The Worlds Between, Above and Below: 'Growing Up' and 'Falling Down' in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Stardust*

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that *The Worlds Between, Above and Below: 'Growing Up' and 'Falling Down' in* Alice in Wonderland *and* Stardust is my own work, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of my dissertation is to conduct an intertextual study of two fantasy texts — *Alice in Wonderland* by Victorian author Lewis Carroll, and *Stardust* by postmodern fantasy author Neil Gaiman — and their filmic re-visionings by Tim Burton and Matthew Vaughn respectively. In scrutinising these texts, drawing on insights from feminist, children's literature and intertextual theorists, the actions of 'growing up' and 'falling down' are shown to be indicative of a paradoxical *becoming* of the text's central female protagonists, Alice and Yvaine. The social mechanisms of the Victorian age that educate the girl-child into *becoming* accepting of their domestic roles ultimately alienate her from her true state of being. While she may garner some sense of importance within the imaginary realms of fantasy narratives, as these female protagonists demonstrate, she is reduced to the position of submissive in reality – in 'growing up', she must assume a 'fallen down' state in relation to the male.

KEYWORDS

Victorian womanhood
Fairy tales
Fantasy literature
Portals
Woman as 'Other'
Growing up and falling down
Self-alienation
Neil Gaiman
Lewis Carroll

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INTRODUCTION

The Victorian period presents the critic with a fascinating array of social polarities. For example, class divisions during the period inscribe a vast economic chasm between the pauper and the aristocrat; political divisions are evident in the conquest of empire and the right to self-determination, as seen, for example, in the desires for Irish Home Rule.

The focus of my study falls on the polarity between growing up and falling down in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1897)[1] and Neil Gaiman's *Stardust* (1999), as well as the filmic re-visionings of these works by Tim Burton (2010) and Matthew Vaughn (2007)[2] respectively. Within these texts, growing up and falling down are symbolic actions that are strongly influenced by social expectation, and, in turn, have a strong influence on the central female protagonists: Alice in the *Alice* texts and Yvaine in *Stardust*.

I have chosen to explore Carroll's and Gaiman's novels because they represent the Victorian context of their stories from unique perspectives, while, at the same time, incorporating the same symbolic actions within their narratives. For Carroll, his *Alice* texts are immersed in the spirit of the age in which they were penned. Gaiman, on the other hand, provides a retrospective of the Victorian age that is both aware of the historical

[1] Following the convention adopted in the *Annotated Alice* (2000), I refer to the combined volume of Carroll's works, entitled *Alice in Wonderland*, as 'the *Alice* texts'. This includes *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-glass.* I reserve the use of the title *Alice in Wonderland* for referring to the Burton film (2010).

[2] I see these four fantasy texts in two categories – the two original printed narratives of Carroll and Gaiman; and the two filmic texts which are inspired by, or adapted directly from, the original printed narratives.

context and able to transcend its influence because of his novel's postmodernist categorisation. Although *Stardust* was not written in the Victorian age, it is set within that period and depicts gender expectations that are rooted in Victorian times. Therefore, these novels, when analysed intertextually, provide a comprehensive understanding of how the actions of growing up and falling down influence the journeys of women in the Victorian period and in fantasy in general. In looking at their development as characters within a fantasy narrative, I will discuss key modes of gender socialisation that impact upon the characters as representatives of the Victorian age. I will also read these female protagonists as representatives of the larger social ideologies fostered by Victorian culture, and with echoes in present-day social mores. Gaiman highlights these issues more than one hundred years after the *Alice* texts were published. Yvaine's sacrifice of herself not only indicates that women in the Victorian age should submit, but, since she is immortal, demonstrates that such social expectations are carried forward in time to the present day and beyond.

The Alice character represented in Carroll's *Alice* texts is an amalgam of several 'Alices' he had known – girl-children who had captured his imagination. The curious child who falls down the Rabbit Hole and through the looking-glass is imbued with elements of all their personalities, but none of these girl-children is more associated with the *Alice* texts than Alice Liddell. In Carroll's *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, the precursor to Carroll's published *Alice* texts, the final words surround a photographic

image of Liddell taken by Carroll himself. Donald Rackin's essay, 'Love and Death in Carroll's *Alices*', discusses the impact that the inclusion of this image has. He writes:

> Through the loving devotion of a brilliant and meticulous photographer, Alice here somehow defies Time – as if some mad inventor from Alice's dream worlds had, with the magic of his words and art, found a way in her waking world to defy gravity and stop aging and death by means of an improbable Wonderland light-machine and some Looking-Glass Roman-cement.
>
> (1982:44-45)

The adventures narrated in both *Alice* texts are initiated by the central protagonist's own curiosity. In *Alice in Wonderland*, lured by a White Rabbit with a pocket watch exclaiming the lateness of the hour (Carroll, 1992:7-8), Alice falls down the Rabbit Hole and into Wonderland. Here, the strength of Alice's developing logic, an intellectual capacity fostered in the real Victorian world above, is tested against the illogical and enigmatic thought-processes of Wonderland's inhabitants. Alice's own adaptability enables her to triumph over her nay-sayers, turning them into 'nothing but a pack of cards' (Carroll, 1992:97) and allowing her to return to the world above.

In *Through the Looking-glass*, Alice's musings about the house on the other side of the looking-glass once again gives her access to Wonderland. Her adventures take the form of a quest, moving through seven ranks before assuming the rank and authority of queen. However, Alice finds no sense of satisfaction in her rule, as logic is turned upside

down by the Red and White Queen. Queen Alice, frustrated by the world of chivalric quests undertaken by inadequate knights, and higgledy-piggledy nursery rhymes, whose meaning in the world above is undone in the world below, returns to the Victorian side of the looking-glass, wondering if what she had experienced was nothing but a dream. The fantastical world of Wonderland that Alice falls into and which she is eventually able to dismiss as nonsense is the very world that enables her to grow up and return to the real world, where she more readily accepts society's design for her. Her journey into the world of fantasy and back into the socially regulated world of gender expectations forms the basis of analysis in subsequent chapters.

Gaiman's *Stardust*, though a retrospective of the Victorian age, manifests a strikingly similar process of gender socialisation within its narrative. Tristran Thorne is a young and ambitious man who, to win the hand of his beloved, Victoria, crosses the boundary wall between the Victorian town of Wall and enters into the fantastical realm of Faerie. His quest is to retrieve a fallen star, named Yvaine, who is thrust out of her position in the night sky by a stone cast by the dying Lord of Stormhold in order to initiate a quest of his own design. He has willed dominion over Stormhold to whoever of his sons finds the stone he sent into the night sky, and which struck the star. Several quests intersect in this narrative, all centred on claiming the star and what she possesses as a prize – Tristran desires the star to take back to Victoria, the sons of the Lord of Stormhold are bent on finding the stone in her possession, and three aging witches, collectively

called the Lilim, want to possess the heart of the star which promises youth and beauty to whoever eats it.

Adversity is overcome and Tristran and Yvaine fall in love. Tristran discovers that he is the rightful ruler of Stormhold when Yvaine gives the stone to him, enabling him to fulfil his destiny. The Lilim's quest is thwarted when Yvaine, having fallen in love with Tristran, gives her heart to him, and eventually marries her erstwhile captor. The traditional fairy tale ending of 'happily ever after' is undone in this narrative when Gaiman does not conclude the tale with the marriage of Tristran and Yvaine. The Epilogue reveals Tristran's death, and Yvaine, as an immortal star, is left behind to carry on the legacy of his rule, never to return to the night sky.

The destinies of the two characters: the return of Alice to the real-world context of Victorian England in the *Alice* texts, and Yvaine having to remain below within a fantastical realm that is strongly influenced by the Victorian world beyond the boundary of the wall, demonstrate the power of gender socialisation. Further, they point to the necessity for readers to better understand the context and norms into which the characters are socialised.

Central to my study on gender socialisation is how two distinct oppositions are highlighted in this process – the paradoxical worlds of the child and the adult, and the separate spheres reserved for the girl-child and the boy-child. Such an ideology of gender separateness relies on the Freudian

mindset of ‘Anatomy is Destiny’ ('The Dissolution of the Oedipal Complex', 1976:320), particularly with regard to the girl-child’s socialisation in Victorian times. As Michael S. Kimmel observes in *The Gendered Society*:

> The nineteenth-century ideology of separate spheres justified gender inequality based on punitive natural differences between the sexes. What was normative, enforced by sanction, was asserted to be normal, part of the nature of things. Women have spent the better part of a century making clear that such an ideology did violence to their experiences, effacing the work outside the home that women actually performed, and enforcing a definition of femininity that allowed only partial expression of their humanity.
>
> (2000:268)

