New Academia: An International Journal of English Language, Literature and Literary Theory

(Online ISSN 2347-2073) **Vol. IV Issue III, July 2015**

CHILDHOOD, ADULTHOOD AND LANGUAGE: THE CRUX OF NONSENSE IN LEWIS CARROLL'S *ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND*

Sharanya Dutta
Junior Research Fellow (U.G.C.)
Department of English
University of Calcutta, India

Abstract

The Victorian passion for order and classification, the valorizing of scientific principles with the accompanying sense that there are rules and truths to be discovered, is about a sense of certainty – a certainty in which everyone is capable of participating. The rules of logic are viewed as the rules of science, and the irrational and random are threatening, creating the same anxiety and resultant desire to impose "enlightened" Victorian values that motivated missionaries and colonialists. In Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Alice's chief illusion concerning both language and life in general is that they are based on a coherent, consistent, inherently meaningful system which, if followed, allows one to control one's destiny. Carroll blasts this illusion by demonstrating repeatedly the arbitrary, even chaotic, nature of language. By shrinking adult figures to Alice's size and often smaller, Carroll creates a counterpart of childhood in which the child must relate to the inhabitants of the fantasy world who cannot linguistically relate to her. In Carroll's nonsense, therefore, language is a means of gaining power, of achieving social communication, of ordering one's world, and perhaps most importantly, of establishing one's individual identity. It is the chief component which nonsense is made of.

'If there's no meaning in it,' said the King, 'that saves a world of trouble, you know, as we needn't try to find any.' (Carroll 130)

Language is the chief component of nonsense when the register of childhood achieves compression of discursive space created by adulthood. Jacqueline Flescher states, "It is the existent or implicit order which distinguishes nonsense from the absurd. It is the departure from this order which distinguishes nonsense from sense." (128-129) While exploring the new world, Alice comes across instances of chaos and anarchy which she dismisses in her instinctive, self-preserving way. This governs the structure of *Alice's Adventures in*

Wonderland. There are nuances in Alice's role that demand careful scrutiny. The novel invites the reader to identify with Alice but only to a certain extent. The emphasis on her complacency, her self-absorption and her obsession with rules and regulations necessitates the reader's adoption of a more distant or cautious reading strategy. Still, it is the reader who responds more fervently to the threats she faces, especially those which challenge her language and logic, than she does herself. Lacking her safeguards, most notably her incomprehension of the possibility of her own death, the reader is actually in a more vulnerable position. This accounts for the dualism in Alice's role: the reader's sense of security being dependent on her security, she is the reader's protector; but at the same time she is the destroyer of the reader's most treasured ideas.

In Alice we find the virtues of a child as well as the defects of an adult. Her identification with society and the forces of order are all the more striking because she often fails to understand the maxims she happily parrots. It is to be noticed how, in the paragraphs which follow her outburst, the text deflects the reader's concern for Alice's loneliness by introducing the white glove, only to reintroduce and even heighten this anxiety when Alice barely manages "to avoid shrinking away altogether". (Carroll 16) Alice complains to the Duchess that she "didn't know that cats *could* grin" (Carroll 58). Perhaps the text is implying that Alice feels she can always "find herself", whether "in" or "out of" existence. (Carroll 16) She first challenges the king's ruling that all persons a mile high should leave the courtroom (Alice grows considerably larger while watching the trial).

In the following chapter the Duck makes an attempt to elaborate on the meaning of "it" within the linguistic construction "found it advisable" (Carroll 23) and thereby inadvertently raises an essential issue, the relationship, if there is one, between language and reality, between the word and that which it represents, and the way in which an individual's own experiences and inclinations can influence this connection. This utterance, again private language, is nevertheless Alice's own thoughts. The Victorian passion for order and classification, the valorizing of scientific principles with the accompanying sense that there are rules and truths to be discovered, is about a sense of certainty – a certainty in which everyone is capable of participating. No attempt is made to show her as having an egalitarian bent of mind: even the thought of being Mabel frightens her, for that would require her to "go and live in the poky little house, and have next to no toys to play with." (Carroll 16)

Many of the Wonderland creatures, whether they are talking animals, nursery rhyme characters, or creatures of myth, fulfil the classic Freudian definition of the uncanny as "in reality neither new or foreign, but something familiar and old-established in the mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression" (Freud 394). Daniel Bivona casts Alice as a "child-imperialist", who will not make sense out of Wonderland because she does not want to, and because she feels that it should conform to her proper British notions of rules and order. In this sense, the figure of the cat, displaced and disguised within its grin, expresses the

idea of incommensurability in the sense that the cat's outlandish, meaningless grin has nothing in common with an ordinary cat and indicates no discernible feeling (generating contradictory states between disembodied "anger" and "pleasure").

