



# Alice in Wonderland in Film and Popular Culture

*Edited by*  
Antonio Sanna

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*To the young ones—Angelica Pittalis, Edoardo Pinna, Marta Cabras,  
Miriana Sanna, Riccardo Polo, and Sharon Fadda—may you enjoy such a  
jovial spirit your whole life and always cheer up the people around you as  
you do with me.*

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction: Alice and the Critics

*Antonio Sanna*

During the past century and a half the Alice books have been widely discussed by the academic community, which has attempted to eviscerate the multiple meanings of the texts, none of the critics claiming nevertheless the final word on Carroll's works. The readings of the texts have therefore been extremely variegated, starting with biographical studies of Carroll's life as it transpires through the books, from Reverend Dodgson's expedition on the river with the three daughters of the Dean of Christ Church (Lorina Charlotte, Alice, and Edith Liddell) during the 'golden afternoon' when the first, oral version of the story was created, to the details of his life emerging from the works. Several critics have examined the texts in order to find the people Carroll knew and came into contact with during his life—as is the case of Jo Elwyn Jones and Francis Gladstone's *The Red King's Dream or Lewis Carroll in Wonderland* (1995), which brilliantly traces the characters in the tales back to public personas such as Prime Ministers William Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli, Poet Laureate Lord

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Alfred Tennyson, Pre-Raphaelite painter John Everett Millais, scientist Thomas Henry Huxley, and Bishop Samuel Wilberforce.

An extensive part of the biographical research on Carroll's life has also been devoted to his renowned affection toward young girls, Alice Liddell having been only his first muse in a series of children aged between eight and eleven (though he generally disliked little boys as grubby and noisy [see Auden 1974, 38]).<sup>1</sup> This has led to an intense, lively debate dividing critics and journalists between those who accuse him of a pedophilic, or at least morbid, interest in young girls—due also to his decision to capture the 'innocent unselfconsciousness of children for posterity by photographing them nude' (Douglas-Fairhurst 2015, 252)—and those who strongly oppose such a view.<sup>2</sup> Critics belonging to the first group include Morton N. Cohen (1995), Michael Bakewell (1997), and Donald Thomas (1996),<sup>3</sup> whereas among those who read such relationships as based uniquely upon innocence and sincere friendship are A.M.E. Goldschmidt (1974), Paul Schilder (1974), and Karoline Leach (2015).<sup>4</sup> Such readings of the writer's life have in turn influenced the interpretations of the literary texts

<sup>1</sup> As Jones and Gladstone note, 'Carroll matured as a tireless finder and loser of child-friends' (1995, 198).

<sup>2</sup> Douglas-Fairhurst specifies: 'Whereas a modern viewer might see nakedness, Carroll saw nudity. [...] in each case [of the photographs] Carroll's true motivations remain a troubling blank' (2016, 256).

<sup>3</sup> Shari L. Savage (2018) indicates that no evidence has ever been provided that Carroll acted on his alleged erotic urges towards young girls, even by those scholars that believe that he was actually a pedophile.

<sup>4</sup> A third argument is suggested by Douglas-Fairhurst when he reports that 'a number of Carroll's contemporaries thought that his sexual interests, however pale and repressed, were more likely to have been focused on other men,' though he later specifies: 'Yet it is just as likely that Carroll's feelings were as much of a mystery to him as they are to us' (2006, 138).

(and, of course their adaptations)<sup>5</sup> as either ‘coded expression of abnormal desire’ (Brooker 2004, xvi) or frivolous, joyous nonsense.

Alongside these readings, many critics have focused on Carroll’s allusions to the cultural, scientific, and social milieu of his age. Prominent among these are the studies of the texts that examine the references to Darwinism (William Empson in 1935 and Jan B. Gordon in 1971), controversial religious disputes (Shane Leslie in 1933), imperialism (Amanda L. Brian in 2013), mathematical concepts (Gillian Beer in 2016), and vivisection (Anna Kérchy in 2018). Other interpretations have considered Carroll’s books as an illustration of different philosophical theories, from Bertrand Russell’s 1942 analysis of perception and existence through the Red King’s dream and Roger W. Holmes’ 1959 interpretation of Humpty Dumpty as a realist to Gilles Deleuze’s theorization of the paradoxical concept of becoming through Alice’s changes in stature (in *The Logic of Sense*, 1969), and Richard Brian Davis’ edited collection *Alice in Wonderland and Philosophy* (Wiley, 2010).