Kimmel sees the fracturing of self as essential to this Victorian ideology and goes on to explain how a narrow set of prescriptive values were promoted by adults and taught to children as lessons in verse. U.C. Knoepflmacher, in his article ‘The Balancing of Child and Adult: An Approach to Victorian Fantasies for Children’, comments on the child/adult dynamic when he writes:

> Much has been written on the socializing aspects of children’s literature, on this or that classic’s promotion of maturity and healthy growth. Yet children’s books, especially works of fantasy, rely just as heavily on the artist’s ability to tap a rich reservoir of regressive yearnings. Such works can be said to hover between states of perception that William Blake had labelled innocence and experience. From the vantage point of experience, an adult imagination re-creates an earlier childhood self in order to steer it towards the reality principle. From the vantage point of innocence, however, that childhood agent may resist the imposition of adult values and stubbornly demand that its desire to linger in a realm of magic and wonder be satisfied. Like Blake’s two “contrary states,” these conflicting impulses thus remain locked into a dynamic that

> acknowledges the simultaneous yet opposing demands of growth and arrest.
>
> (1983:497)

Knoepflmacher notes that the child/adult dynamic is influenced by two opposing movements — one progressive and the other regressive. According to Jacqueline Rose, progressive and regressive movement is governed by the realisation that fantasy literature, and by extension literature for children, are adult-coded narratives. In Rose's revolutionary text, *The Case of Peter Pan, or the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, she compares this child/adult dynamic to the power inequality between the coloniser and the colonised, where the adventures that characterise literature for children may be seen to be 'the inheritors of a fully colonialist concept of development, and a highly specific conception of the child' (1984:29). The child can, therefore, be seen as a colonised 'text' on which adult prescription is imprinted. For the girl-child, this adult-imprinting is given an extra dimension in that, in a patriarchal society, growing up will ultimately require submission to masculine authority. Feminist critic Carole Pateman supports this when she states, 'The patriarchal construction of the difference between masculinity and femininity is the political difference between freedom and subjection' (1988:207). Gaiman's *Stardust*, while set in Victorian England, demonstrates that social relations characterised by male dominance are accessible and relevant to contemporary audiences.

In the light of the paradoxical social requirement for Victorian women both to grow up and fall down, I will explore three key areas of the texts in this dissertation. These are: the othering of Alice and Yvaine; the connection between Victorian society and fairy tales; and the portals of the Rabbit-Hole, the wall and the mirror as bridges between fantasy and reality. Each of these forms the focus of a chapter of my dissertation.

In Chapter One, I will examine how Victorian social expectation dictated the specific domestic role that women were meant to play as Coventry Patmore's quintessential 'Angel in the House' (1854). The fulfilment of this role required women to relinquish a sense of self-determination and submit to masculine-devised dictates. Within this framework of understanding, the spatiotemporal mechanisms of self-alienation will be explored, specifically as these mechanisms impact upon Alice and Yvaine in Carroll's and Gaiman's narratives respectively. This chapter will incorporate insight from feminist critics such as Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, Carolyn Heilbrun and Judith Butler, as well as Victorian scholars such as Richard Altick and Charles Petrie. Building on my analysis of the characters' representation in the primary narratives, I will also scrutinise the portrayal of Alice and Yvaine in the filmic adaptations.

Fundamental to the analysis of these characters within a spatiotemporal framework is Julia Kristeva's model of horizontal and vertical coordinates (1969:145), which will, in turn, form the basis for Chapters Two and Three. Kristeva's model is represented as follows:

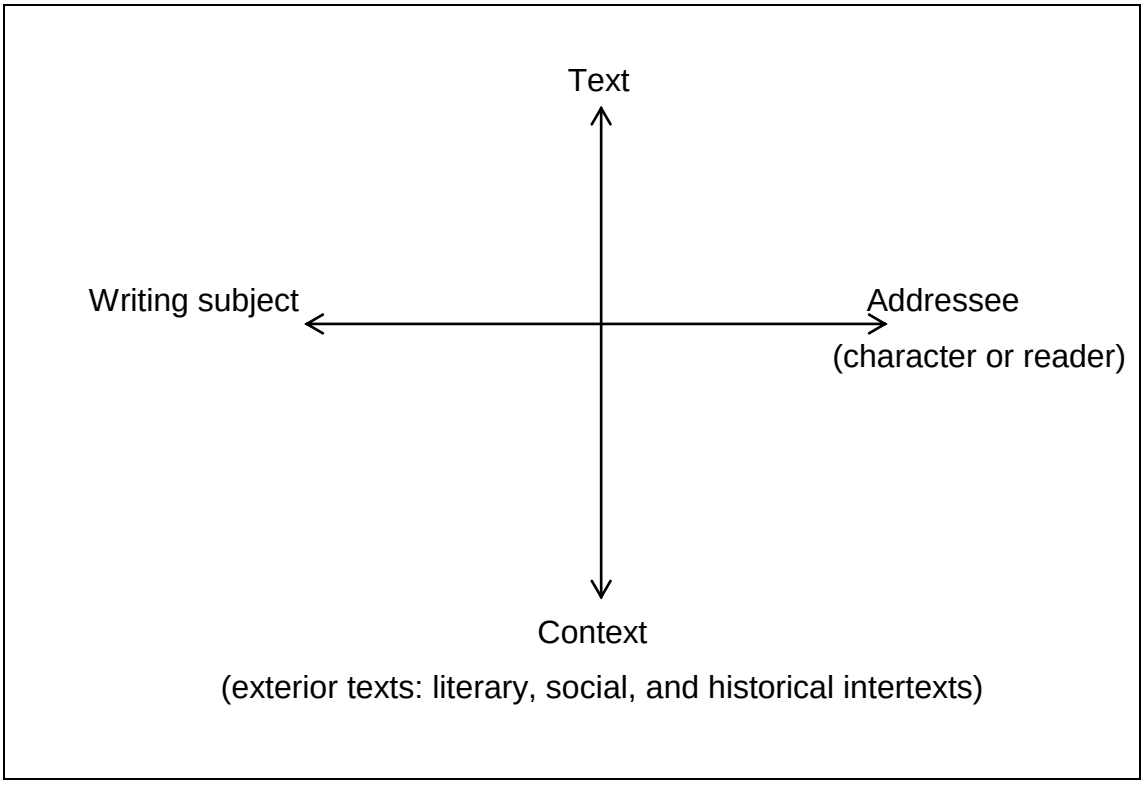

Figure 1. Kristeva's Horizontal and Vertical Coordinates (Friedman 1996:112)

My analysis of Victorian society and fairy tales in Chapter Two will use the text/context relationship, as shown in the vertical axis of Kristeva's model, in order to analyse the discursive and social methods of educating and socially conditioning a girl-child to assent to a specific social role. As I will show, the archetypes propounded by fairy tales promote a specific, submissive female role. Based on this insight, I will examine the *Alice* texts and *Stardust* in order to determine how these texts relate to the social mores of the Victorian age and to establish how the novels and films follow the conventions of fairy tales and literature for children. I read the *Alice* texts as adult-authored works for children, and to this extent I am indebted to children's literature critics such as Jack Zipes, Jacqueline Rose, Nina Auerbach and Lissa Paul. Carl Jung's categorisation of

archetypes – particularly the ‘animus’ and the ‘anima’ – is also useful in my analysis of the function of specific types of characters within fantasy narratives. For Jung, the anima was the female side of the soul, and his description of this archetype was commensurate with his understanding of ‘the Shadow’: dark, chaotic and irrational. This will be shown to apply to both Alice and Yvaine. I will demonstrate that Alice’s Wonderland with its irrational inhabitants, like Yvaine’s natural purpose to shine in the night sky and the Lilim in their dark palace, are all images that bear the influence of the anima. An understanding of the anima is essential to understanding the depiction of ‘Other’ in fantasy narratives, and will be counterbalanced against the depiction of ‘Self’ as indicative of the animus.

Throughout this dissertation, I use the generic term ‘fantasy’ to refer to a cluster of literary genres, including fairy tales, literature for children and romance narratives. This approach is supported by Gary K. Wolfe, who, in his essay ‘Fantasy from Dryden to Dunsany’, observes that ‘we can trace particular elements of [fantasy] to three important literary traditions which evolved during [the Victorian] period: the imaginary ‘private histories’… (in other words, the early novel), the popularity of the Gothic romance, and the renewal of interest in folk and fairy tales’ (2012:12). While *Stardust* may be regarded as a romance/fairy tale, and the *Alice* texts may be regarded as children’s literature, for the purposes of this study, all my primary texts are understood to be works of fantasy.

