both illustration and children's literature, Tenniel's illustrations are classics and are the standard against which all subsequent attempts at illustrating the *Alice* books are held. But if they are so revered, why then have scores of artists since tried their hand at illustrating the stories? What is it about Carroll's vision that has such allure? Perhaps it has something to do with our culture's practice of defining itself by *redefining* itself over time, based upon cultural icons including fictional characters such as Alice.

After the publication of Carroll's book, Alice immediately became *the* iconic child. There is something about the emblematic figure of Alice to which we are continuously attracted. Just as childhood is central to Western culture, so Alice is to childhood. Why has Alice become especially privileged and powerful among fictional characters? I suggest that the character of Alice is reimagined generation after generation so as to ensure that our culture always has a fictional character around which to define itself: a child through whom we can live vicariously, and into whom we can channel our fears, dreams, and desires. In the following paper, I explore the relationship between the evolution, from 1858 to 2000, of visualizations of Alice and changing conceptions of childhood in Western culture. The visual adaptations I have chosen to examine meet two criteria: they are both stylistically and historically innovative. The fact that these criteria yielded so many cases indicates that the theme of Alice has been a key vehicle through which to rethink childhood for almost 150 years.

This continuing fascination with Alice is also echoed in changing scholarly and critical reinterpretations of the character. In the last few decades of the twentieth century, much ink was spilled on the subject her "true" nature. Citing Nina Auerbach, James

Kincaid, author of the provocative *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child & Victorian Culture*, explains that Alice's sexuality lies in her resistance to growing up.<sup>1</sup> She is desirable because "she vacates the position of the true child. ... and becomes the false child, the child who betrays growing up."<sup>2</sup> She lingers in this liminal state because Carroll refuses to allow her to mature, just as Dodgson refuses to acknowledge the maturation of Alice Liddell. Dodgson's reluctance to let go of his child friend is textually and visually conveyed in Alice's resistance to her physical growth in *Wonderland*, and in her ultimate loss of control over it.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps this state of uncertainty and oscillation is illustrative of the difficulty in assigning Alice unequivocally to a particular category. Nina Auerbach, author of "Falling Alice, Fallen Women, and Victorian Dream Children," questions whether it is even possible to create a unified vision of Alice. She suggests that Alice is an "amalgam of purity and subversive power... a nursery avatar of a grand Pre-Raphaelite icon: the fallen woman, scandalous and blessed." These girls possess "power and erotic energy within a dream of purity."<sup>4</sup> I suggest that it was the very conception of the ideal child that both created and was created by an atmosphere saturated with simultaneously sentimental and sexualized images of young girls.

The 1963 publication of Philippe Ariès' seminal work *Centuries of Childhood* marked the beginnings of historians' quest to discover and trace the development and changing nature of childhood and the ways in which people perceived it. His main objective was to outline the emergence in the nineteenth century of a *sentiment de l'enfance*, "an ambiguous phrase which conveyed both an awareness of childhood and a feeling for it."<sup>5</sup> But although childhood changes over time and emerged as a discernible concept only as recently as the nineteenth century, to what extent does childhood actually reveal something about the time and place in which it exists? Is "childhood" a universal, timeless phase of life characterized by certain constant truths? Or is it a highly malleable social construct? To what extent are artistic representations of children shaped by contemporaneous conceptions of childhood?

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*Victoria Sears, now at Princeton in the second year of a PhD program in art history, wrote this as her undergraduate senior thesis from Barnard in 2003. We will publish this in its entirety over the next few issues of the Knight Letter, this article being the first two of six sections.*

## II. THE VICTORIAN ERA

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, a new notion of childhood emerged that suggested children were not merely undeveloped adults, but in fact, had value in their own right.<sup>6</sup> In the early nineteenth century, a variety of social changes and ideological shifts led to the occupation by children of a *childlike* place in society. However, it was not until the Evangelical movement, Romanticism, and widespread industrialization swept Europe that children began to acquire a collective identity.

Julia Briggs attributes the proliferation of children's literature in part to the Evangelicalism. As the movement attempted to reach children of the lowest classes and children's books preaching morality, good values, and altruism were published, a "sentimental conviction of the child's innate virtue gradually came to replace the earlier emphasis on original sin."<sup>7</sup> While the Evangelical movement is most often cited as contributing to the development of children's *literature*, I propose that this increased output of age-specific literature also helped mold childhood into a socially and culturally distinct category.

Another factor in the development of childhood was an increasing interest in "ideas more overtly compatible with Romanticism's idealization" of childhood.<sup>8</sup> Romantics such as Wordsworth and Coleridge viewed childhood as innocent, pure, and characterized by a "vitality of the imagination as it instinctively recognized its affinities with the natural world."<sup>9</sup> Children were seen as having a more profound relationship with the natural world, as possessing perceptual and imaginative capabilities that were lost upon reaching adulthood. Citing literary historian David Grylls, Heywood describes the Romantic child as having "deeper wisdom, finer aesthetic sensitivity, and [a deeper] awareness of enduring moral truths."<sup>10</sup> This formulation of childhood as a lost realm essential to the formation of, but separate from adulthood contributed to the singularity of the child's identity.

While Romanticism disseminated the idea of childhood as pure and intrinsically connected to nature, the industrialization of the countryside further contributed to the ideal of the innocent, moral child. Romanticism was predicated upon a recovery of England's rural, idyllic past, a past industrialization was swiftly destroying. Accompanying the rise of industry was the reality of the abused, working-class female child: "The abused girl constituted ... the central horror ... largely because she is depicted as the absolute inverse of the ideal little girl."<sup>11</sup> She stood in striking contrast to her innocent, romanticized counterpart. The wretched, laboring girl simultaneously created and revealed the Victorian imperative to rescue their children and, with Romanticism and Evangelicalism as their models, to construct an ideal child.

Thus, ideal childhood did not suddenly appear in the Victorian era: it resulted from the circumstances outlined above, as well as from Victorian ideologies that both contributed to and were consequences of the new conception of ideal childhood, at the heart of which was the girl-child. Perhaps no other era has been so often analyzed, interpreted, and reinterpreted in terms of its love affair with the female child—a singularly Victorian construct known as the Cult of the Child. I wish to divide this extremely complex and often paradoxical construction into two major components: the girl, as ideal and treasured by society as a whole, and the so-called "lost girlhood of Victorian gentlemen."

The Victorians possessed a cultish love for young girls, viewing children as innocent, sexually pure, moral, and spiritual. However, beneath her immaculate façade, the Victorian girl was in fact quite complex and problematic. Innocence and an appearance of purity simultaneously sustained the ideal of the pre-sexual child and rendered the female child highly, albeit implicitly, sexualized; her latent sexuality and appearance of purity made her desirable. The sexual nature of the child was "the epitome of innocent beauty which awakens longing without itself demanding sexual satisfaction."<sup>12</sup> Because explicit childhood sexuality was taboo, forbidden adult male sexual desires were "subconsciously redirected towards children, because in the context of a pre-sexual child they [seemed] safe, unchallenging, and hardly sexual at all."<sup>13</sup> On the surface, the Child as a Victorian symbol carried with it all sorts of powerful meanings: beauty, purity, morality, *and* sensuality, eroticism, sexuality. In the female child, these seemingly contradictory qualities come together in a synthesis of all that was desirable and desired during the Victorian era.

Also contributing to the shape of Victorian childhood was the attraction felt by men toward young girls, an attraction which Catherine Robson attributes to the "male myth of feminized origin."<sup>14</sup> As a symbol of an idyllic and happy childhood, the young girl became a provider of male security, yet with an implicit eroticism. The girl's age and gender, contrasting with those of her male admirer, focused this complex relationship on the body, thus implicitly eroticizing the child. U. C. Knoepfelmacher attributes the attraction to little girls by Victorian men such as Dodgson to the male's sense of a missed childhood—a result of the removal of boys from the home to school at a very young age.<sup>15</sup> Emotional, creative, and sentimental Victorian gentlemen desired to recover their lost childhood by appropriating the body of the young girl and all it implied. Thus, Victorian childhood was coded as explicitly feminine and highly desirable.

The Cult of the Child and the "male myth of feminized origin" relate directly to Dodgson and his

photographs of Alice Liddell, the first visualizations of Alice. While it is important to note that he was by no means alone in his attraction to young girls—in fact, it was rather common and not at all suspect—his photographs *do* underscore the powerful allure young girls held for him. Kincaid suggests that Carroll wished to capture in his photographs the child before she vanished, before she grew up<sup>16</sup>—a theme that resonates quite explicitly in the illustrations of *Wonderland*. This desire to encapsulate childhood in visual form also implies that Dodgson felt nostalgia for the conditions of feminine childhood in which he never participated. Robson proposes that photography was the perfect outlet for his desires. His method was the license offered by “self-effacement,” his absence from the photograph itself. This invisibility allowed him to capture his erotically suggestive relationship with his young child friends without complicating it with his presence.<sup>17</sup> But because of the nature of the medium, he was inherently present: the very act of framing was part and parcel of his “sensual exploration of childhood and emergent sexuality,” which, while suspect today, was normative and intrinsic to the Victorian male artist.<sup>18</sup>

Dodgson’s photographs of Alice Liddell in proper, girlish dress indeed convey a sense of youthful innocence. For example, in a photograph from 1859, Alice wears a fussy, complicated, and constricting dress typical of affluent Victorian girls. The flowered garland in her hair and her demure smile give her a delicate, doll-like quality, while the circular framing of the photograph renders both the subject and the content sentimental and ornamental. In another photograph



from that year, Alice poses coyly in an ivy-draped corner). Again, she wears a ruffled white dress and frilly white socks, both of which suggest innocence and purity. The photograph’s staged quality is obvious, and reinforces the



idea of the Victorian girl as constructed object of sentiment and desire. Dodgson took another photograph of Alice in that same corner, yet in this one she wears the costume of a beggar girl, a costume that removes her from the realm of proper Victorian childhood and into that of fantasy and role-playing.

Photographs such as these that construct Alice as the Other reveal the ambiguity and multivalence of the Victorian child. Her face and body are childlike, but her torn clothing, confrontational gaze, and provocative gesture are suggestive of the latent sexuality that characterized Victorian perceptions of childhood.<sup>19</sup> Dodgson’s photographs juxtapose the ethereal, natural beauty of children with proper Victorian childhood and the formal constraints of the medium. The photographs are structured around this tension between the physical reality of the children portrayed and the styled artifice of the image itself. Oppositions between the natural and the artificial, the erotic and the repressed, and interiorized and staged theatricality are all invoked. Thus, he weaves form and content into a seamless whole that is implicitly erotic and visually haunting. The power of Carroll’s creations lay in his management, through photography, of the Victorian girl’s paradoxical nature, and in his brilliant synthesis of the innocently nostalgic and the implicitly erotic.