Critics who are fond of comparing nonsense to dreams often argue that the conclusion of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is arbitrary, that it ends, not out of formal or aesthetic appropriateness, but simply because it *does*. Alice does not speak the same language as the Wonderland characters, and few make the attempt to learn the necessary codes of her language to understand Alice. However, she finally has enough of Wonderland's nonsense when the Queen insists on sentencing before hearing the verdict. And the legal system is signified by such trappings and procedures as the wig of the King/judge and the presence in court of a jurybox full of Wonderland residents. Furthermore, much of the conversation is itself about language, with Alice's poems and speech providing a frequent source of debate. Again, her role as an outsider conflicts with Wonderland's sense of justice.

The monarchy is represented by the Kings and Queens. Wonderland contains the full spectrum of the British class system. Alice pronounces to everyone in the courtroom, "The idea of having the sentence first!" (Carroll 132) This heterogeneous figure of tea time expresses a paradox where the formal, punctual customs of the tea party are painfully incommensurable with the perpetual demand of the absence of time (generating contradictory states of the Hatter and Hare's position at the table, which exhausts the Dormouse). Alice's physical growth symbolizes her linguistic development of articulating her own thoughts, though she fails at explaining them to others. But all is forgotten with the mere mention of the garden.

Like a poorly constructed mathematical problem, the trial has no correct solution, and the board in the end is simply wiped clean. Alice does at times become upset by what she encounters; in fact, immediately after the show of equanimity in

> Dear, dear! How queer everything is to-day! And yesterday things went on just as usual. I wonder if I've been changed in the night? Let me think: was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not the same, the next question is, Who in the world am I? Ah, *that's* the great puzzle! (Carroll 14)

she suddenly bursts into tears, crying: "I do wish they would put their heads down! I am so very tired of being all alone here!" (Carroll 16) Alice first encounters the Cheshire cat in the Duchess' house, where it sits grinning. The limitations of Alice's logic also often protect her from comprehending potentially devastating consequences. British customs are both satirized and simultaneously held up as the ultimate standard by which all things must be judged. But the child is far more likely to be unsettled by the behaviour of these creatures in Wonderland, where they treat her in unexpected, often blatantly rude, ways. It is in this manner that the

figure of tea-time is displaced and disguised by the maddening and perpetual sliding of the guests around the table.

The final chapters of the work, which occur inside the long-anticipated garden, elaborate on what Alice has both lost and gained by her rejection of Wonderland; it is here that the joyous side of Wonderland's madness is most clearly and fully expressed. The rules of logic are viewed as the rules of science, and the irrational and random are threatening, creating the same anxiety and resultant desire to impose "enlightened" Victorian values that motivated missionaries and colonialists. Thus, her potentially frightening experience with the pigeon, where her neck grows so long that "it kept getting entangled among the branches, and every now and then she had to stop and untwist it" (Carroll 52) is balanced by her first truly successful, self-directed change of height. Since the condition of measurable time dissolves, "tea time" is no longer a special occasion, but a permanent state.

The Queen intimidates Alice until she realizes that the Queen herself is nothing but a piece of paper. But, in the words of James R. Kincaid, this view "has oversimplified both Carroll's rhetoric and his vision." (Kincaid 93) Alice, as the narrative reveals through her thought processes, deliberates lying on the ground in submission to the Queen. Rather than the variable size of Alice and the Cheshire cat, in this case, time is itself variable: in one sense, it constantly conforms or metamorphoses into one time (tea time, six o'clock), and in another sense has been "murdered" and has no form. The audience gets the first glimpse of Alice verbalizing her thoughts when she adds to herself "Why, they're only a pack of cards, after all. I needn't be afraid of them!" (Carroll 81) The tradition of *Alice* criticism, however, neglects this view and maintains that the titular protagonist represents a favoured perspective, moving at times to the extreme essentialism of W. H. Auden who claims Alice to be "an adequate symbol for what every human being should try to be like." (Auden 12)