Many critical readings examine the texts’ educational and pedagogical aspects. Such studies focus on the relationship between Alice and the adult characters surrounding her (Agarwal et al. 2012) as well as on the role of children in the Victorian age (Nina Auerbach 1973; Christine Roth 2009;

<sup>5</sup>Noteworthy are those films that include Lewis Carroll in their narratives. These are: the French production *Alice in Wonderland* (1949), which is the first color adaptation of the books, in which events in Dodgson’s and the three Liddell sisters’ lives at Oxford are read as the inspiration for the telling of the story on the expedition on the river. Actors and actresses performing in the Oxford scenes lend their voices to the stop-and-motion animated characters in Wonderland, thus reproducing a doubling of their parts typical of fantasy films such as *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). The expedition on the river takes central importance in Dennis Potter’s TV film (1965), in which the stuttering and introverted reverend’s real life, his relationship with Alice Liddell, and the history of the book’s publication are alternated with the scenes taken from the books, as well as in the 1972 adaptation directed by William Sterling and the 1986 BBC version. The expedition on the river is also depicted in the theme of the Anglia Television five-episode series (1985) and in *Dreamchild* (1985). In the latter film, an elderly Alice Liddell Hearngraves visits New York in 1932 to celebrate Carroll’s centenary and to receive an honorary degree from Columbia University. On the occasion she remembers through flashbacks events involving her and Carroll as well as she fantasizes about some portions of Carroll’s stories in which her young self acts as the fictional Alice. By offering an interpretation of Carroll and his relationship with Alice Liddell these films thus allude to the critical interpretations on the writer’s life.

Naomi Wood 2012).<sup>6</sup> Critics such as W.H. Auden (1974) emphasize the contrast between the ‘invariably reasonable, self-controlled, and polite’ heroine and the ‘unsocial eccentrics [whether human or animal]—at the mercy of their passions and extremely bad-mannered’ (1974, 35) that she encounters during her adventures.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, both in Wonderland and the world through the looking glass the young protagonist moves through an anarchic environment that she needs to order out. As it happens to many children, the innocent and conscientious Alice attempts to make sense of the commands and prohibitions set out by the adults, and the laws binding them. She confronts a world that is ‘fantastic, insane, sometimes even terrible; a world that, as in a game of mirrors, is turned inside out, reversed, comical and frightening at the same time’ (Meloni 1990, 11).<sup>8</sup> Some critics also focus on the parallels between Alice’s changes in stature and a child’s growth as well as on the frequent indications about eating and drinking. Issues of identity have been often traced in the texts as due to the fact that many characters ask Alice who she is or invite her to remember it, thus producing in her an identity crisis<sup>9</sup> and feelings of alienation from her body and her mind. On the other hand, the progressive acquisition of confidence and assertiveness on the protagonist’s part has been interpreted as a representation of the growth of children and their social, psychological, and emotional development (Lloyd 2010, 9).<sup>10</sup>

Many interpretations of the books—such as those by Robert Sutherland in 1970, Francis Huxley in 1976, Winfried Nöth in 1994, James

<sup>6</sup> Apoorv Agarwal et al.’s “Social Network Analysis of *Alice in Wonderland*” (2012) uses an annotation scheme for a dynamic network analysis of Carroll’s text created by the interactions between (and observation of) the characters as social events, focusing specifically on the characters of Alice, the White Rabbit, and the Mouse.

<sup>7</sup> As Elsie Leach brilliantly summarizes, the characters in Wonderland ‘snap at her [Alice], preach to her, confuse her, or ignore her. They behave to her as adults behave to a child—they are peremptory and patronizing [and exhibit a] ponderous didacticism, and contradictory behavior’ (1974, 125).

<sup>8</sup> My translation. Charles Taliaferro and Elizabeth Olson argue that Wonderland is an amusing rather than horrifying world, ‘because of Alice’s sensibility, all the situations, characters, and commands are exposed as ludicrous and absurd. [...] Alice is sensible, rational, and grounded. She does not panic or even truly lament her predicament’ (2010, 189).