Jackie Wullschläger discusses these seemingly paradoxical components of the Victorian ideal: the innocent, Romantic child who was connected to nature, and the sexual child toward whom the desires of Victorian men were directed. While I suggested that Dodgson both revealed and concealed his desires through photographs of girls, I also believe that it was through the writing of children’s fantasy novels that such desires could be unleashed yet channeled in a socially acceptable manner.<sup>20</sup> One result, and perhaps cause as well, of the emergence of a conception of a distinct childhood was the emergence of illustrated children’s books as a legitimate form of literature. Illustration during this period was of especially high quality, and Sir John Tenniel’s illustrations for Carroll’s books are the best known.<sup>21</sup>

The first illustrations for the *Alice* books, however, were drawn by Carroll himself. Before the first book was published, he prepared a hand-lettered and illustrated manuscript of the stories for Alice Liddell. Carroll’s drawings were until recently (and by Carroll himself) typically viewed as flawed and childish. While I acknowledge that they do not reach the level of Tenniel’s technical and artistic competency, I propose that we view them as interesting and imaginative drawings that both influenced Tenniel and have merit in their own right. His Alice is not so much an explicitly *Victorian* idealized child as she is an allusion to a slightly earlier period of romanticism and raw passion. As Rodney Engen explains, Carroll’s Alice evokes an ideal Pre-Raphaelite girl-child with



her “long, frizzy tresses and haunting eyes” (cf. *Juliet*, John William Waterhouse, 1898, detail, above right).<sup>22</sup> Yet unlike so many images of Pre-Raphaelite and Victorian females, this Alice is not sexualized, but rather predominantly childlike and innocent.

Carroll thought his drawings childish and felt he was not competent enough to illustrate the published *Alice*. Twenty years later, Kate Greenaway became famous for her stylistically childlike drawings of an idyllic, nostalgic childhood. The very qualities that made Carroll see his drawings as inadequate, Greenaway sought intentionally and with great success. They became the hallmark of her well-known and recognizable style. Greenaway’s drawings are like vivid memories: they evoke and long for a lost childhood of the past. When Dodgson chose an artist to illustrate the published edition in 1865, he chose Sir John Tenniel, who drew as he would draw for an adult audience: illustrations with none of the endearing childlike qualities of Greenaway or Carroll.

Carroll provided almost no description of Alice’s physical characteristics, and thus Tenniel’s visualization of Alice was left to his imagination and to anything he could gather from Carroll’s illustrations. Carroll implies only that Alice “had long, straight hair, shiny shoes, a skirt, small hands, and bright eyes,” and given such details, she “becomes a nondescript Everygirl.”<sup>23</sup>

It is in Tenniel’s illustrations that Alice becomes an embodiment of the Victorian child, simultaneously innocent and mature. While Carroll’s drawings did influence those of Tenniel, mostly in terms of poses and gestures, Tenniel’s Alice is a completely different girl. Tenniel’s Alice, with her “china-doll features,” is stiffer, more enigmatic, and unlike Carroll’s childlike girl, embodies the child-adult split that characterized the Victorian ideal of childhood. According to Engen, the appearance and expressions of Tenniel’s Alice are

“well-suited to her fits of very adult petulance and outraged anger as well as the expressions of childish innocence which dominate the story.”<sup>24</sup> His Alice is often wooden and stoic; she lacks vitality and seems detached from the characters around her. She is



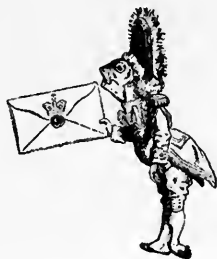
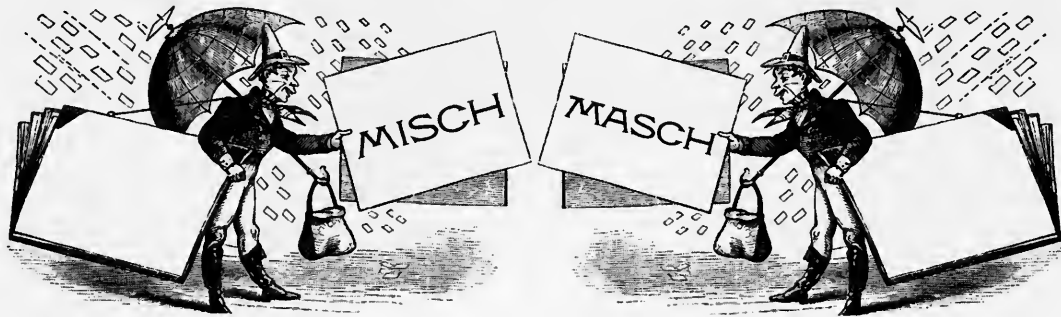
“unsentimental and minute, with some of the effect of a photograph taken for factual record.”<sup>25</sup> Thus it is not surprising that, like wealthy girls in Victorian photographs, Alice exemplifies the conventions of proper girlhood. The Alice of *Through the Looking-Glass*, with her long blonde hair, black boots, and black hat with feather, resembles, for instance, the eldest daughter in a photograph of the daughters of the Fourth Marquess of Bath (above).

Another influence on Tenniel’s Alice was Sir John Everett Millais’ paintings of children. Tenniel’s illustration of Alice seated on the train is an obvious descendant of Millais’ *My First Sermon* (opposite, left). They share the same hat, boots, fur muff, and striped stockings. Both girls have a sullen, childlike countenance. Tenniel’s Alice also embodies the dual nature of the Victorian girl-child, lost in a strange, adult world, “caught in the liminal moment between herself as a physical body and the adult’s requirement that she conform herself to the ideological identity given to her.”<sup>26</sup> Carroll’s girl-child is forever curious about her surroundings, and wavers between remaining a child and progressing to adulthood. These visualizations of Alice, in terms of both themselves and their relationship with contemporary images of children,



embody the paradoxical nature and multidimensionality of the Victorian conception of the ideal child.

- <sup>1</sup> James Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child & Victorian Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 290.
- <sup>2</sup> Kincaid, *Child-Loving*, 289.
- <sup>3</sup> Jacqueline Labbé, "Still She Haunts Me, Phantomwise': Gendering Alice," *The Carrollian* 3 (Spring 1999): 28.
- <sup>4</sup> Nina Auerbach, "Falling Alice, Fallen Women, and Victorian Dream Children," in *Soaring with the Dodo*, edited by Edward Guiliano (Richmond: University of Virginia Press, 1982): 47.
- <sup>5</sup> Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), 19.
- <sup>6</sup> Heywood, *History of Childhood*, 24.
- <sup>7</sup> Julia Briggs, "The Emergence of Form: 1850–1890," in *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*, edited by Peter Hunt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 130.
- <sup>8</sup> Catherine Robson, *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of Victorian Gentlemen*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 7.
- <sup>9</sup> Briggs, "The Emergence of Form," 136.
- <sup>10</sup> Heywood, *History of Childhood*, 24.
- <sup>11</sup> Robson, *Men in Wonderland*, 51.
- <sup>12</sup> Jackie Wulfschläger, *Inventing Wonderland* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 23.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 23-24.
- <sup>14</sup> Robson, *Men in Wonderland*, 3.
- <sup>15</sup> U.C. Knoepfelmacher, *Ventures into Childland: Victorians, Fairy Tales, and Femininity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 11.
- <sup>16</sup> Kincaid, *Child-Loving*, 227.
- <sup>17</sup> Robson, *Men in Wonderland*, 144.
- <sup>18</sup> Karoline Leach, *In the Shadow of the Dreamchild* (London: Peter Owen Publishers, 1999), 67.
- <sup>19</sup> Anne Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 123–4.
- <sup>20</sup> Wulfschläger, *Inventing Wonderland*, 27.
- <sup>21</sup> Briggs, "The Emergence of Form," 163.
- <sup>22</sup> Rodney Engen, *Sir John Tenniel: Alice's White Knight* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Scolar Press, 1991), 76.
- <sup>23</sup> Richard Kelly, "If you don't know what a Gryphon is': Text and Illustration in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*," in *Lewis Carroll, a Celebration*, edited by Edward Guiliano (New York: C. N. Potter, 1982), 65.
- <sup>24</sup> Engen, *Sir John Tenniel*, 77.
- <sup>25</sup> Mikiko Chimori, "Shigeru Hatsuyama's Unpublished *Alice* Illustrations: A Comparative Study of Japanese and Western Art," *The Carrollian* 4 (Autumn 1999): 46.
- <sup>26</sup> J. Zornado, *Inventing Childhood: Culture, Ideology, and the Story of Childhood* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2001), 112.



## Leaves from The Deanery Garden



I do congratulate you on the new format for *Knight Letter*: it is now much clearer, and makes the whole journal easier to read and enjoy.

I particularly value having the bonus of a page of “Contents,” and the way the reviews at the end have been unscrambled—so that one can now identify so much more easily books (that we may need to order) from magazine articles, cyberspace, collectibles, etc. (which are of interest, but it’s not vital to buy every item!). I am much impressed at how you manage not only to find all this material, but also then to assemble it in such a palatable form for publication. It is a wonderful service to members, and a totally invaluable source of information. The Societies owe you a big debt.

I admire the way you are happy to include ongoing controversies between certain arguing factions—Docherty and Leach; the “revisionists” and Cohen; and even Tufail and Wakeling. We can all sit at ringside and enjoy.

The increased strength in the “Leaves from the Deanery Garden” is a splendid development. This makes for great reading—and your extended letters of correction of errors, and explanation of contentious issues can do nothing but good.

A few points, if I may:

In “What the Archbishop Found” (*KL* 70:26), Mark Burstein discusses the source of “the driest thing I know,” identified by Roger Lancelyn Green as *A Short Course of History*, by H. Le M. Chepmell. He rightly says the first edition was published in 1848, and the seventh in 1859. My own copy is the third edition, 1850. It is not a common book. To be really pedantic, one might add that Lewis Carroll slightly misquotes the original—in Chepmell, the sentence starting “William’s conduct...” is a new paragraph; in *Alice*, there is no new paragraph (I am also pedantic!—in the Moser edition of *Alice*, I reinstated the new paragraph.)

August Imholtz Jr., in his definitive account of Latin and Greek

versions of “Jabberwocky” (*KL* 70:5–11), discusses Vansittart’s Latin version as having been composed “in a room at Trinity,” and says that Classics teachers “often had copies privately printed and distributed to their students as translation models.” He does not mention that Vansittart did indeed do this with his Latin version. I discussed this version in *Jabberwocky*, Spring 1975, a paper that August omits from his bibliography. In this article I discussed the variations between this 1872 version and the Oxford University Press 1881 version. Most are minor, but there is one word change: “resolvens” is changed to “revolvens.” I commented then that both words make perfect sense. August lists the Latin translation by H. D. Watson as appearing in *More English Rhymes with Latin Renderings* (Oxford, 1937). In fact, that part of the title is in brackets, the primary title is, rather appropriately, *Jabberwocky, Etc.*

I much enjoyed the extended discussion by Matthew Demakos on “The Authentic Wasp” (*KL* 72:15–25), and his detailed com-

ments on our Wasp symposium in April 1978. He gives the impression that this was a formal “nine-member panel discussion.” This was not quite the case. The talks by Denis Crutch, Brian Sibley, Raphael Shaberman, and myself were all prepared beforehand, but the discussion was free-ranging, and all those who attended were invited to comment “from the floor” as it were. I recorded the entire proceedings, and then transcribed it from the tapes, which I recall as an immensely laborious process. I am relieved that Matthew, after his extensive further researches, still comes to much the same conclusions as our symposium did.