It is what they say, as well as the fact that they say it, that Alice finds so disturbing. Class division is a matter of the utmost importance in Victorian society; Alice, the upper middle class child, readily perceives an Other in Mabel, who belongs to the lower classes. In fact, she forgets her conversation skills and indignantly responds to the queen's inquiries about the gardeners and demands for execution. At one point,

> [The cat] vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone. 'Well! I've often seen a cat without a grin,' thought Alice; 'but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in my life!' (Carroll 66)

Again, these instances show Alice can point out faulty logic but not articulate her thoughts. Her final test, and the one which fully convinces her, is her attempt to repeat "How does the little–." As White notes, "the most significant moment in cognitive development occurs when [the child] begins to use language not only for communication with others but also as a tool for thought."

When immediately reprimanded by the Queen, Alice defies her and rebukes the "Off with her head." In many respects her journey through Wonderland can be viewed as her search for a "book of rules" that will rationalize the weird behaviour of its inhabitants. Placed in a different context, the arbitrary and peculiar nature of the nineteenth-century British system becomes evident. Though articulated, she shares her thoughts with no one.

Alice's chief illusion concerning both language and life in general is that they are based on a coherent, consistent, inherently meaningful system which, if followed, allows one to control one's destiny. This becomes further complicated when Alice encounters the cat again after leaving the house, who intermittently appears and vanishes. A menacing creature, the ruler of Wonderland threatens death to all who oppose her. The experiences include both physical threats and intellectual attacks; but while Alice can deal fairly well with the former, her language and logic are not sufficiently strong to withstand the latter. Alice's journey in Wonderland is to learn how to express her thoughts verbally on her own. Confusion reigns as she mixes up meanings and recites her lessons incorrectly. How little all her previous metamorphoses have affected Alice is exemplified in her reaction when she finally does achieve her correct size, as well as in her willingness to "shrink" herself to nine inches so quickly after her return to "normalcy". And yet it is this limitation that protects Alice, and through her, the reader, from being overwhelmed by the full impact of her experiences.

She is berated and belittled but she endures it all simply because she still cannot fully understand them and is still having difficulties with language puns that do not translate for her. When Alice asks what they do when they come full circle, they change the subject, perhaps because they are in denial about re-using the same tea cups (and the extent of their madness), or do not want to admit that tea time could possibly be suspended so that they could re-locate, rest, or get more tea.

The action of falling down the rabbit hole ensures Alice's access to Wonderland, a world where both natural and cultural laws differ radically from the world of her origin, but she is by no means detached from her past. The connection between language, meaning and identity is established early in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* when Alice first tries to solve the question, "Who in the world am I?" by testing to see "if I know all the things I used to know." When the Mock Turtle tells about his education, he is appalled that Alice questions the Mock Turtle's addressing his turtle teacher as a tortoise:

> 'Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one?' Alice asked. 'We called him Tortoise because he taught us,' said the Mock Turtle angrily. 'Really you are very dull!' (Carroll 98)

She does not even comprehend the word play between "tortoise" and "taught us." Instead, she continues her adventure to endure other linguistic challenges to prepare her for a final meeting with the Royal Hearts who speak nonsense. Perhaps the most memorable secondary character in Wonderland, the Mad Hatter, first appears at the "mad tea party"; this instance in

fact illustrates a peculiar variety of the paradox of incommensurability where the figure of (tea) time is essentially extended indefinitely. And in a final act of incredible irony she uses language to save herself from her dream – "Who cares for you . . . You're nothing but a pack of cards!" (Carroll 132)

It is interesting to note that Alice has no problems in recognizing her "usual height". In fact, the King of Hearts makes excuses when Alice insults the Queen at the croquet match, saying: "Consider, my dear: she is only a child!" (Carroll 82). Of course, logically, "the table was a large one," and there are plenty of empty seats, so Alice "indignantly" sits down. (Carroll 67) Lewis Carroll, in his *Alice* books, illuminates children as speakers of another language by translocating his central character in a foreign environment and presenting one child's path of maturation both linguistically and physically. Once she can verbalize her thoughts and understand the meaning of her words, Alice can leave Wonderland: "Who cares for *you*?" said Alice (she had grown to her full size by this time). "You're nothing but a pack of cards!" (Carroll 132).