<sup>9</sup> As Donald Rackin argues, ‘Not only is Alice’s previous identity meaningless in Wonderland; the very concept of permanent identity is invalid’ (1974, 458).

<sup>10</sup> Kathleen Blake (1974) has read the character of Alice through the pedagogical theories elaborated by Jean Piaget, arguing that the seven-year-old child represents the third period of the psychologist’s development model, which signals the appropriate use of logic on the part of the child and his/her attempt to entertain more complex social interactions.

A. Williams in 2012, and Gillian Beer in 2016—have examined their linguistic and logical aspects and have attempted to penetrate Carroll’s nonsensical language. The latter is a ludic genre that targeted Victorian ‘common sense’ by using different logical mechanisms of language that unsettle the meaning of words and their relationships with the signifiers, while simultaneously producing an effect of irony. Under scrutiny have therefore been the many riddles and jokes populating the texts and the literalization of puns as much as the elision of the expected meanings, the dissolution of cause and effect, ‘the random juxtaposition or decisively arbitrary of sense and sound’ (Meloni 1990, 66), the homophonic ambiguities, graphic homonyms, and parodies of contemporary songs, nursery rhymes, and poems.<sup>11</sup>

Other critical readings have focused on the dreamy aspects of the story and its psychoanalytical implications. Both the Alice books indeed reveal in the final chapters that the young protagonist’s adventures have been dreams. In 1933 A.M.E. Goldschmidt evidenced the sexual symbolism of the stories, Paul Schilder in 1938 and Géza Róheim in 1955 explored the issues of oral trauma and aggression, whereas (in *The Logic of Sense*) Gilles Deleuze considered Alice as simultaneously sexualized and desexualized (and thus both confirming and reversing the Oedipal complex). More recent studies (Hart Christopher Lane in 2011 and Angela Hart in 2015) have examined the parallels between Carroll’s use of nonsensical language and the theories elaborated by French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, who himself compared the stories to the works of Jean Piaget in 1964–65.

Since the 1960s several critics and readers have interpreted Alice’s journey as an allegory for an intense drug experience, as a story ‘inspired by, a celebration of, or a guide to hallucinogenic drugs’ (Parker 2010, 138). Critics such as Thomas Fensch (1974) and Scott F. Parker (2010) have evidenced the presence in Carroll’s texts of some allusions to the consumption of drugs (the Caterpillar smokes a hookah; Alice eats mushrooms and drinks mysterious beverages that alter her perception of reality).<sup>12</sup> The depiction of Wonderland has therefore been compared to the hallucinogenic state of people who make use of drugs and such an

<sup>11</sup> According to Douglas-Fairhurst, ‘Alice’s adventures are a celebration of language—its pleasures, anxieties, rewards, risks’ (2006, 147).

<sup>12</sup> Parker himself contradicts such an interpretation of the texts by arguing that Alice experiences the reality of Wonderland as absurd and distorted before she takes any alleged drugs (2010, 138).

association has been established in popular culture through the ascription of the slang term ‘alice’ to LSD and through songs, starting with Jefferson Airplane’s ‘White Rabbit’ and the Beatles’ ‘Lucy in the Sky with Diamond’ (both 1967).<sup>13</sup>

Many contemporary books on the adaptation and re-mediation of Carroll’s texts in film and popular culture generally focus on a single aspect or medium of the adaptation. Volumes such as Catherine Nichols’ *Alice’s Wonderland: A Visual Journey through Lewis Carroll’s Mad, Mad World* (2014) and *Illustrating Alice* by Marina Vaizey et al. (2013), for example, examine the evolution of the illustrations accompanying the literary texts. Catherine J. Golden’s *Serials to Graphic Novels: The Evolution of the Victorian Illustrated Book* (2017) focuses on the evolution of the illustrations in Victorian books until present-age graphic novels, but only a portion of it is dedicated to the illustrations of Carroll’s texts. Such volumes do not contain any academic discussion on the subject apart from brief summaries of it.