There are a few errors in Mark Burstein’s summary of the Steadman/Carroll connection in his article “Read, Aim, Firefly!” (*KL* 72:37–38). The series of etchings limited to 65 sets (1973) were all from *Looking-Glass*, none of them from *Wonderland*. The 150 copies of the *Snark* (1975) had a numbered and signed etching of “The Beaver and Butcher” loosely inserted. The set of six etchings from the book are in black and white, not “sepia and black,” and were published by Cliff White of White Ink Limited, not Bernard Stone (though he may well have distributed them). There is something of a puzzle over Steadman’s pictures for the American trade editions of *The Wasp*. The dust wrapper on the first edition says “Frontispiece after Tenniel with two additional black-and-white illustrations by Ralph Steadman,” but no such illustrations are to be found. The dust wrapper on the second printing, 1978, also says “Frontispiece after Tenniel with two additional black-and-white illustrations by Ralph Steadman,” but only the frontispiece (with the picture in reverse, as Mark points out) and *one* extra illustration are to be found. The dust wrapper on the third printing says it has “Frontispiece (after Tenniel) and an additional illustration by Ralph Steadman,”

but *none* are to be found. Possibly my copies are faulty, but there is no sign of tampering. Mark rightly includes *My After-Dinner Speech*, but no mention of the booklet prepared on the occasion of the Centenary Dinner: *Ralph Steadman and the Lewis Carroll Connection*, by Selwyn Goodacre.

Selwyn Goodacre  
South Derbyshire, UK

*Thank you very much for your kind words and vast erudition, Selwyn. If you really want to get pedantic about the Chepmell quotation, I am forced to point out that in the original, “Pope” was capitalized; “the English” is followed by a semicolon, not a comma; and many of the proper nouns were italicized. But since it was an oral recitation, rather than a written transcription, I think we can let it be.*

The new *Knight Letter* (75) just arrived and is smashing; Martin Gardner’s comments and notes alone are above the price of rubies.

It is so rarely that my memory can be trusted, please let me vindicate it in one small matter.

On p. 22 appears my note: “I have a recollection of reading in a *KL*—perhaps in *KL* 42—of a member’s once asking Douglas Adams on the fly if his using 42 as ‘the answer’ in *A Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* was inspired by Lewis Carroll’s interest in the number. As I recall, the member received a brusque, even disgusted, denial from the irritated author.”

You seemed to think it wasn’t in the *Knight Letter*, so I went back in my time machine to check.

In *Knight Letter* 42, under “Carrollian Notes,” beneath the head “Life, the Universe, & 42,” Michael D. Welch writes: “I asked Adams when I met him last year if there was any connection between his use of the number 42 in his book and Carroll’s use of it. He denied it out of hand, glaring at me testily as if he was about to shake

like a wet rat. Yes, he *had* read Carroll when he was but a child, but it had no influence on his own writing above any other books he devoured.”

As disturbing as I find the distortions of my memory’s lens, I’m relieved that the incident wasn’t “my own invention.”

Thanks for all your good work.  
Gary Brockman

Is Walt Kelly’s transvestite Pogo (unless it’s actually his sister, flying blind without her glasses, or a grownup niece) playing Alice in “Who Stole the Tarts?” (*The Pogo Stepmother Goose*, Simon & Schuster, 1954) the only example we have of a “humanoid” or animal Alice? Is she *always* illustrated as a human child? I suppose that makes sense, for the contrast between her and the other creatures. Do any readers know of other non-human instances?


Andrew Ogus



The following email was received by [webcontact@lewiscarroll.org](mailto:webcontact@lewiscarroll.org):

Hi! my name is gill and im a huge charles lutwidge dodgson fan. i do not mean to be finicky but there is only one “r” and one “l” in carol. just thought i’d point it out..... but i would like to congratulate you on the marvelous site!!!!!!

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## Ravings from the Writing Desk

OF ALAN TANNENBAUM

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One of the tasks I have is to organize and arrange the venues and speakers for our semi-annual meetings. As long as I have been attending LCSNA gatherings (20 years), we have always had good meetings, and I don't think the previous seven, during my tenure as President have been exceptions. We've had some outstanding speakers, exhibitions, receptions, and side-trips. Back in 2000 when I hosted the Austin meeting of the LCSNA, and before I became President, I had a little taste of the logistical work needed, but I was the local. Then, at the end of 2002, when the helm transferred to me from the capable hands of Stephanie Lovett, I began to appreciate the amount of work these meetings entail and had a new respect for the work of my predecessors. Fortunately, with the help of local members and the staffs at the respective institutions, we always succeed at having an enjoyable meeting for the many people who come to share in our common interest.

Since this special issue of the *Knight Letter* comes to you with a summary of the past two meetings, I have the pleasure of thanking a number of speakers and staff in helping to make these meetings a success.

I won't rehash those events, but I will go out of my way to thank Heather King and the staff of the Iowa State Historical Society for helping us arrange the meeting and exhibition of Lewis Carroll items in their collection. And to Mary Kline-Misol who invited us to Des Moines and not only gave us personal tour through her wonderful retrospective, but along with her husband truly went above and beyond in arranging the evening reception and gala dinner at the Salisbury House. They presented the Society with a specially engraved white stone to mark the event. Special thanks also go to our speakers: Frankie Morris, the foremost authority on Sir John Tenniel; Genevieve Smith for her insights into the artistic side of Carroll; David Schaefer for the mini film festival (and the untold hours of mastering digital video editing to reproduce some effects not seen in 100 years),

and the panel of collectors: Joel Birenbaum, Mark Burstain, and August Imholtz. To those members who sent in pictures of items from their collections, thank you very much.

The academic conference just concluded in Los Angeles, in conjunction with our Spring meeting, was only possible due of the work of Tyson Gaskill and his capable staff at USC. The two days of talks and exhibitions at the Doheny and Huntington Libraries was top-notch. And special thanks to Dr. George Cassady who has been quietly compiling an outstanding collection of popular and rare Carrolliana that is now in the collection of USC. As Dr. Cassady explained to me, he feels strongly that Carroll enthusiasts should be able to get close to these rare items, and his special private exhibition for attendees put even more of these items into our careful hands. The host and moderator of the conference, Professor James Kincaid, did

a fabulous job of introductions and commentary for the prestigious cadre of speakers you've read about earlier in this issue, and well deserves a round of applause from the Society.

Looking back on the successful meetings I've had the pleasure of helping to arrange makes me temporarily forget the many hurdles it took to get there. Which brings me to the next meeting and thoughts for the future: the Board of Directors has a standing intention to meet in the New York City area each year. Sometimes that does not mean every other meeting, but rather once per calendar year. To that end, we will be meeting in NYC in the fall. We intended to meet in October at the newly renovated Pierpont Morgan Library in Manhattan, which let us know (before the meeting at USC) that they would be



very happy to host us. However, at the time we went to press, the Morgan staff is very involved with their grand re-opening and have begged us to wait a few weeks before dates and logistics can be arranged. So, the best I can say at this moment is as soon as the venue and date is chosen, we will send out a mailing and update the LewisCarroll.org Web site.

The NYC meeting also will be an election meeting. My second term is coming to an end and I want to take this time to thank the members for all the support they give the Society. I especially want to thank Mark Burstein once again for his efforts not only as vice president but for the outstanding job as editor-in-chief of the *Knight Letter*; Dr. Fran Abeles, our long-time Treasurer, for keeping the Society's books straight and for taking over as Publications Chair; and Cindy Watter, the Society's secretary, for all of the myriad operational roles she performs, not the least of which is owning the Society's postal address. The other members of the Board of Directors and the Board of Advisors of course have my thanks for their guidance. Details of the elections will be available on the Web site as we get closer to the fall meeting. If any of you would like to serve on the Society's Executive Committee or Board of Directors, I encourage you to write directly to me.

You may have noticed that you can join or renew your membership, contribute to the worthy Funds of the Society, or register for meetings via our Web site and PayPal accounts. You will find soon that the Web site is undergoing a bit of transformation, and we are constantly looking at ways to communicate to the membership in a more efficient manner. To that end, I encourage all members to submit their email addresses to the Society's secretary for our mailing list the next time you renew your membership or have an occasion to write to Cindy or me. We will not publish this information or use these addresses for purposes outside the business of the Society.

Finally, the Society intends to restart the practice of issuing books and other publications to members as a benefit of Society membership. This will begin during 2006. You will also be receiving a newly updated list of the books in our inventory, and these will become available to Society members at very special prices.



You dream so much, Alice  
A folly which you prayse.  
To. Still. The mouths of malice  
Quick rabbit watch spring days.

Dressed so gracefully  
In your frock of Sunday metaphors,  
You cast tightly mirrored looks  
At images of extinct shadows.

*"'ere's to the looking lass.  
The lovely, lavish liar:  
Oh! It's lovely jam!  
Saint Mathematic's choir."*

*"That Lady! Are you mad at her?  
That cheeky quince of 'arts!  
The cherished cat o' ninepillars  
That mocks the turtle's tarts!"*

Your daze of fierce abandon  
Are numbered, deep, and dirty  
A liddell song a played upon  
a carrolless hurdy-gurdy.

*Dean Motter*

*Through a Glass Darkly (Futura Novelty, 2005)  
with permission*

"I was reading very early. I taught myself when I was about three and a half, and read just everything. I read *Alice* and *Dracula* the same month, I guess, at between five and seven."



"You look at the original drawings for *Alice in Wonderland* that Tenniel did, which are just wash drawings, rather than engravings. So that the Dalziel brothers, or however you pronounce them, are really responsible, in a sense, for the quality of the Tenniel drawings. For instance, those funny square-toed feet that turn up in the *Alice* are not Tenniel—they're the Dalziel brothers. Because in every single thing that they ever engraved, no matter by whom, those square feet turn up."



"There's a book by Elizabeth Sewell, which was the best book on nonsense I've ever read. It was mostly about Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear. *Alice* and Lear's limericks and everything are nonsense, but they have a connection with sense. Whereas fantasy seems to be totally arbitrary at its worst. You know, you just think up something odd. Or you can start with the endless numbers of children's books which are stuck together with the first rhyme that comes into somebody's head for an animal's name or something. Well, I don't wish to denigrate Dr. Seuss, but I mean, you know, 'the cat in the hat.'"



"I plan to do *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* for Putnam, eventually, a project I anticipate with a great deal of alarm."

*Edward Gorey, in various interviews collected in Ascending Peculiarity (Harcourt, 2001)*



We [Maurice Sendak and the author] walked back up to the house with Herman [Sendak's German shepherd], and made some tea in the kitchen. On the wall of the studio is a photograph by Lewis Carroll, of Alice Liddell as a young woman. Sendak said, "I like to think that he was angry at her for growing up: to get even, he took the picture when she was slumped."

*Cynthia Zarin, "Not Nice: Maurice Sendak and the Perils of Childhood" in The New Yorker, April 17, 2006.*



Hopes for profits at Macmillan & Co.  
Very often would tro.

Concerns that they had  
That an author was mad  
Or just cracked, like Ho. Do.



She [Celia Johnson] landed this, her first major film role [*In Which We Serve*], by uncharacteristic means. Usually shy, she saw [Noël Coward] at a party late in 1941 and, knowing that he was casting the film, asked for the part. He invited her for a screen test, where they "talked for hours . . . until we'd exhausted every topic of conversation. Then suddenly Noël began to spout bits of 'The Walrus and the Carpenter' at me. What was the sun doing? he said. Shining on the sea, I told him exuberantly, shining with all its might. If seven maids with seven mops swept it for half a year, he said, considering the situation gravely, do you suppose (and he dropped his voice because he wanted a very sad bit for the camera) that they could get it clear? I doubt it, I told him with an absolutely miserable face, and shed a bitter tear . . . It looked quite crazy in the rushes. But Noël seemed to like it and I got the part."