In Chapter Three, I will pursue the relationship between the 'writing subject' and the 'addressee' (Kristeva, 1986:36), as represented by the horizontal axis of Kristeva's model, in order to explore the actions of growing up and falling down as experienced in two opposed realms: the worlds of reality and fantasy. My analysis will demonstrate that these worlds or realms serve the same goal of socialising women, and that they are, in fact, dialectically related. Their synthesis is achieved, as Alice and Yvaine's *becoming* is ensured, because of the portals of the Rabbit-Hole, the wall and the mirror.

In addition to exploring the portrayal of Alice and Yvaine, I will also scrutinize the female antagonists or mirror opposites of these characters, particularly as their desires inform the corrupt pursuit of beauty and power. I will show how these desires, based on Victorian social expectation of an acceptable womanhood, are unhealthy, undesirable and ultimately rejected in their extreme — as represented by the Lilim and their pursuit for youth and beauty in *Stardust*, and the Queen of Hearts with her demonstration of absolute power in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.*

My understanding of Victorian womanhood and the symbolic value of the actions of growing up and falling down is best described as *becoming*.[3] The paradoxical nature of Victorian womanhood is initiated by the social mechanisms that facilitate this *becoming* — women are inducted into

[3] I use the word 'becoming' throughout as indicative of a social process outlined by Simone de Beauvoir in her work, *The Second Sex* (1973:301).

growing up in order to fall down and submit to a masculine-ordered value system. Carroll and Gaiman imply this significant and ubiquitous attitude towards women through the 'treatment' of Alice and Yvaine within their respective narratives Within this patriarchal value system, fairy tales, Victorian codes of conduct for women, verse and other texts all serve the purpose of socialising young girls into acceptable behaviour within Victorian society.

In *Moulding the Female Body in Victorian Fairy Tales and Sensation Novels*, Laurence Talairach-Vielmas argues that stories served an educational purpose in Victorian times, as demonstrated in the introductory poem of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*:

> As the introductory poem features a male narrator and female listeners, the tale functions as an educational story passed from one generation to the next and teaching little girls the precepts of the age.
>
> (2007:51)

Talairach-Vielmas's observation provides a significant starting point for analysing the *Alice* texts and *Stardust* texts. Growing up to assume a 'fallen down' state shows that, in order for girls to progress towards womanhood, they must ultimately regress.

'Progress' is both a noun and a verb, and may be defined as:

> *noun* "the process of improving or developing, or of getting nearer to achieving or completing something",
> or
> *verb* "movement forwards or towards a place."
>
> (Turnbull et al, 2010:1172)

‘Regress’, the antonym of ‘progress’, is a verb, and is defined as:

> *verb* “to return to an earlier or less advanced form or way of behaving.”
>
> (Turnbull et al, 2010:1239)

Progression and regression, as they relate to the psychological development of the girl-child, are also indicated in Sigmund Freud’s explanation of the dynamic between Eros and Thanatos, or the life and death instinct respectively. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud explains their dynamic in relation to psychoanalytical practices as follows:

> We, on the other hand, dealing not with the living substance but with the forces operating in it, have been led to distinguish two kinds of instincts: those which seek to lead what is living to death, and others, the sexual instincts, which are perpetually attempting and achieving a renewal of life.
>
> (1961:40)

Where Eros/Libido is a progressive instinct, driving existence forward into a tangible and substantial condition of Enlightenment, a progressive movement reserved almost exclusively for men during the Victorian Period, Thanatos is a regressive impulse pulling the subject back into the mystery of non-existence — the absence of substance.

These opposing instincts are fundamental to Alice's journey, for she is constantly aware of their influence in her development. They form the basis for her personal, conflicting psychological and emotional experience in her rite of passage toward adulthood. This is indicated, most notably, through the instructions to ‘DRINK ME’ and ‘EAT ME’ (Carroll, 1992:11-

12), which Carina Garland scrutinises in her article, 'Curious Appetites: Food, Desire, Gender and Subjectivity in Lewis Carroll's Alice Texts' (2008:22-39). However, as Simone de Beauvoir notes in *The Second Sex* (1949), Freud's method of psychoanalysis, and by inference his conceptualisation of Eros and Thanatos, are almost exclusively applied to the masculine rather than the feminine. As De Beauvoir states: 'In particular psychoanalysis fails to explain why woman is the *Other*. For Freud himself admits that the prestige of the penis is explained by the sovereignty of the father, and, as we have seen, he confesses that he is ignorant regarding the origin of male supremacy' (2002:477, original emphasis).[4]