<sup>13</sup>Songs referring to Carroll’s works abound and include: Chick Corea’s entire album *The Mad Hatter* (1978), Chary Garcia’s ‘Alicia en el Pais’ (1980), Annihilator’s ‘Allison Hell’ (1989), Symphony X’s ‘Through the Looking-Glass’ (1998), Forever Slave’s ‘Alice’s Inferno’ (2005), Hypnogaja’s ‘Looking Glass’ (2005), Lisa Mitchell’s ‘Sometimes I Feel Like Alice’ (2007), Buck Tick’s ‘Alice in Wonder Underground’ (2007), Natalia Kills’ ‘Wonderland’ (2010), Avril Lavigne’s ‘Alice’ (2010), Monkey Majik’s ‘Wonderland’ (2011), Egypt Central’s ‘White Rabbit’ (2011), Panic! At the Disco and Fun’s ‘C’Mon’ (2011), AKB48’s ‘First Rabbit’ (2012). Several artists have specifically focused on the poem ‘Jabberwocky’ in their songs, referring to it in their lyrics or performing a recited version of it. Among these, Boeing Duveen and The Beautiful Soup’s ‘Jabberwock’ (1968), Ambrosia’s ‘Mama Frog’ (1975), Verkrum’s ‘Beware the Jabberwock’ (2008), and Hatcham Social’s ‘Jabberwocky’ (2009). On the other hand, Carroll’s texts have also inspired orchestral works, operas and ballets, starting with Dick Cotsford’s *In Wonderland: Six Duets for the Pianoforte* (1876), Deems Taylor’s suite *Through the Looking-Glass* (1918), and Irving Fine’s *Three Choruses from Alice in Wonderland* (1942) to David Del Tredici’s symphonies (1969–85), the operas by Unsuk Chin (2007) and Alan John (2008) as well as the ballets by John Craton (2010) and Joseph Hallman (2010).

Similarly, at least one chapter is devoted to the 1951 film<sup>14</sup> in the books on Disney's productions, including Zach Zypes' *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films* (2011), *Diversity in Disney Films: Critical Essays on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexuality and Disability*, edited by Johnson Cheu (2013), and *It's the Disney Version! Popular Cinema and Literary Classics*, edited by Douglas Brode and Shea T. Brode (2016), whereas the books on director Tim Burton published after 2010—such as *The Philosophy of Tim Burton* (edited by Jennifer L. McMahon 2014) and *A Critical Companion to Tim Burton* (edited by Adam Barkman and Antonio Sanna 2017)—examine the American director's version of Carroll's stories.<sup>15</sup>

Among the books that focus on the re-interpretation of the literary figure of Alice in other media and the evolution of Carroll's texts into popular culture are included: Zoe Jaques and Eugene Giddens' *Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass: A Publishing History* (2013), on the differences between the various printed editions of the text and, only in the last chapter, between them and

<sup>14</sup>The 1951 Disney adaptation, which mixes characters and events from both the 1865 and 1871 books, is notable for its transformation of many objects and animals (such as the teapots) into surreal projections as well as for the final chase sequence inspired by Dali's works. Disney's version has been however criticized for its 'cheaply pretty,' over-sugared songs and for being too episodic and stylistically inconsistent (Boslaugh 2016, 53 and 55). On the other hand, as Will Brooker has noted, Disney's film fixed 'Alice's image as cultural icon' (2004, 200). The 1951 film is the first to introduce the scene of the Pigeon, but there are several sequences that are completely original to it, such as the protagonist's wish to live in an ideal world where things work on the contrary, the golden doorknob, and Alice getting lost in the Tulgey wood while attempting to return home. Also, in Disney's film there is a major emphasis on the danger (especially, of beheading) that Alice is threatened with during the story.