*Philip Hoare, Noël Coward: A Biography (Simon & Schuster, 1995)*



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## Another Contemporary Sylvie and Bruno Review

CLARE IMHOLTZ

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Another *Sylvie and Bruno* review has been disinterred from dim library periodical storage stacks and is presented for your reading pleasure. This one is interesting on two counts: it was written by a woman, and it appeared in a magazine written for children, not adults. The author was L. T. Meade, a prolific and quite popular writer of girls' school stories and other novels, and editor of *Atalanta*, a magazine for girls, from 1887–1893. Meade's real name was Elizabeth (Lillie) Thomasina Meade Smith. She was the eldest daughter of a clergyman, and her evangelical concerns are obvious in her generally positive review. [*Other contemporary reviews of the S&B books are found in KLS 62, 63, 67, 71, 72, and 74.*]

ATALANTA, MARCH, 1890

There are few sweeter children to be found, either in or out of Fairyland, than Sylvie and Bruno; at the same time, the book is disappointing. It is meant to inform, to instruct, to enlighten; but its information is given in the form of a medley, its instructions are somewhat irritating, and its flashes of light are perhaps too brilliant for our weak vision. Grown people cannot help being disappointed in the book, principally because they expect so much from Mr. Carroll. There are some children, however, who, seeing with a clearer vision, will skip the homilies and the love-story, and revel in the fairy tale which runs like a bright chain of the purest gold through the volume. Sylvie and Bruno appear to perfection here, and Mr. Carroll is once more the Magician who conjured up scenes at the back of the Looking-Glass, and caused Alice to be almost drowned in her own tears. Once more he is the old friend who imparts truths to make a boy or girl better for a lifetime with the delicate tip of his fairy wand. It seems a pity he should leave a country to which he alone of all men possesses the key. For there will never be another Alice, nor perhaps in her way, although she does not quite come up to Alice, another Sylvie. Mr. Carroll complains that copyists have trenched on her domain, but surely the copies have been of the feeblest and most shadowy order, as one cannot recall their existence. Sylvie's and Bruno's adventures in their fairy world can only be described in their creator's words. These children are Mr. Carroll's own, the babies of his brain, impos-

sible to imitate, and yet like, so like, every baby in all the nurseries in the world.

Mr. Carroll's preface to the volume is full of interest. In it, he explains some of the motives which prompted him to tell the present story. It is written, "not for money and not for fame, but in the hope of supplying for the children whom I love, some thoughts that may suit those hours of innocent merriment which are the very life of childhood; and also in the hope of suggesting to them and to others some thoughts that would prove, I would fain hope, not wholly out of harmony with the graver cadences of life."

His preface has some valuable suggestions with regard to books desirable to be written. Amongst others, he proposes that a Child's Bible should appear, with carefully selected passages, and full of pictures. The principles of selection would be that religion should be put before a child as a revelation of *love*.

He does not think it is necessary to apologize for the graver thoughts introduced into his books, and one of his sentences comes with the solemnity of an undying truth. It is this—

"It seems quite possible to lead, for years together, a life of unmixed gaiety... A man may fix his own times for admitting serious thought, for attending public worship, for prayer, for reading the Bible: all such matters he can defer to that 'convenient season', which is so apt never to occur at all; but he cannot defer, for one single moment, the necessity of attending to a message, which may come before he has finished reading this page—'*This night shall thy soul be required of thee.*'"

The songs in the present volume are not so many as in Mr. Carroll's earlier works. Those introduced, however, are quite up to his own standard. Only Mr. Gilbert can compete with Lewis Carroll in this peculiar form of genius. The 'Musical Gardener' has been quoted in almost every review; perhaps also the 'Three Badgers,' but with Harry Furniss's inimitable illustrations I cannot help reproducing the latter verses here. [*The review ends with five verses from said poem, along with two of Furniss's badger drawings.*]

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# An Archetype of Transformation

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JENIFER RANSOM

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In numerology, the number five represents the energy of adventure, freedom, and change, and the fifth chapter of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is rich in the symbolism of far-reaching transformation. It is said that God must be a mathematician; he may also be a numerologist, and just may be symbolized by the Caterpillar, cozily ensconced on a mushroom, smoking his hookah and lording it over those who, like Alice, are seeking answers. He, too, seeks one: "You! Who are *you*?" In this, he may represent consciousness itself, which is continually asking us to define our identity. A change in consciousness may require a period of land-locked, fuzzy caterpillar-creeping, followed by sequestering in a chrysalis, before taking flight as the "butterfly" of a new and glorious manifestation. The Caterpillar takes a cavalier attitude toward Alice's perception that such a transformation is "strange," implying that he's accustomed to it.

Of course, normal caterpillars go through this only once.

Marc Edmund Jones, in his *Studies in Alice* at the Sabian Assembly Web site, [www.sabian.org/alice.htm](http://www.sabian.org/alice.htm), sees the Caterpillar as symbolizing the inner self: "The real or inner self is symbolized by the worm. ... Observe the development of the primal streak or worm-like beginning of differentiation in the embryo. ... The convenient symbolism of the inner self is further borne out in the fact that the true butterfly does not eat, but exists through the whole span of its existence, aerially or spiritually or in beauty, on the vitality it has stored up in the worm state." This also applies to the metaphor of the butterfly as the fulfillment of an idea that has undergone incubation and is then realized in form, living on the power that has built up around its "inner self" in the womb of thought, through the time of gestation. (Many butterflies do, in fact, eat,

living primarily on nectar from flowers, but some do not, and the metaphor is a good one.)

The Caterpillar's mushroom seat and hookah-smoking have often been taken to be one of the indications that the *Alice* books were inspired by some kind of hallucinogenic drug, or, at least, that Carroll was familiar with them. Although it is highly unlikely that he ever used these substances, Carroll was an inveterate reader and explorer of many areas of life, especially of the occult (he owned a copy of *Stimulants And Narcotics* (1864) by the English toxicologist Francis Anstie), and it is possible that he had some knowledge of them. Even if so, it is doubtful the subject

held much personal interest for him, since he was quite conservative, even ascetic, in his habits, although progressive in his thought. Migraines and temporal lobe epilepsy have been suggested as contributing to his unusual imagination, but here, too, the facts are inconclusive. In any case, he demonstrated a superb, wide-ranging imagination throughout his life, as well as a highly developed spiritual awareness that went far beyond the dogma of his church.

## "THEN TAKE ME DISAPPEARING THROUGH THE SMOKE RINGS OF MY MIND"

BOB DYLAN

"Mr. Tambourine Man"

Although psychedelic experiences are often facilitated by psychoactive drugs, they are not required. The word "psychedelic" means "mind-manifesting," and the psychedelic experience, as noted in Wikipedia, "is characterized by the perception of aspects of one's mind previously unknown, or by the creative exuberance of the mind liberated from its ordinary fetters." In this broader sense, the two books can be seen as psychedelic literature, and Tenniel's tableau of the Caterpillar sitting on the mushroom smoking a hookah, with Alice peeking up at him just behind the mushroom, is a powerful archetype of transformation.

The hookah may be the most arresting aspect of that tableau (what *was* that Caterpillar smoking?).

Continues Jones: “The hookah, an arrangement to pass smoke through water, is an added touch of unwitting genius, for the endocrines alone make possible the entrance of spirit or smoke into sensation or water.” Natives of aboriginal cultures, including American Indians, have long used tobacco to connect to the divine realm and to the Great Spirit.

Swiss anthropologist Jeremy Narby set out to discover how, out of the many thousands of plants growing in the Amazon rainforest, the natives had learned which of them had medicinal properties and how best to combine them. He was told the information came from the shamans when in altered states of consciousness. In *The Cosmic Serpent: DNA and the Origins of Knowledge*, Narby explores the shamans’ use of high-nicotine native tobacco and other, ingestible plant substances such as *ayahuasca* and psychoactive mushrooms. In altered states of consciousness, they can “take their consciousness down to the molecular level and gain access to information related to DNA, which they call ‘animate essences’ or ‘spirits.’ This is where they see double helixes, twisted ladders, and chromosome shapes. This is how shamanic cultures have known for millennia that the vital principle is the same for all living beings and is shaped like two entwined serpents (or vines, ropes, ladders). DNA is the source of their astonishing botanical and medicinal knowledge, which can be attained only in defocalized and ‘nonrational’ states of consciousness, though its results are empirically verifiable.”

Narby hypothesized that properties of nicotine or the psychoactive plants used by shamans “activate their respective receptors, which sets off a cascade of electrochemical reactions inside the neurons, leading to the stimulation of DNA and, more particularly, to its emission of visible waves, which shamans perceive as ‘hallucinations.’ ... There, I thought, is the source of knowledge: DNA, living in water and emitting photons, like an aquatic dragon spitting fire.” He theorizes that photons are visible as light signals that communicate information from the DNA cell to cell. Scientists do not know the function of 98 percent of our DNA, which they term “junk DNA”; Narby suggests we call it “mystery DNA,” and theorizes that our collective DNA is interconnected and in constant communication.

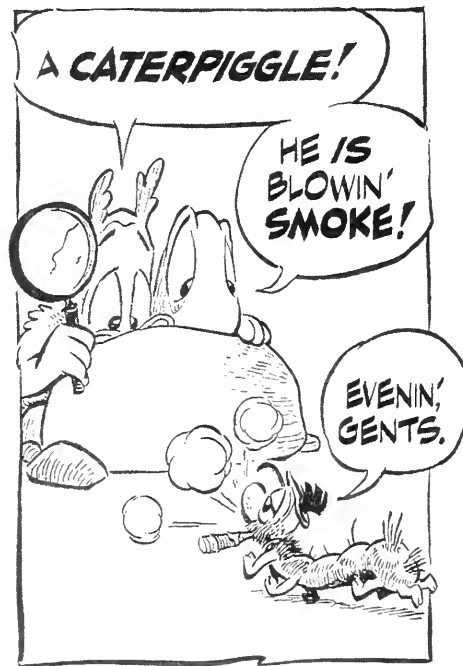
The information the Amazonian shamans received was not confined to botanical knowledge, but

incorporated into the learning of necessary skills such as weaving and woodworking. In fact, anything the natives wanted to know was accessible through the shamans. Narby hypothesized that the symbolism of the snake, a constant in the wisdom traditions throughout history (often accompanied by the Tree of Life or a Caduceus), is connected to the double helix of DNA in almost all living beings—this, despite the fact that conventional science did not discover the existence and structure of DNA until 1953. He cites various Cosmic Serpent creation myths, such as that of the plumed serpent Quetzalcoatl, and refers to our DNA as a master of transformation: “The cell-based life DNA informs made the air we breathe, the landscape we see, and the mind-boggling diversity of living beings of which we are a part.” After Alice ingests some of the mushroom and finds that she is able to bend her neck around like a snake, she encounters an angry pigeon who shrieks that Alice must be “a kind of serpent.”

The transformational features of the mushroom also have a historical meaning, though not one that you’ll find in many history books. Ethnobotanist and “psychonaut” Terence McKenna put forth, in his book *Food For The Gods*, the theory that psychoactive mushrooms were a crucial catalyst in our rapid evolution. The human brain size tripled over several million years; the hallucinogenic compound DMT (di-methyl-tryptamine), found in the the mushrooms and other plants used by shamans, is one of the chemical factors that McKenna theorizes played a role: “We literally may have eaten our way to higher consciousness.” DMT is also naturally produced in small amounts in the pineal gland, notably in deep dream states and at birth and death.

Few books convey deep dream states as well as the *Alice* books; those who insist that Carroll’s works are the products of drug experiences may be sensing this dream chemical wafting through their pages.