Male supremacy is not only noted in aspects of the content of Carroll's and Gaiman's novels through the narrative journeys of Alice and Yvaine, but is inscribed in the fibre and origin of narrative, as outlined by Aristotle. According to Aristotle's *Poetics*, every historical journey or fictional narrative has three contributing elements that generate meaning or validity: a beginning, a middle and an end. Aristotle outlines the importance of particular elements that should constitute the plot in terms that are relevant to my reading of Victorian fiction: 'A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but

[4] While some may question my inclusion of De Beauvoir's theory on the grounds that her thinking is outdated, I argue that her insight provides the foundation for all feminist endeavour.

has nothing following it. A middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard, but conform to these principles' (2008:14). Aristotle's outline of narrative structure demonstrates the prescriptive limitations within which the characters are allowed to develop and change, and it is within this limited structural scope that Alice and Yvaine experience growing up and falling down. Aristotle is notoriously misogynistic, as is evident through his distinction between the capabilities of the active male, and the incapability and passivity of the female in *Politics*, Book I:

> Man is active, full of movement, creative in politics, business and culture. The male shapes and moulds society and the world. Woman, on the other hand is passive. She stays at home as is her nature. She is matter waiting to be formed by the active male principle.
>
> (cited in Fisher, 1979:83)

Aristotle's observations imply that the masculine command of the world extends to his command over the imaginary worlds where characters like Alice and Yvaine are formed. In her essay 'Curious Appetites: Food, Desire, Gender and Subjectivity in Lewis Carroll's Alice Texts', Garland provides relevant insight into Carroll's depiction of Alice. She asserts, astutely, that 'Carroll's heroine is *not* the active, feminist child critics have long held her to be. Instead, Alice is a passive heroine who is denied her own feelings of hunger in order to satisfy a desiring male gaze' (2007:37, original emphasis).

Progress or regress — growing up or falling down — encompass the element of direction within a given spatiotemporal narrative framework. From the point of origin, the journey may either progress (move forward) or regress (move backward). Progression and regression cannot be equated with any absolute moral standpoint — progression should not wholly be equated with good, or regression wholly with evil. Rather, Alice and Yvaine fall down into adventure, irrationality and dependency in order to grow up into the Victorian ideal of womanhood. In this way, growing up and falling down segue into each other in cyclical transformation, rather than absolute difference. Potentially, growing up can become falling down, and vice versa, based on this logic. As men rise to prominence, women fall into relative weakness, and this enables their union in marriage. In this way Victorian womanhood is constructed by the male gaze.[5]

Subsequent chapters will delve further into determining the validity of this logic as it applies to these two novels, and in so doing, will establish an intertextual connection between them through the journeys of Alice and Yvaine. By adopting an eclectic feminist hermeneutic, based on post-structuralist and post-modernist thought, I will demonstrate that these two protagonists are, essentially, girls who are lost to their own purpose, and who struggle to find, possess and control their own identity and authority in the fantastical lands of Wonderland and Faerie respectively.

[5] John Berger articulates the influence of the male gaze in his seminal work, *Ways of Seeing* (1972:45-46). His insight into the relationship between, what he terms, the 'surveyor' and the 'surveyed' will be further analysed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

The inclusion of the filmic re-visionings of Carroll's *Alice* texts by Burton (2010), and Gaiman's *Stardust* by Vaughn (2007) is important in facilitating the understanding of the identity and authority of these characters. I will show that Burton's and Vaughn's films depart from the novels in that they do not look back to Victorian social expectation, but look ahead and liberate Alice and Yvaine to fulfil their purpose and 'live happily ever after'.

CHAPTER 1: THE SELF-ALIENATION OF ALICE AND YVAINE

In this chapter, I will explore the way in which the four authors/*auteurs* represent their Victorian female protagonists. The common theme, with regard to the representation of the female protagonists in the four texts I have selected, is what I have called self-alienation, or the process by which women are made Other to themselves because of social expectations. The strict enforcement of social mores characteristic of the Victorian era offers a structured and well-documented foundation for this exploration, but the spatiotemporal mechanisms of self-alienation in Victorian texts are echoed in many post-Victorian texts as well. As a result, spatiotemporal movement, as noted by Kristeva in her model of horizontal and vertical coordinates (1969:145), needs to be considered as it reveals the apparent contradictory nature of the representation of Victorian womanhood in these texts — namely that the requirement for women to 'grow up' is simultaneously imaged as the requirement for women to submit and 'fall down'.