<sup>15</sup>The 2010 *Alice in Wonderland* directed by Tim Burton is structured as a sequel to the original story, Alice being a nineteen-year-old girl who returns to the realm (actually called 'Underland') and liberates its inhabitants from the tyrannical yoke of the hydrocephalic, 'castrating' Red Queen (who suffers from her own deformity). This is an unwelcoming, nightmarish version of the fantasy world created by Carroll, which is characterized by 'gloomy landscapes and allusions to the Darwinian concept of the struggle for existence' and emphasizes the post-traumatic stress of many characters (Sanna 2017, 78). Alice is kind, resourceful, and brave, but the film also emphasizes her nonconformity to societal norms of femininity and female behavior by presenting her as a freethinking agent who must accept her role as a strong female lead and finally reject a life of domestic constraints. The film exemplifies Burton's fondness for absurdity and the bizarre in the use of nonsensical language and whimsical characters as well as it epitomizes the director's visual style in the representation of both psychedelic, gracious landscapes and waste, joyless lands.

their adaptations in other media; and Laura Helen Marks' *Alice in Pornoland: Hardcore Encounters with the Victorian Gothic* (2018), whose third chapter examines the contemporary pornographic adaptations of Carroll's books that recast the protagonist as a sexual active agent. The aforementioned books, however, do not examine in detail the novels, graphic novels, films, and videogames studied in this volume.

Will Brooker's *Alice's Adventures: Lewis Carroll in Popular Culture* (2004) traces the development of Carroll's books into several media (including toys, theme parks, and heritage sites). Brooker examines a wide range of texts, from Carroll's diaries and several literary adaptations of the Alice stories and their illustrators to cinematic and TV adaptations,<sup>16</sup> videogames, and the work of the Lewis Carroll Society. Postmodern, contemporary texts such as Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* (2002), films such as Terry Gilliam's *Tideland* (2005), the TV series *Once Upon a Time in Wonderland* (2013–14), and the 2011 Scottish Ballet *Alice* are the focus of Anna Kérchy's *Alice in Transmedia Wonderland* (2016), which examines 'how media change elicits different modes of enchantment, disenchantment and reenchantment in metafantasies commenting on the limits

<sup>16</sup>Brooker's volume examines in details two of the most renowned cinematic adaptations of Carroll's novels, Jonathan Miller's 1966 *Alice in Wonderland* and Jan Svankmajer's *Alice* (1988). The former, a slow-paced film with no real vivacity and a mesmerizing soundtrack, is set in a series of apparently abandoned buildings, such as a hospital, a church, a manor and some country houses and the countryside, where the young protagonist (whose voiceover supplants much of the original dialogues) meets several people representing Carroll's characters. There are no animals in this production, only extravagant and bizarre individuals in Victorian costumes, who represent Alice's encounter with an adult world. The human actors' and actresses' wild and irrational behavior seems to define the locations more properly as a madhouse. More disquieting is the fact that Alice rarely looks at the other characters, but rather stares blankly straight ahead with an absent expression. In Svankmajer's film, it is Alice herself who tells the story, addressing spectators directly and reciting all of the characters' lines. Wonderland is depicted as a decrepit building and its creatures (stuffed animals and their skeletons, often hybridized with miniature objects, wooden dolls, and a pack of cards) and objects move by means of the stop-motion technique. The latter further contributes to the feeling of anxiety and the uncanny generated by this film's images, which linger on discomforting details (the close-ups on dirt and the food residues mixed with nails and pins) as well as on menacing themes (Alice becomes a doll after eating tarts and drinking ink, and she is often chased by the creatures or hurts herself during her adventure), and are accompanied only by raw sound effects. According to Brooker, Svankmajer creates a series of repeated motifs (such as Alice's many struggles to open school desks and the White Rabbit's greediness for sawdust) that emphasize some of the original books' themes, including sadism, eating, and mathematical puzzles (2004, 216).

and potentials of the fantasy genre' (2016, loc. 649). Christopher Hollingworth's *Alice Beyond Wonderland: Essays for the Twenty-First Century* (2009) focuses on both recent and older adaptations of Carroll's texts in media as different as madness studies, childhood studies, and hyperspace philosophy. Finally, Laura Tosi's *The Fabulous Journeys of Alice and Pinocchio* (2018)—which traces the many similarities between the two texts (including the structures of the stories, the metamorphosis of their protagonists, and the use of the fantasy tradition), along with their differences (such as the different social spheres of the protagonists, the respective satirical and didactic intent of the narratives, and the different treatment of physical suffering)—devotes two chapters to the nineteenth-century narratives' evolution and their transcendence of temporal and national boundaries through contemporary works by Angela Carter, Thomas Hughes, George Henty, Edmondo De Amicis, and Emilio Salgari.