Throughout her dream-adventures, Alice struggles with the epistemological question of whether her experiences are real. Are our dreams and other altered-state experiences any less “real” than our waking life? Writes Rick Strassman in his book *DMT, The Spirit Molecule*: “The other planes of existence are always there ... but we cannot perceive them because we are not designed to do so; our hard-wiring keeps us tuned in to Channel Normal.” Rather than seeing



these other planes as pure hallucination, Strassman accepts them as realities that we tune in to when in these altered states.

Psychedelic mushrooms are also called *ethneogens*, a term meaning “creating or becoming divine within.” The yogic headstand is perhaps another such tool. Alice’s rendering of “You Are Old, Father William” is the first instance of a character “incessantly” standing on his head; this is also a favored, though less deliberate, posture of the White Knight in *Looking-Glass*, who assures Alice: “The more head-downwards I am, the more I keep inventing new things.”

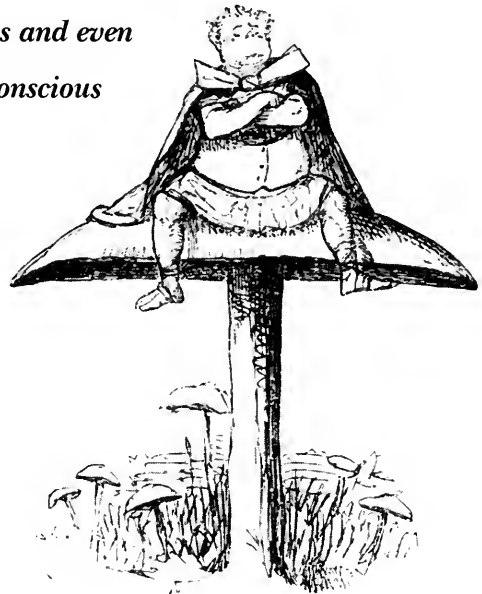
Most babies face head downwards in their final weeks in the womb; “inventing new things” can be taken as a metaphor for any kind of birth or new beginning. We naturally transform our world when standing on our head, both perceptively and on inner levels, through action on the glands, particularly the pineal. The Hanged Man, hanging serenely upside down from a tree in the twelfth card of the Tarot, is an archetype of this transitional and transformational process, and the Caterpillar itself, like all headed for butterflyhood, will hang head downwards as it transforms within its chrysalis.

According to the insect biologist Carroll Williams, in an article titled “When Insects Change Form” (*Life*, February 11, 1952), a caterpillar’s transformation is triggered by a hormone in the brain which, in turn, stimulates the thoracic hormone in the region of the heart, which “forces the body cells to produce a substance called cytochrome, which hastens growth and change. ... This same cytochrome exists in the cells of the human body, but its role as a growth factor has never been known.” Along with the 98 percent of our DNA that seemingly has no function, it could be that this cytochrome substance is far more crucial than we know.

Is it possible that the Absolute has been cocooned in us, waiting for the right time to awaken fully in our hearts? Is this what we will experience in the future—or now, if we can but invoke it—and will the Caterpillar of our collective self flutter free of its cocoon, utterly transformed?

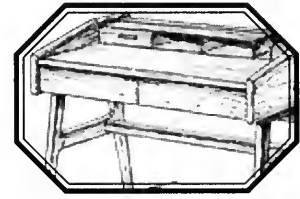
*“All of Alice’s subsequent distortions, softened by the loving irony of Lewis Carroll’s imagination, retain the flavor of mushroomic hallucinations. Is there not something uncanny about the injection of this mushroom into Alice’s story? What led the quiet Oxford don to hit on a device so felicitous, but at the same time sinister for the initiated readers, when he launched his maiden on her way? Did he dredge up this curious specimen of wondrous and even fearsome lore from some deep well of half-conscious folk-knowledge?”*

R. Gordon Wasson and  
Valentina Pavlovna Wasson,  
*Mushrooms, Russia and History*  
(Pantheon Books, 1957)





## Carrollian Notes



### SIC, SIC, SIC

“140 Years Ago: Curiouser and Curiouser”: Mathematician Charles Dodgson, 33—a.k.a. Lewis Carroll—publishes *Alice’s Adventures Under Ground* in November 1865. – Alison McLean in “This Month in History,” *Smithsonian*, Nov. 2005.

*Tsk. There was no mention of Wonderland in the rest of the article, and no correction of the title in subsequent issues. My offer of help to Ms. McLean before the article came to be was ignored. Off with their heads.*



A designer of paper dolls as well as a collector of vintage ones, her collection included some, obtained 20–30 years ago, that were reproductions of paper dolls made by Robert Teneal, the original artist of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*. – *The Benton* [Arkansas] *Courier*, October 24, 2005.



Editor [*San Francisco Chronicle*, October 7, 2005]: As consumers of Cheshire cheese, admirers of Lewis Carroll’s Cheshire cat in “Alice in Wonderland,” and owners of Cheshire Cat Clinic in Oakland, my husband and I wondered what happened to the second “H” in “Cheshire-Cat smiles” (Letters, Oct. 5). For your penance, we suggest the first stanza of Carroll’s poem, “Jabberwocky”:

“’Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.”

Rebecca Sodikoff  
Oakland

*Dear Mrs. Sodikoff: What happened to it? Presumably the same thing that happened to the second “B” in “Jabberwocky” in your letter. Possibly also related to the extraneous “R” of your misspelled “borogoves”!*



### THE RATH OF GRAPES

A BBC news story on January 12 (by the suitably yclept Chris Hogg) was headlined “Taiwan Breeds Green-Glowing Pigs.” National Taiwan University’s Department of Animal Science and Technology combined DNA from jellyfish with pig embryos to produce “transgenic” pigs that glow grape-green in the dark. They claim that while other researchers have bred partly fluorescent pigs, theirs are the only pigs in the world which are green through and through. See [news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4605202.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4605202.stm). Why of such interest to Carrollians? Surely you remember what Humpty told Alice a “rath” was.



### DODO DADA

Online magazine *Slate* (Slate.com) has been going mad for dodos of late. First was “Quagga Quest” by Jon Lackman, on January 3: “In what would be an unprecedented feat, a South African amateur scientist says he is going to bring an animal back from extinction: the quagga. A large mammal that descended from the zebra, the quagga filled South Africa’s plains for millennia. But it fell to gun-toting European colonists and was last seen alive in 1883. ...

Perhaps, then, as a symbol of racist and sexist fear-mongering, the quagga is best forgotten. If only someone would bring back, say, the dodo instead!” ([www.slate.com/id/2132747/](http://www.slate.com/id/2132747/)). And lo! Someone did!

Finnish artist Harri Kallio was named *Slate’s* Artist of the Month in February. “There’s something appealingly odd about Harri Kallio’s color photographs of dodos in their lush natural habitat, beginning with the fact that they depict a species that went extinct about 150 years before photography was invented. Kallio first started thinking about the dodo when he reread Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* and noticed John Tenniel’s famous drawings of the brawny bird with its tiny wings and enormous hooked beak. ‘I couldn’t help but laugh,’ Kallio recalls in the introduction to his own book, *The Dodo and Mauritius Island: Imaginary Encounters* [Dewi Lewis, 2005]. ‘Somehow it was hard to believe that once upon a time there really had been something like the Dodo out there in the world.’

“The dodo was a large, flightless bird driven to extinction after the Dutch settled its native Mauritius, a previously uninhabited island in the middle of the Indian Ocean, in 1598. With no natural predators, the dodo was not only flightless but fearless, and this made it easy prey for hunters, who unfairly mocked the bird’s obtuseness. (The word dodo comes from the Portuguese *doudo*, meaning stupid. Nowadays, we would call it ‘ecologically naive.’)

“My idea,’ he writes, ‘was not so much to carry out a scientific reconstruction, but rather to place back into the landscape of Mauritius the Dodo of *Alice in Wonderland*—a character faithful to its appearances in art history, a character that is part myth and part real.’ Kallio constructed two life-sized sculptural models of the dodo—a male and a female—with adjustable aluminum skeletons, silicon rubber heads, and bodies covered in swan and goose feathers. With the two models stuffed into a large backpack, he traveled around Mauritius and photographed the birds in various remote locations where the landscape still looks more or less the way it did in the 17th century.” Kallio’s photographs will be on view at Bonni Benrubi Gallery in New York from February through April 1. [www.slate.com/id/2136049/](http://www.slate.com/id/2136049/). Many of the pictures can be seen at [www.harrikallio.com/dodoexhibit.html](http://www.harrikallio.com/dodoexhibit.html).

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OF SEX AND QUEENS

According to evolutionary biologist Olivia Judson, one of the three chief theories of why sexual reproduction evolved—which was suggested by J. B. S. Haldane (1949), H. J. Bremermann (1980), W. D. Hamilton (1980) and J. Tooby (1982)—was nicknamed the Red Queen by Graham Bell (*The Masterpiece of Nature: The Evolution and Genetics of Sexuality*, 1982). Dr. Judson explains: “Susceptibility to infectious diseases—or more generally, to parasites, whether viruses, bacteria, fungi, or other nasties—typically has a genetic component. Since asexuals keep the same genes (give or take a mutation or two) from one generation to the next, parasites can easily evolve to infiltrate their defenses, annihilating clones. In contrast, sex, by mixing up genes, prevents parasites from becoming too well adapted to their hosts. Sex is an advantage *because* it breaks

up gene combinations: it creates the genetic version of a moving target. With each act of sex, the parasites have to start again from square one. The name of the theory, the Red Queen, comes from *Through the Looking-Glass*. Remember? The Red Queen says to Alice, ‘Now, *here*, you see, it takes all the running *you* can do, to keep in the same place.’ In other words, you have to change to stay where you are.” – *Dr. Tatiana’s Sex Advice to All Creation* (Metropolitan Books, 2002)

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SERENDIPITY DO

Andrew Sellon

I have not had the opportunity before now to tell you of an odd Carrollian experience that Tim and I had this past May. We live in Park Slope in Brooklyn, but one evening we went back to our old neighborhood, Carroll Gardens (our subway stop used to be Carroll St. and we lived opposite Carroll Park, but it was a different Carroll) to have dinner and do a little shopping.

After dinner, as we were strolling along Court Street (the main shopping venue), we passed by an old building I hadn’t paid much attention to in the nine years we had lived in the neighborhood, because it was always closed up and the place looked unused. It caught my attention because on this particular evening, the large old wooden door was ajar and strains of piano playing and an operatic voice singing “Speak roughly to your little boy” were wafting out into the warm evening air.

Needless to say, we stopped and (in the nery style of true New Yorkers) poked our heads inside to see just what exactly was going on. We discovered that it was some sort of small, converted storefront performing space. There was a simple platform with lighting set up, and two performers rehearsing in street clothes: a young woman singing Alice, and a large man singing the role of the Duch-

ess. As they were in mid-rehearsal, and we had no official business being there and had other errands to run, we did not linger. But I did pick up a card from the door.

The company was called the “Vertical Player Repertory,” and the card advertised “Opera for Kids: Fully staged excerpts (the fun parts only!) from Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*, Yoav Gal’s *The Dwarf*, Ben Yarmolinsky’s *Alice (in Wonderland)*.” I wonder if anyone else in the Society knows of this version? I googled it, and found a plain text page listing the composer’s works. It says simply “Children’s musical on texts by Lewis Carroll, 1981.” Another site lists its American premiere as April 15–16, 2005 in New York. Another mentions that it is based on both Alice books. It might be interesting to learn more, and some excerpts might be appropriate for an upcoming NYC meeting.