After some experimentation, Alice eventually learns how to control her changes in size. Instead of idolizing her and hiding her negative qualities, the narrator from the very beginning offers a realistic portrayal of her character (though literary nonsense implies a departure from realism). This notion interestingly contradicts and complicates the more traditional view of the books, which is that Alice is simply trying to impose some kind of order on a rule-less and illogical society with no system of its own. The characters are just cards and later pawns, players of the linguistic game. When approached by the royal procession, Alice enters into a conversation with the Queen when she identifies herself by her name, her linguistic symbol. If one were to level a single charge against Alice, to represent the implications (or source) of her occasional vanity, pedantry, class-consciousness and false sentimentality, one might simply describe her as self-absorbed, an element of her character that results in a failure of imagination.

Alice is able to suppress her frustration with not understanding the creatures of Wonderland until the final courtroom scene of the text. Alice can finally understand that all of the adult figures are also learning the rules of language. Furthermore, the grin itself is meaningless since the cat, by its own admission, is "mad" and expresses pleasure and anger in conflicting ways, remarking to Alice that "I growl when I'm pleased, and wag my tail when I'm angry. Therefore I'm mad" (Carroll 64). As soon as they see her, they all exclaim that there is "no room." In fact, she is able to silence the Queen into submission forcing the ruler to turn away from the child.

Alice meets royalty, an upper middle-class gentleman in the person of the White Rabbit, and Bill and Pat, the animal workmen with distinctly working-class or Irish accents. This remains her problem, and also perhaps her greatest defence, throughout her adventure. The death jokes are evidently the most glaring specimens of the numerous assaults on Alice's

continued existence. Alice loudly declares to all present that the trial is "stuff and nonsense." In this section Alice faces a series of increasingly strong attacks against her language and logic that finally bring about her abrupt departure from the tea party. Carroll blasts this illusion by demonstrating repeatedly the arbitrary, even chaotic, nature of language. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* can perhaps best be viewed as having a tripartite structure. In this case, Alice arrives at the party to find the March Hare, the Hatter, and a Dormouse sitting together at the very corner of a large table.

The book commences with Alice trying desperately to understand the customs of this peculiar new world in which she has found herself, examining and speculating even as she falls down the rabbit hole. Instead, it forces Alice to confront how easily the prized rationality of the grown-ups who have been trying to educate her in their ways of thinking can be reduced to irrationality. In Carroll's nonsense, language is a means of gaining power, of achieving social communication, of ordering one's world, and perhaps most importantly, of establishing one's individual identity.

Yet, if this scene were indicative of Alice's complete articulation of her thoughts, then Alice would have awakened from her dream at this moment. The Mock Turtle and the Gryphon, both of whom enjoy dominating the young girl, force her to endure their lessons. Then, she confronts the Queen when the dictator pronounces the Knave guilty before reviewing all of the evidence. Carroll echoes Wordsworth's narrator in *We Are Seven*; though children, the characters cannot understand Alice, and she is tired of trying to explain her language codes to them. Despite Alice's sudden linguistic growth, she still has problems with language relativity. As soon as she comes to understand that none is available, she draws support from her previous conception of reality and gives up her dream. While this may be usual behaviour for a cat, the figure of the cat's grin expresses both feelings at once. Alice's understanding of everyday logic compares with Wonderland logic as the mathematical logic of scholars like Carroll compares with legal reasoning. Alice attempts to impose a logical order on a distinctly illogical system – one in which the laws of time and physics are suspended, and where the legal system itself, as personified by the Queen of Hearts, is taken to the extreme. Emotion tends to threaten the balance required by nonsense, and the technique used in this situation is simple – arrangements are made in order to distract Alice's (and the reader's) attention. When she tries to devise a plan that will allow her to enter the garden, she wishes for "a book of rules for shutting people up like telescopes". (Carroll 8) It ends with the trial of the Jack of Hearts, which the now-confident logic of Alice, grown accustomed to Wonderland at last, is able to disrupt completely.