The volume that is closer to the present collection is *'Tantalizing Alice': Approaches, Concepts and Case-Studies in Adaptations of a Classic* (2016, edited by Sissy Helff and Nadia Butt), whose twelve essays focus on issues and adaptations examined here (such as the narrativization of Carroll's life and the eroticization of his alleged pedophilia, the Burton/Bobin cinematic duology, and the computer game *Alice: Madness Returns*), but also study a series of topics and texts that are not analyzed in this volume, including fan fiction, wedding settings, photography, early cartoons, circus productions, and Susan Sontag's *Alice in Bed* (1994).<sup>17</sup> Helff and Butt's book uses a comparative interdisciplinary approach assessing a wide spectrum of Alice adaptations and could, therefore, be considered as an ideal companion to the present collection.

*Alice in Wonderland in Film and Popular Culture* examines the many reincarnations of Carroll's texts, illuminating how the meaning of the original books has been re-negotiated through adaptations,

<sup>17</sup> Susan Sontag's *Alice in Bed* is a 1993 play in eight scenes presenting the fictionalized character of Alice James, sister of the intellectuals Henry and William James who died of breast cancer at forty-three. In the play, set in London in 1890, the protagonist is forced to her death bed, where she is visited by her relatives and some literary personages; her interior journey and exploration of the past is characterized by the death wish and the curative function of fantasy. The parallels with Carroll's novels abound, from the mirror motif and references to hookahs, changes in size, and dreams to a recreation of an exclusively female tea party. As Nadia Butt argues, "the play is, in reality, a vehement vituperation of gender discrimination towards a woman who aims to explore her physical and mental talents as freely as her male counterparts, but is brutally thwarted by social and familiar mores" (2016, 115).

appropriations, and transmediality. The volume is an edited collection of eighteen essays and is divided into three sections. In the first section the contributors analyze several literary re-interpretations of the *Alice* books. In the second chapter Antonio Sanna traces the evolution of Carroll's texts through their numerous adaptations and appropriations on the page, presenting a history of them until the present day in literature, comics, and graphic novels. The third chapter, by Olga Bukhina, explores how the transcultural iterations of the *Alice's* topsy-turvy wordplay and food transformations permeate such American classics as Carl Sandburg's *Rootabaga Stories* (1922) and Norton Juster's *The Phantom Tollbooth* (1961) as well as the contemporary Russian children's poetry by Arthur Givargizov and Masha Rupasova. The following chapter, by Maciej Skowera, focuses on contemporary fiction (from 1970s to 2010s) presenting Dodgson's life to show the ways in which the biography of *Alice's* creator has been adapted and to reflect on how the patterns of the interpretation of it (specifically, the discourses of the 'saint' and the 'pedophile') and the reception of the books themselves (such as psychoanalytical or psychedelic analyses) affect it. In the fifth chapter Brigid Cherry draws on Thomas Leitch's 2012 account of adaptation and intertextuality in order to consider the remediations of the *Alice* texts in Bryan Talbot's *Alice in Sunderland* (2007), Alan Moore's *Lost Girls* (2009), and Bill Willingham's *Jack of Fables* (2006–11). Eileen M. Harney's chapter considers the portrayal of the two protagonists in the first run of DC Comics' *Batwoman* series (2009–15), which was designed to break boundaries and challenge norms in the hyper-masculine, heteronormative world of the DC Comics of ten years ago by having an LGBTQ lead character. The last chapter of the first section, by Rick Hudson, bridges over the next section by exploring how Carroll's characters are used within DC comics' *Batman* stories (and their adaptations in TV cartoons and the TV series *Gotham*) and how they develop the themes of madness and the monstrous in a fictional world that foregrounds these two tropes in both its villains and its heroes.