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DELIVA FALLETTA

“The Nicholas Falletta Collection of Lewis Carroll Books and Manuscripts” at Christie’s, London (South Kensington), November 30, 2005, had many exceptionally desirable items, including: rare mathematical pamphlets, some unrecorded in *The Handbook*; the only known copy of *Notes on the First Part of Algebra* (1861); cyclostyle publications; a bifolium of Vansittart’s Latin *Jabberwocky* (1881); a charming 1893 letter to Princess Alice, with a trompe l’oeil spider drawn on it; the original copperplate for the final version of “The Mouse’s Tale”; Carroll’s own marked-up copy, in the original cloth, of *Looking-Glass* (1893) indicating all the printing problems that led to its suppression; Alice Liddell’s own copies of ten different editions of the *Alice* books, and Carroll’s own copy, the only one known, of the rare private printing of *The Lost Plum Cake* and a presentation copy of the first trade edition. [Christies.com](http://Christies.com) has records of

the pieces, the auction results, and the catalog for sale. Sale # is 5056.

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**DODGSON ON HOLIDAY**

*Clare Imholtz*

Of the three Lewis Carroll Society (UK) weekends I have been fortunate to attend, last summer's trip to Eastbourne was far and away the best in terms of gaining insight into Charles Dodgson and his ever fascinating life. From 1877 through '97, Dodgson spent a substantial part of his life in Eastbourne, spending long summer holidays there every year. In Eastbourne, Dodgson wrote the bulk of *Sylvie and Bruno* (though one would never know it from the books, nor are there any signs of tiny fairies in the local woods), enjoyed frequent visits from relations and child friends, went for long, mostly solitary walks, and attended innumerable plays and church services.

August and I traveled to London first, and were relieved to find the city in a normal mode following the terrorist bombings some three weeks before. We took the train to Eastbourne—a journey of only 1½ hours—then struck out on foot for the Lansdowne Hotel on King Edward's Parade, tugging our suitcases behind us, and finding our way after only the usual bit of misdirection. Eastbourne is a classic sedate English resort town with a terraced approach to the sea. King Edward's Parade, where the choicest hotels are located, most of them in converted private homes that date back to Dodgson's time and before, is the uppermost terrace. The next level is covered with plantings; then comes a path along which Dodgson would have strolled when he went out in hopes of meeting young friends or making new ones. More plantings, and then several feet below is the beach, actually comprising mud flats, seaweed, and shingle, none too inviting.

The long Study Weekend opened on Thursday, August 18th, with a very informative talk by Alan White, focusing on the prodigious amount of writing and reading Dodgson accomplished at his summer digs in Eastbourne (although never as much as he hoped to). We then struck out for the Eastbourne Historical Society, stopping on the way to pay homage at 7 Lushington Road—where Dodgson stayed for about eighteen years of visits to Eastbourne, initially in a third-floor room, and later renting a first-floor sitting room and bedroom. Unfortunately, we were unable to enter the building (or should I say, fortunately—it is now a dental surgery). Mark Richards read a brief account of the Dyer family, who lived in the house, and Dodgson's loyal relationship with them.

At the Historical Society, we were greeted graciously with sherry and shown an excellent exhibit of the Gilman collection of Dodgson photographs. Art historian Michael Kaye gave a superb talk. Kaye believes that Dodgson's photographs of children are his best, due to their stunning textures and the obvious magical connection between sitter and photographer, but that his nude photographs lack artistry, perhaps because Dodgson, with tinting and fictive settings, was trying to divorce them from reality. Kaye also emphasized his view that many of the photographs are posed so as to imitate attitudes seen in famous paintings. In general, although Kaye thinks that Dodgson's photographs outshine many of his contemporaries', he does not believe that they are up to the standard of his writing—a statement that sparked a lively discussion among LCS members who had up till then listened politely to his talk.

That evening we heard a lecture by Society member Roger Scowen who, with his wife Pat, has made a special study of Dodgson's perambulations. Walking for pleasure was not a widespread

phenomenon in the nineteenth century, but Dodgson often walked more than twenty miles a day, following roads and clear-cuts rather than cutting across fields; he wore no special walking clothes or boots, and as far as we know carried no refreshment or equipment. During 1888–92, his walks were temporarily cut back due to knee problems, and he sorely (no pun intended) missed them. The cliffs of Beachy Head (about three miles round-trip) were a favorite early-morning destination, sometimes accompanied by one or another child friend who would then stay to breakfast. Roger's appropriately "rambling" talk also covered Dodgson's other destinations, such as Hastings, reached by a five-hour hike, to visit friends (at least he would return by train).

Dr. Selwyn Goodacre was next up, enlightening us in his usual entertaining style as to Dodgson's health while at Eastbourne—piles, agues, arthritic knees, migrainal auras—nothing was omitted. Selwyn described Dodgson's concerns about sanitation at his boarding house (he was somewhat ahead of the times in this concern; he even wanted an expert to come from Oxford to certify that the drains were safe) and his desire for an asbestos fire in his bedroom. (Contrary to what is often believed, the asbestos used in fires is not hazardous.)

Friday morning we were treated to two additional talks. Anne Amor, in her customary scholarly manner, discussed the friends Dodgson had made in Eastbourne and those whom he invited down to stay with him: Dolly Blakemore, Phoebe Carlo, Edith Rix, Isa Bowman (whom he made go to the dentist), and several others, including at least one boy, Francis "Pitty" Patmore, whom he taught to fold paper pistols. Dodgson invited numerous guests to Eastbourne in part because he wished them to have the opportunity to share his healthy seaside surround-

ings. Bible reading was a popular activity with his young friends as were walks and backgammon. After Anne, guest speaker Edward Thomas talked about Dodgson's theatre-going during his summer holidays, and we set out to visit two local theatres that Dodgson had attended, the Devonshire Park and, a cut below, the Hippodrome, a variety house that in Dodgson's time was known as the Theatre Royale or the Opera House, and that featured such entertainments as "Miss Ella and her Educated Lions," which I think we would all have enjoyed. Dodgson would sit in the first balcony because, strangely enough, the seats up in front, the ones we would pay dearly for today, were strictly for the hoi polloi back then, at least in Eastbourne. We received the full tours of the two theatres, and were even able to walk around backstage.

In the afternoon we took a coach to the Towner Art Gallery where, mirabile dictu, we found an impressive exhibit of Carrollian art, including paintings, lithographs, drawings, and photographs, by seven LCS members: Marion Hiller, Brian Partridge, Pilar Correia, Norman Roberts, Michael Taylor, Jean Stockdale, and Frances Broomfield. The coach then took us up to Beachy Head, a promontory high above the sea, from which eight slightly deranged thrill-seekers walked down into town in torrential rain, following as best we might the path Dodgson would probably have taken. After dinner, another fine talk, as Edward Wakeling described in detail the grief that Harry Furniss gave Dodgson over the *Sylvie and Bruno* illustrations.

Saturday we went by coach for historic Hastings, about sixteen miles away. En route, we viewed both eleventh- and nineteenth-century coastal fortifications, meant to repel Normans and Napoleon, respectively. At the Hastings Museum and Gallery, in

a beautiful oak-paneled room with stained-glass windows (the room had been brought from India entire by world travelers Lord and Lady Brassey), we heard local historian, pastor, and raconteur par excellence Edward Preston tell us absolutely everything that is to be known about Hastings from the Normans on, but with emphasis on the many literary figures who have dwelt there, including George MacDonald, Harry Furniss, and Beatrix Potter. Here, too, Mark Richards spoke about the relationship between Dodgson and MacDonald, and Selwyn Goodacre stepped to the podium again, this time to discuss Sidney Herbert Williams, Dodgson's first bibliographer, whom Selwyn finds something of an enigmatic character. We walked around Hastings, viewed MacDonald's house as well as that of Dodgson's psellismologist, Dr. Hunt, with whom he stayed on occasion for speech correction. On the way home, we stopped briefly in St. Leonard's, where Williams lived. That evening we donned posh garb and enjoyed a gala dinner. August offered a Latin toast to Dodgson, derived from a medieval drinking song but suitably modified for the occasion.

Dodgson was also a frequent visitor to Brighton, which we visited on the final day of the weekend, where he often stayed with his old Oxford friend, the Reverend Henry Barclay, at 11 Sussex Square. It is a popular myth locally that the tunnel in the beautiful Sussex Square Gardens leading to the seafront provided inspiration for Dodgson's White Rabbit disappearing down the rabbit hole, but as it appears Dodgson first visited Brighton on 27 August 1872 this is clearly not very likely. In 1885, his sister Henrietta moved to Brighton on her own, for reasons unknown; he also visited her regularly. In 1887, he watched a performance of *Alice* at Brighton's Theatre Royal, probably not, however, accompanied by Henrietta, who

opposed theatrical entertainment. The Brighton seaside is chintzy, but the town itself boasts two fine museums. I highly recommend a visit to the Royal Pavilion, which has no Dodgson connection, but is an outstanding historical building, originally the home of George IV, one of England's less illustrious but more interesting monarchs. In the very fine Brighton Museum we saw a charming painting by George Dunlop Leslie (1835–1921) of a mother reading to her daughter (*Alice in Wonderland*, c. 1879, below).



August and I recommend the LCS Study Weekends to all Carrollians. Led by Mark and Catherine Richards, Alan White, and Myra Campbell (but with help from a large and merry band of members, many of whom gave informative talks while we visited this or that site and even during coach rides), the British Society puts a tremendous amount of work into these outings, and it shows. The food and lodgings are always superb, and we have never failed to have an outstanding experience.

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**TAKE THE KIDS**

An updated calendar for the "Alice's Wonderland" exhibition, originating at the Children's Discovery Museum in San José, California (*KL* 70:2–4) is as follows:

March 2006: closing at the Children's Museum of Manhattan  
 May–September: The Children's Museum of Houston  
 September–January 2007: Chicago Children's Museum  
 January–May: (at CDM San José for refurbishment)  
 May–September: Creative Discovery Museum, Chattanooga

### ALICE AND THE DEAN

*Through a Glass Darkly: Shattered Reflections of Wonderland*

Dean Motter (Futura Novelty, 2005)

Award-winning author/designer/illustrator Dean Motter has become well known for his work in book- and album-cover designs, along with many noteworthy graphic novels and comics. His 1977 portfolio of offset lithography (*Alice. Alice.. Alice... : Wonderland in Ten Regions*) is a highly sought collectors' item, portraying a dark, delirious, haunting vision ("a visual allegory for madness"), replete with literary allusions. Fortunately, Dean has seen fit to reissue the drawings (digitally restored, revised and newly colored) in book format, and has included four new plates, poetry (see p. 27), and an afterword. \$13 from [www.lulupress.com](http://www.lulupress.com). 48 pages. Motter's work may be seen at [home.earthlink.net/~dean.motter/](http://home.earthlink.net/~dean.motter/).



### LEAVE THIS STONE UNTURNED

*Andrew Ogus*

*White Stone Day:  
A Victorian Thriller*

John MacLachlan Gray  
(St. Martin's Minotaur, 2006)

(SPOILER ALERT: the following reveals the novel's plot.)

What can one say about a novel that thanks Carroll for its inspiration, and then places his doppelganger. Rev. William Leffington Boltbyn, within a circle of vile hacks?

That Boltbyn is either so incredibly naïve or so astoundingly stupid that he is unable to distinguish between a sleeping child and a dead one?

That literally marking one's diaries by pasting white stones into the pages would make them difficult to read and impossible to close?

That Boltbyn's story telling is interesting, suggesting how an



author might turn the dross of life into the gold of literature?