Her positive traits are certainly her honesty, curiosity, impetuosity and common sense, all of which find expression in the first few paragraphs of "Down the Rabbit Hole". Alice's firm commitment to unproductive social and intellectual customs shows the degree of indoctrination by adults. The first four chapters initiate the reader to Wonderland, establish

Alice's essential reliability as a guide, and introduce language as a crucial element in the dialectic between order and disorder. Ironically, he often accomplishes this by having the Wonderland creatures apparently represent the side of logic. Only the Caterpillar translates her language but only by telepathic means. Alice encounters characters from the tales she is told in the nursery, and living versions of the familiar objects with which her home is filled, like playing cards. Bivona and Kelly get to the heart of Alice's uneasiness with the matter.

Her declaration indicates a superior attitude towards and a dismissal of her Wonderland counterparts. They are children with puffed up attitudes, bullies of the streets, but children nonetheless. Alice comes to perceive this attack against her language as a threat to her identity and sanity: "It's really dreadful . . . the way all the creatures argue. It's enough to drive one crazy!" (Carroll 56) As Jacqueline Flescher has noted, "Conversation, or more precisely, argument, is the essential vehicle of nonsense if *Alice*." (Flescher 137) For a child may quickly adapt to the notion of talking animals, which after all, forms a portion of most children's fantasy life through nursery poems and stories. The cat has an unclassifiable, rapidly changing and even amorphous aspect which does not conform to the rules she knows about cats, but seems nevertheless to be a property of it. She begins with Arithmetic but is not too upset when she gets her numbers all wrong, for "the Multiplication-Table doesn't signify." (Carroll 16)

In Wonderland, Alice, only seven years old, has learned the basic structures of language, but not the code of the adult language and cannot converse effectively with the inhabitants of the fantasy world to ask for help leaving Wonderland. The reader travels with Alice on her journey, at times separated intellectually from her by his or her awareness of the forces that invite her to act as she does, but ultimately moved by the same pressures, pressures which often carry both Alice and the reader to the brink of anarchy, only to whisk them back to temporary safety, so that both can play and be played with yet a while longer. This system is harsh, random, and without any apparent logical basis.

Since it is *always* tea time, the guests at the tea-party are constantly shifting their seats, and this is why they insisted that there was "no room" at such a large table. This act is the true climax of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, in that Alice is never again as vulnerable as she was up to this point. Though Alice learns how to express her thoughts, Carroll does not provide further dialogue with the Wonderland creatures to suggest that they understand Alice's outburst. The iconic episode with the "Cheshire cat" intensifies the paradox of incommensurability that abounds in Wonderland. In this instance, the condition of the cat which at least gave its protean grin some structure dissolves, and the figure of the grinning cat is thus displaced and disguised by the figure of the grin "without a cat."

Alice simply cannot modify her assumptions and language to fit her audience. But what they do not acknowledge is that Wonderland is governed according to British notions of rules and order, although British notions presented in a distorted manner. This transformed

logic has a greater capacity of provoking anxiety because it is not alien. As she starts to assimilate language into a preconceived language structure – she is able to determine the Queen's linguistic demands as nonsense – Alice becomes empowered by her linguistic skills which allows her to stand up to an authority that does not care for her welfare. Chapters Five through Seven clarify the relationship between language, identity and meaning. Asking her to recite lessons she cannot remember, they inadvertently teach her how to hold her tongue in conversation, how to tell a story, and how to be humble.

Richard Kelly sums up this viewpoint by saying "[s]he resembles a Victorian anthropologist, an explorer encountering strange cultures that she chooses not to understand." (Kelly 16) Alice is no longer speaking to herself or submissively or moderately. Wonderland logic is no longer threatening to her, but demonstrably flawed, and Alice is able to use those systemic weaknesses to undermine the system. When, instead of reciting Watts' moralistic and tedious little poem, Alice says "How doth the little crocodile" in a voice "hoarse and strange", she is finally persuaded that she is no longer herself: " 'I'm sure those are not the right words,' said poor Alice, and her eyes filled with tears again as she went on, 'I must be Mabel after all.' " (Carroll 16) In Chapter Four, for example, when the white rabbit throws pebbles to try to force her to leave his house and pebbles turn to little cakes, Alice has the following "bright idea": " 'If I eat one of these cakes,' she thought, 'It's sure to make *some* change in my size; and, as it can't possibly make me larger, it must make me smaller, I suppose.' " (Carroll 38) In this instance Alice is lucky, for the cakes do have the desired effect, and she goes on her way, never realizing how close she had come to disaster. Without taking sides in this debate, I would like to focus on the powerful ambivalence of the reader's, no less than the narrator's, attitude towards Alice. The talking animals she encounters are either domestic pets, or birds, frogs and rabbits, such as she might have encountered in her Oxford garden or its environs.