The second section focuses on the cinematographic and television adaptations of the original books. Joy E. Morrow and Christopher Flavin examine several cinematic adaptations of Carroll's stories, from the first silent shorts to Disney's most recent films, focusing on their shift in tone in the representation of *Alice* and the *Queen of Hearts* as suggestive of a different interpretation of class and ideological structure throughout the past century. In the second chapter Martin F. Norden focuses on Disney's 1959 animation film *Donald in Mathmagic Land* and demonstrates how

the studio's interest in using film to teach mathematical concepts was strongly informed by Carroll's unique literary blend of logic, mathematics, and surrealism. The third chapter, by Alexandra Heatwole, interprets the Burton/Bobin duology as a (post)feminist retelling of the original narratives granting the young adult Alice agency and the ability to rewrite both past and future. In the following chapter Lindsey Scott reads Alice's journey down the rabbit hole through a series of works—such as *Pan's Labyrinth* (2008), *The Hunger Games* (2008–10), and *Stranger Things* (2016–)—that expressly engage with horror, present a complex range of gender-related issues, and prompt discussion over censorship and the preservation of childhood boundaries. The fifth chapter, by Andrew Grossman, focuses on Kerry Feltham's *Chicago 70*, a largely forgotten work of agit-prop that grafts transcripts of the 'Chicago 7' trial onto the narrative skeleton of *Alice in Wonderland*. Grossman argues that the film represents less a process of 'smooth' translation than a deliberately jagged and ironic dialectic that renders real the violence implicit in Carroll's Wonderland. The concluding chapter of the section, by Carla Fusco, analyzes Woody Allen's free adaptation of the story in *Alice* (1990), a modern-day rendering of the narrative consisting in a hilarious pastiche of hectic metropolitan sequences alternated with dream-tableaux. Fusco's chapter is based upon a hermeneutic analysis that focuses on detecting the many suggestions deriving from the distinction between the character and the performer through a structuralist approach.

The last section of the volume examines the remediations of the original texts into other media, such as in the branches of commerce and the space of the city, videogames, photographs, music videos, theatrical plays, and madness and nonsense studies, thus expanding this volume's scope into several other areas of inquiry. The section begins with a chapter by Anne-Marie Beller and Claire O'Callaghan which focuses on a range of texts, images, and other media that appropriate Alice in sexual, erotic, and pornographic ways (including various popular images from fan fiction websites) and traces the parallels between the fetishization of the female child in Victorian and contemporary society. In the second chapter, Joanna Madlock offers an analysis of the presence of Carroll's characters in the public space of several big cities, concentrating on the commercial uses of motifs from Carroll's books and the incorporation of *Alice*-originated names in the signifying systems of different branches of commerce and in publicly displayed art. The following chapter, by Masafumi Monden, proposes, through a study of the music video for Japanese pop artist Aimer's

chart-topping song ‘I Beg You’ (2019), that Alice’s image in Japan is strongly intertwined with the concept of *shōjo*, a representation of liminal femininity and girlhood in Japanese culture. In the fourth chapter, Dominique Angela Juntado and Antonio Sanna examine how the video-game American McGee’s *Alice* and its sequel *Alice: Madness Returns* portray the way in which certain anxieties in ‘growing up’ influence the framing of how a person receives the concept of identity and its construction. This discussion presents a sociocultural vista which looks into how characters, dialogue, and locations demonstrate and comment on ideas of socialization and the conscious experiences that come with certain life stages. The chapter by Amanda Rutherford and Sarah Parker explores how the original character of the Mad Hatter has transgressed across platforms and genres to become a representation of what is considered the go-to depiction for clowning and craziness, and to act as a parody for contemporary issues and concerns by tricking and disguising morals and good advice within his narrative. In the last chapter of the volume Emily Scherzinger and Jeffery Donaldson study the nonsensical nature of *Alice’s Adventures* by including madness into the postulations on nonsense and meaning-making practices within the text and by incorporating the conceptualization of interpretation that founds auto-theory, a growing field of feminist hermeneutics, to consider the creation of a ‘mad hermeneutics.’

This collection is an addition to the existing work on *Alice in Wonderland* and its sequels, adaptations, and appropriations, and helps readers to have a more comprehensive view of the extent to which the Alice story world (like many other canonical texts) is vast and always growing. Carroll’s Victorian texts have accompanied us during the past century and a half, establishing roots in (and reflecting) our culture throughout the globe with their numerous versions in different media. The volume in your hands will help you navigate and interpret such a process and evolution, and become ‘curioser and curioser’ about such an expanding cultural phenomenon.

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