That Edmund Whitty, the hapless journalist hero, frequently chloroformed out of consciousness, is absurdly influenced by an engrained sense of station?

That at least one red herring, depends on the unbelievable idea that Whitty's dead brother, an amateur photographer, used himself as a nude model?

That even the stock wicked aristocrat, bent on restoring his uneven fortunes with child pornography, could not be so stupid as to glass his conservatory with the photo plates that disclose his crimes?

That a clairvoyant who "witnessed" the Duke's unspeakable acts is apparently supposed to be taken seriously?

That the Victorian gangster with a tender heart is an all too familiar character?

That the psychopaths who do much of the dirty work are reminiscent of characters in a Neil Gaiman novel?

That Emma Pleasance [*sic*] Lambert's turning from Boltbyn may reflect the pathetic truth of the pedophilic experience, but his sudden interest in her younger sister Lydia is distasteful?

That Emma's sudden maturity is that of a sophisticated modern woman, not a twelve-year-old Victorian girl?

That gambling on rat-killing dogs appears to much more convincing effect in Claire Clark's *The Great Stink*?

That Emma and Lydia reveal the duke's deeds to their confused

mother, and then enlist her help to "borrow" the ether from the photographer's supplies to drown her aristocratic lover in his bath?

That if there are parallels to be drawn between the real or imagined world of Carroll, I prefer not to make them?

That there were no suffragettes as such in 1858?

That in that year Swinburne had not yet published under his own name?

That I seriously doubt that *Punch* would even consider publishing a poem that included the word "pudendum"?

That if one does suspend one's disbelief, the readable style, rapid pacing, and suitably "Victorian" tone and complex plot make for an acceptable thriller?

That I admit I resented the book from the moment I read the blurb on the dust jacket?

That I forced myself to finish the book only because I'd agreed to write this review for the *Knight Letter*?



### MYSTERY SOLVED

*Why a Raven Is Like a Writing Desk:  
An Alice in Wonderland Mystery*

Robert Doucette (Xlibris, 2005)

Reading this short, humorous and enchanting fable, we become involved in the adventures of Louis Croissant as he travels to Oxford to find Gladiola Badcock, grand-niece of Mary Hilton



Badcock, and the true location of Wonderland. Decorated with Doucette's own charming illustrations (and the crossword puzzle that started M. Croissant on his cross-channel journey), the book is a most amusing and enjoyable *folie*. Available through Xlibris.com, or Amazon.com. Highly recommended! Paper \$18, \$28 hc.

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REDUXIO AD ABSURDUM

Sarah Adams

*Alice Redux*

Richard Peabody, ed. (Paycock Press, 2006)

If every woman is secretly Alice, does that mean every man is secretly the fallacious (or phallicious) Dodgson, lusting after little girls? Or is every man even more secretly Alice also, albeit in drag? What should one think of a cover image of Alice with a smoking pistol standing over a dead White Rabbit? *Alice Redux* inspires plenty of thoughts in this vein. A book of Alice-inspired short stories edited by Richard Peabody, with photographs by Nancy Taylor, these 31 tales and novel-excerpts range wildly in tone and theme.

From present-day America to seventeenth-century Prague to Victorian India to timeless Wonderland, Alice is sexually abused, battling menopause, forever falling down the rabbit hole, in therapy, married to Huck Finn, sitting on Humpty-Dumpty's wall, and/or worshiped as "Our Lady of the Mirror." Other stories provide commentary by Alice Liddell, her mother, her sisters Edith and Lorrina, the dreaming Red King, and, of course, Lewis Carroll himself. The multiplicity of viewpoints and ideas is intriguing but, eventually, overwhelming.

Unfortunately, for all of their zaniness, not all of the stories in *Alice Redux* are successful at capturing the spirit and curiosity of Alice. Those that are, in fact, seem to be those stories that find the

strange and wonderous within the everyday. Whatever one's response to *Alice Redux*, it is nice to know that Carroll's Alice remains untouched, pristine in her mystery, yet continuing to be accessible and inspiring.

Order (\$16) from Richard Peabody at 3819 North 13th Street, Arlington, VA 22201 or [www.gargoylemagazine.com/books/paycock/alice.html](http://www.gargoylemagazine.com/books/paycock/alice.html) or Amazon.com.

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TEN FOR TEN (NIEL)

Sarah Adams

*Artist of Wonderland:*

*The Life, Political Cartoons, and Illustrations of Tenniel*

Frankie Morris (University of Virginia Press, 2005)

As complex as was the life of Lewis Carroll, so, too, was that of his friend Sir John Tenniel, the artist most famously connected with Carroll. Frankie Morris's new book, *Artist of Wonderland*, shines a light on the many facets of Tenniel's complex character and creations. Of course, the chapters on their working relationship will be most interesting to Carrollian readers. (Particularly intriguing is the chapter on Christmas pantomimes, likely unfamiliar to non-British readers.) Yet the details of Tenniel's early years as an artist, his fifty years of work on *Punch*, and his conservative politics are equally fascinating, describing the era almost as much as they do the man.

The wonder isn't that Dr. Morris wrote this book; it is that she even attempted it. A book that includes a detailed biography of an artist, an examination of his artwork and influences, and a discussion of the political climate and how the artwork affected and was affected by it would be daunting under any circumstances. But as we know from Dr. Morris' article discussing her experiences in writing the book [KL 75:15–19], most previously written documentation on Tenniel's life either conflicted

in major details or was missing altogether. By working almost exclusively with primary sources, however, she has written an appealing and readable book that paints a cohesive picture. Not only does the reader feel as if a full 360-degree portrait has been presented, but that Tenniel was someone the reader might like to know.

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ALICE, WHERE ART THOU?

Clare Imholtz

That Jorge Luis Borges and Lewis Carroll were soulmates, at least on some level, is a speculation that has not escaped notice of the *Knight Letter*, nor numerous critics and artists.<sup>1</sup> Add now to that perspicacious list M. L. Van Nice, the artist who created *The Library at Wadi ben Dagh*, a brilliant and idiosyncratic installation of book sculptures which could be seen at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., from April 11 to November 6, 2005. According to Van Nice, the installation represents the very personal, thoughtfully chosen library of Woman Doe, who, although she no longer lives in Wadi ben Dagh, left her collection—the map of her mind and soul—to the people there. Among her book sculptures are *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Joyce's *Ulysses*, Baudelaire's *Flowers of Evil*, Borges' story "Borges and I," and Shakespeare's tragedies. The nameless Woman Doe has transformed books written mostly by males, many of whom, it seems, wrote memorably of girls and women.

Accompanying Van Nice's installation was a small pamphlet subtitled "An Invitation to Wonderland," describing how Van Nice created a rabbit hole as the central feature of the Alice book sculpture by cutting openings in the shape of hearts, spades, clubs, and diamonds for visitors to peer into and visit Wonderland. At the very bottom of the hole is a red chess

piece, representing the Queen of Hearts.

The whole installation had a definite Borgesian feel to it, perhaps because of its almost totally monochromatic white purity, or perhaps due to its Arabic title, or was it Woman Doe's brilliant choice and arrangement of books, her manifest respect for, and yet gentle mocking of, minute scholarship? As August and I wandered from piece to piece, we felt like characters in a Borges story, the Aleph just out of our grasp.

And wander we did, though in search of Alice not Aleph. Unwisely, we had not arrived until November 5th, the eleventh hour. Supplies of the exhibit pamphlet were totally depleted. And worse. We walked around and around the small room where the Library was installed, inspecting each piece with the utmost care, enthralled, yet continually searching: Where is

the Alice? Which could it be? The sample exhibit pamphlet clearly included a detail ("The Hole of Understanding") from the Alice sculpture. Shouldn't we of all people recognize an Alice when we see it? Alas! Finally we asked, and to our great disappointment were told that an overenthusiastic visitor had leaned too far into the hole, and broken the piece. What became of that visitor we do not know. Even more tragic, perhaps, was a note announcing that when the exhibit closes, the Library, "will be dismantled, and [like

Woman Doe] perhaps never seen again."

<sup>1</sup> "Lewis Carroll" by Jorge Luis Borges, *KL* 55:4-5; "Borges and Carroll: On a Scale of One to One" by the present author, *KL* 71:28; "Lewis Carroll and Jorge Luis Borges: Mock Epic As Autobiography," in *Textual Confrontations: Comparative Readings in Latin American Literature* by Alfred MacAdam (University of Chicago, 1987); etc.



Robert Doucette, Frontispiece,  
*Why a Raven Is Like a Writing Desk* (p. 37)

## BOOKS

A special collaborative Alice issue of *Belio*, an “experimental art-design magazine” from Spain, contains a wealth of stories (English translations at the back) with pictures, and fabulous illustrations from all over the globe. 146 color pages; \$18 in US; €10 in UK. *Belio*, Calle Argente 14, 28053 Madrid, Spain. info@beliomagazine.com; www.beliomagazine.com.



A compendium called *folotog.book: A Global Snapshot for the Digital Age* by Nick Currie and Andrew Long (Thames & Hudson, 2006) contains 1,000 of the best images selected from online photo journals in the *folotog* digital community, including six full pages of Alician digital images by Helenbar. See item in Cyberspace, below.

*The German Alice: An Annotated Bibliography* (including “nearly all” German editions of the Alice books, parodies, comics, videos, CDs, etc.), compiled by Udo Pasterny and Alise G. Wagner, privately printed in 100 numbered copies, 30 including postage for U.S. residents. Udo Pasterny, Hohenzollernstr. 15, 44135 Dortmund, Germany; udo.pasterny@web.de.

Tatiana Ianovskaia’s illustrated *The Mad Gardener’s Song* with prefatory essays by August A. Imholtz, Jr. and Clare Imholtz (Tania Press, 2006). us\$12. bianovski@sympatico.ca; 25 Black Hawkway, North York, Ontario, Canada, M2R 3L5; (416) 650-1871. She has some copies of her *Wonderland* still available for us\$15 as well. Postage to U.S. is us\$2, elsewhere us \$3.50.

Lisa Randall’s *Warped Passages, Unraveling the Mysteries of the Universe’s Hidden Dimensions* (Ecco, 2005)

posits that we live in a “kind of Oreo cookie multiverse, 4-d(imensional) (mem)branes, thinly separated by a 5-d space poetically called the bulk.” References to *Wonderland* abound, including the author’s belief that the title is a pun on “1-d land.” “When they solved the equations for this setup, they discovered that the space between the branes would be warped.”

*Slithy Toves: Illustrated Classic Herpetological Books at the University of Kansas in Pictures and Conversations* by Sally Haines (University of Kansas, 2000). Just the title.

*Alice in Corporate Wonderland: Down the Long Hallway* by R. T. Talasek, Ph.D. (PublishAmerica, 2005). “Alice is all grown up and a freshly minted Ivy League MBA thrust into the world of corporate America.”

Michael Buckley’s *The Sisters Grimm, Book One: The Fairy-Tale Detectives* (Abrams, 2005; ages 9–12; Peter Ferguson, illustrator) is a fantasy mystery in which our White Rabbit is one of the characters.

Adam Gopnik’s convoluted children’s novel *The King in the Window* (Miramax/Hyperion, 2005) combines science, French history, and fantasy. An ancient Alice and her pale, wide-eyed lost children appear as a plot device.

Peter Ackroyd’s *Albion: The Origins of the English Imagination* (Chatto and Windus, 2002) contains a handful of references to the books.

*Lewis Carroll and the Victorian Theatre: Theatricals in a Quiet Life* (Ashgate, 2005) by Richard Foulkes. To be reviewed in our next issue.