Language defines the boundaries of the human imagination, and, hence, of the self. From the Victorian viewpoint, in which order is valued, and rules reassure that society will continue to be an integral whole, this premise is an extremely threatening one. For it is chiefly through attacks against Alice's language that Wonderland exposes the absurd foundations of her world. Nothing could be further from the truth; all of the narrative functions to prepare the reader for the conclusion, which is but the culminating expression of a series of tensions that Carroll balances with great sophistication. In fact, one may be tempted to see her behaviour, particularly in the opening chapter of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, as mimicking that of the adults of her prelapsarian world and thereby illustrating how strong the bond is. Even though she defies the cards, she cannot verbalize her feelings about the injustice of the trial. Her sudden linguistic growth stems from her comprehension of her own words, not just those words of others.

This is certainly the case with Alice who, in spite of her good intentions, alienates all of the creatures she meets in the pool of tears with her constant references to the killing of animals. An examination of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* reveals, however, that Alice herself almost always responds to these threats with remarkable aplomb, as do the characters in Edward Lear's limericks. After becoming acquainted, the Hatter and Hare explain that one day the queen proclaimed that the Hare had "murdered time," at which point the Hare went mad. Lewis Carroll is much ahead of his age in his sense of how language, rather than furthering communication between individuals, more often acts to isolate them.

By trying to force Alice to make her language logical, they reveal the untenability of her position. In this scene, Alice realizes the Knave is being sentenced before he is found guilty. But, the true test of her linguistic abilities appears when she holds court with the Queen of Hearts. The Queen's croquet game, with its flamingo-mallets and its constantly moving hoops; the caucus-race, which has no apparent end or goal, and for which everyone must be awarded a prize; and the trial of the Knave of Hearts, with its peculiar parodies of British legal procedure, all would make sense in the context of a Wonderland culture that Alice does not even attempt to comprehend. The Wonderland citizens parallel the nineteenth century child's struggle with adults. By shrinking adult figures to Alice's size and often smaller, Carroll creates a counterpart of childhood in which the child must relate to the inhabitants of the fantasy world who cannot linguistically relate to her. Though both speak English, Alice is seen as an outsider as she learns, through conversations with her adult counterparts, how to verbalize her thoughts. Thus, language, caught in the dialectic of childhood and adulthood, serves not as an instrument of nonsense but as the chief component which nonsense is made of.

Works Cited:

Auden, W. H. "Todays Wonder-World Needs Alice." *Aspects of Alice: Lewis Carroll's Dreamchild as seen through the Critics' Looking-Glasses, 1865-1971*. Ed. Robert S. Phillips. New York: Vanguard, 1971. 3-12. *Google Books*. Web. 22 July 2013.

Bivona, Daniel. "Alice the Child-Imperialist and the Games of Wonderland." *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 41.2 (Sep. 1986): 143-171. *JSTOR*. Web. 17 July 2013.

Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. London: Elsevier Phaidon, 1975. Print.

Flescher, Jacqueline. "The Language of Nonsense in Alice." *Yale French Studies*, No. 43, The Child's Part (1969): 128-144. *JSTOR*. Web. 17 July 2013.

Freud, Sigmund. "The 'Uncanny'." *Sigmund Freud: Collected Papers*. Ed. James Strachey. Vol. 4. New York: Basic Books Inc., 1959. 368-407. Print.

Kelly, Richard. Introduction. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. By Lewis Carroll. 2nd ed. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2011. 9-50. Print.

Kincaid, James R. "Alice's Invasion of Wonderland." *PMLA*, 88.1 (Jan. 1973): 92-99. *JSTOR*. Web. 17 July 2013.

Tigges, Wim. *An Anatomy of Literary Nonsense*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988. *Ebrary*. Web. 22 July 2013.

Wordsworth, William. "We Are Seven." *The Collected Poems of William Wordsworth*. Ware: Wordsworth Poetry Library, 2006. 96-97. Print.