*The Kingfisher Book of Great Girl Stories*, chosen by Rosemary Sandberg,

includes an excerpted “Mad Tea Party,” from *Wonderland* (Kingfisher, 1999).

Erica Spindler’s *Killer Takes All* (Mira Books, 2005) is a mystery/thriller that involves a role-playing game called White Rabbit, with people taking on characters from the book, and someone whose name is Alice. “It looks pretty violent and unpleasant.” Hardcover, \$20.

*Creature Carnival*, featuring whimsical illustrations by Gris Grimly and associated poems by Marilyn Singer (Hyperion, 2004), has a Cheshire Cat.

Film producer (*There’s Something About Mary*) and first-time novelist Frank Beddor’s gritty re-imagining called *The Looking Glass Wars Trilogy* (KL 74:42) will be published in the U.S. by the Penguin Young Readers Group (ages ten and up). The eponymous first book is in print; he is currently working on the second, to be called *Seeing Redd*. Three of the four issues of its adaptation into a mini-series graphic novel called *Hatter M* have been published. A musical and a card game along the lines of *Magic: The Gathering* are said to be in the works. www.lookingglasswars.com.

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**ARTICLES**

*Покорение XXI (Generation XXI)* #2, 2005, a student magazine from the Russian Academy of Education contains an interview with Carroll translator/scholar Nina Demurova.

*T: The Sunday New York Times Women's Fashion Magazine*, August 28, 2005, contained "Curiouser and Curiouser: Fall Down the Rabbit Hole in Prints Fit for a Mad Tea Party," a photo spread of hatterly outfits.

*The Sea Fairy* 41 (Jan/Feb 2006) mentions Carroll several times and includes a feature called "A Look at the Different Alices," discussing 14 illustrators from Carroll to Mervyn Peake.

"Hat-itude Adjustment," in *AARP: The Magazine*, March/April 2002, discussed actor Andy Garcia's hat collection, with an illustration of him as, of course, our Hatter.

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**CYBERSPACE**

Edward Wakeling has a new Web site, which contains two papers, "Lewis Carroll as Photographer" and "The Real Lewis Carroll"; a listing of all known Dodgson photographs; and is a place where he sells duplicates from his superb collection. [www.lewiscarroll-site.com](http://www.lewiscarroll-site.com).

The superb digital images of *Wonderland* by Helena De Barros ("Helenbar"), one of which was featured on the cover of *KL 73* (article: *KL 73:39*) can be seen as a slide show by going to [www.helenbar.com/art/wond\\_01.htm](http://www.helenbar.com/art/wond_01.htm) and clicking the forward arrows (»).

"Alice no País das Maravilhas," an abbreviated version used to teach Portuguese on the Isle of Jersey (U.K.) at [www.projectodejersey.com/Alicenopaisdasmavilhas1.htm](http://www.projectodejersey.com/Alicenopaisdasmavilhas1.htm).

An amazing array of *Alice* images at [www.eatpoo.com/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=39960](http://www.eatpoo.com/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=39960).

Adam Cline's *Adventures of Amish Alice* online comic book at [adamcline.com/theadventuresofamishalice/adventuresofamishalice.htm](http://adamcline.com/theadventuresofamishalice/adventuresofamishalice.htm).

Peggy Guest's marvelous take on the *Snark* at [www.peggyguest.com/illustration.html](http://www.peggyguest.com/illustration.html).

"Alice in Underland" is the title of a series of sketches by Raymond Korshi at [www.lairofthetwistedkitten.co.uk/gallery/alice1.htm](http://www.lairofthetwistedkitten.co.uk/gallery/alice1.htm); Rigoberto Rodríguez's series of erotic photographs at [www.enterart.com/rigoberto/english/works.htm](http://www.enterart.com/rigoberto/english/works.htm); a poem by Lisa Shao at [lisa.shao.org/archives/poetry/alice\\_in\\_underland.html](http://lisa.shao.org/archives/poetry/alice_in_underland.html); Wolfgang Zuckermann's book (Olive Press, 2000), described as "a curious mixture of nonsense, social satire and surrealist fairytale, which takes the classical Alice through the dreary landscape of suburban America"; a performance piece from Norway ([www.katma.net/performances/aliceinunderland.php](http://www.katma.net/performances/aliceinunderland.php)); an online comic by The Brothers Grinn (Brian and Stuart Burke) at [www.supermegatopia.com/comics/alice.php](http://www.supermegatopia.com/comics/alice.php); etc.

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**CONFERENCES AND LECTURES**

Children's author John Scieszka (*The Stinky Cheese Man*, etc.) delivered the annual Zena Sutherland Lecture at the University of Chicago on May 6, 2005, which ended with his accolade to Carroll and a "tribute" poem called "Gobblegooky." The talk was adapted into an article published in *The Horn Book Magazine* (November/December 2005).

In a special session on the history of mathematics at the American Mathematical Society's eastern regional meeting on October 8, 2005, at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, Dr. Francine F. Abeles gave a paper entitled "Lewis Carroll's Diagrammatic Logic System for Syllogisms."

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**EXHIBITIONS**

The 2005 "Hand Bookbinders of California Annual Members' Exhibition," at the University of California at San Francisco's Kalmánovitz Library (September–December '05), featured Eleanor Ramsey's stunning binding of the Brabant/Walker Cheshire Cat Press *Wonderland*. Her companion *Looking-Glass* will be on loan to the "100th Anniversary Exhibition of The Guild of Book Workers" from October 2006 through September 2007. Venues include the Grolier Club in New York City, Newberry Library in Chicago, University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Portland State University, Bridwell Library in Dallas, and the Boston Athenæum. Further details will be posted to [palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw/exhibit/2006exhibit.shtml](http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw/exhibit/2006exhibit.shtml).

The Spencer, a small, newly renovated boutique hotel located on the grounds of the illustrious Chautauqua Institution, a not-for-profit, 750-acre educational center located on Chautauqua Lake in southwestern New York State, is celebrating its centennial in 2006. The Spencer operates as a small, independent hotel property with a distinctive literary theme that celebrates the life and works of history's most revered authors; naturally, it has a Lewis Carroll room. [www.thespencer.com](http://www.thespencer.com); 800.398-1306.

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**AUCTIONS**

One of John Lennon's school notebooks sold for 126,500 pounds (\$226,000) on April 19 by rock-memorabilia auctioneer Cooper Owen in Egham, Surrey, England. Lennon was only 12 when he made the 10-page book of drawings in pen, pencil and watercolors alongside handwritten verses from classic English poems in 1952. The collection, called "My Anthology," included an illustrated

"The Walrus and the Carpenter."  
[www.cooperowen.com/news\\_lenon.asp](http://www.cooperowen.com/news_lenon.asp).

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**MEDIA**

Marilyn Manson seems to be going ahead with his *Phantasmagoria* movie project (KL 75:30) and has cast porcelain-faced, red-haired British fashion model Lily Cole, 18, as Alice. Keep up with the madness at [www.mansonusa.com](http://www.mansonusa.com).

"The Compulsive Line: Etching 1900 to Now" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in April, included "Pool of Tears 2 (After Lewis Carroll)" by Kiki Smith, an etching with watercolor additions based on a sketch from *Under Ground*, and a portfolio of Surrealist etchings from the game "Exquisite Corpse," wherein an elongated, nude Alice appears.

Mononymous pop star Jewel's latest CD is titled *Goodbye Alice in Wonderland*.

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**PERFORMANCES**

Playwright, Pulitzer-nominated journalist, novelist (*Wildcatting*) and very successful radio talk show host Shann Nix's play *Alice Underground* opened at the

Sonoma (CA) Community Center in April. With an original score by Jef Labes (Van Morrison's pianist), the "dark musical about the 82-year-old Alice approaching the end of her life" blends her nursing-home existence with hallucinations-come-to-life from her fictional adventures.

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**THINGS**

Frank Brunner's erotic art portfolios of *Wonderland* (1977) and *Looking-Glass* (1979) have been long-sought collectors' items. They—along with some other *Alice* pieces, comic book stories, and other fantasy illustrations—have now been reprinted in magazine format as *Brunner's Carnal Delights* (\$10) by Carnal Comics, P.O. Box 2068, Scottsdale, AZ 85282; <https://demicomix.com/oscommerce/>. Be sure to get the "Alice" and not the "regular" cover.

Nana Banana's "Classic Coloring Books" includes an abridged *Wonderland* illustrated by Edel Rodriguez. [www.nanabanana.com](http://www.nanabanana.com). \$16.

Pierre Silber, purveyor of erotic wear, has some items of interest: "Alice's Wonderful Apron Dress," "Alice's Dress," "Tea Party Costume" (the Hatter!?), "Sexy Fairy-

tail Dress," and "Alice's Queen." All for around \$40–\$60. Be forewarned. [www.pierresilber.com](http://www.pierresilber.com).

*Disney Rarities: Celebrated Shorts 1920s–1960s* collects the "Alice" shorts of the 1920s onto DVD. Features include an interview with Virginia Davis, who played Alice.

Collectors of *hentai* (Japanese erotic *manga* [comic books]) should note two series from Eros Comics: Mashumaro Jyuubaori's *Alice in Sexland* and *Alice Extreme*. Of the first series, #s 2 and 5–8 are available, of the second, the full set of seven at \$3.50–\$4 each. [www.eroscomix.com](http://www.eroscomix.com); 7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115; 800.657-1100. You can find scans of the complete books in many places on the Web. Not for the faint of heart.

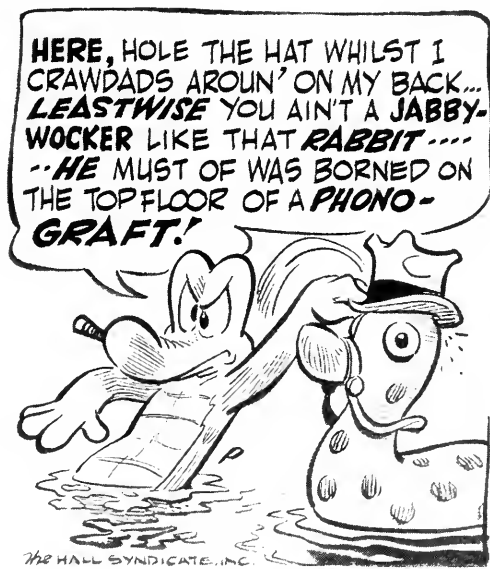
Rob Espinosa's *New Alice in Wonderland* comic book mini-series from Antarctic Press has released Issues #1, 2, and 3. \$4.50 each. [www.antarctic-press.com/html/version\\_01/store.php?id=Alice](http://www.antarctic-press.com/html/version_01/store.php?id=Alice).

Whittard of Chelsea has many tea-related Alice items. See [www.whittard.co.uk](http://www.whittard.co.uk): check out "Alice" under "Easter," or use the search box.

Just released: a DVD of the Seventh World Symposium on Choral Music in Kyoto, Japan, with the first three movements of *Eight Scenes from Alice* by Patrick van Deurzen; [www.brain-music.com/asia/205dvd/05choral\\_dvd.html](http://www.brain-music.com/asia/205dvd/05choral_dvd.html).

Pop-up cards from Sabuda's *Alice* are now available from [robert-sabuda.com](http://robert-sabuda.com).

The Breaches, Westerham, Kent, an "enchanted period house," went on sale in October for £1,100,000. Alice Hargreaves wintered there in later life, and this is where she died, on a cold November day in 1934.





*The Breaches, Westerham, Kent*