Richard Altick, in his work *Victorian People and Ideas*, offers valuable insight into the expectations levied upon women in Victorian times, and highlights, specifically, the innate contradiction of Victorian womanhood – to be simultaneously morally superior and socially inferior. Altick specifically states the following in this regard:

> [W]oman was inferior to a man in all ways except the unique one that counted most (to man): her femininity. Her place was in the home, on a veritable pedestal if one could be afforded, and emphatically not in the world of affairs.
> (1973:54)

Altick highlights a specific dimension of Victorian womanhood: comparison. A woman is deemed inferior when compared to the superiority of man. Her inferiority is developed independently of who the woman is by nature, and is, therefore, something over which she ultimately has little or no control. Simultaneously, however, a woman who embraces her designated domestic role is raised on a pedestal as the exemplar of ideal womanhood, thereby becoming what Coventry Patmore declared to be an 'Angel in the House' (1854). In her essay, 'Professions for Women', Virginia Woolf comments specifically on the ideal Victorian woman depicted in Patmore's poem when she writes:

> She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed daily. If there was a chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught she sat in it ... Above all, she was pure.
> (1966:285)

The picture that Woolf paints of the ideal woman highlights a necessary quality that will ultimately determine the woman's success in her domestic role as devoted wife and mother. The description of this quality implies that, as a grown woman, she must remain, for all intents and purposes, as innocent as a child. Charles Petrie, in his article 'Victorian Women

Expected to be Idle and Ignorant', elaborates on this expectation of innocence regarded as attractive by Victorian men:

> Innocence was what he demanded from the girls of his class, and they must not only be innocent but also give the outward impression of being innocent. White muslin, typical of virginal purity, clothes many a heroine, with delicate shades of blue and pink next in popularity. The stamp of masculine approval was placed upon ignorance of the world, meekness, lack of opinions, general helplessness and weakness; in short, recognition of female inferiority to the male.
>
> (2000:184)

Superficially, this would seem true of Alice and Yvaine. The purity of their appearance and their dislocation from the real world aligns with Petrie's observations, and will constitute the foundation for discussing their respective journeys. This innocent disengagement from the real world will be shown to define Alice and Yvaine as possessing the fundamental potential, as outlined by Petrie (2000:184) and Altick (1973:54), eventually to become the ideal woman prized by Victorian men. Petrie states that '[f]rom infancy all girls who were born above the level of poverty had the dream of a successful marriage before their eyes, for by that alone was it possible for a woman to rise in the world' (2000:180). In her work, *Writing a Woman's Life*, feminist author and academic, Carolyn Heilbrun, refers to this as 'the successful enactment of a male-designed script' (1988:52).

I will also show, in this chapter, that the 'dream' Petrie refers to (2000:180) is not the innate dream of Alice or Yvaine, but a dream designed for them by Victorian society. A woman's desires for her life, as well as what she

feels to be her authentic nature, are cast aside by socio-political expectations, and these expectations quite literally, in the texts that will be discussed, force her down into submission. One of the most prolific founding theorists with regards to understanding gender representation on a universal level is De Beauvoir. Her philosophy regarding the polarity between the masculine and the feminine is stated in her work *The Second Sex* (1949). Her famous declaration rings true when one considers the representation of Alice and Yvaine: 'One is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one' (1973:301).

The condition of womanhood is a much-examined phenomenon, and this examination has spanned several centuries and has been conducted in many different cultures. In her work, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Judith Butler provides a historical overview of feminist theory in relation to the fortunes of the word 'representation', and explains the role of 'representation' in the following in-depth analysis:

> For the most part, feminist theory has assumed that there is some existing identity, understood through the category of women, who not only initiates feminist interests and goals within feminist discourse, but constitutes the subject for whom political representation is pursued. But *politics* and *representation* are controversial terms. On the one hand, *representation* serves as the operative term within a political process that seeks to extend visibility and legitimacy to women as political subjects; on the other hand, representation is the normative function of a language which is said either to reveal or to distort what is assumed to be true about the category of women. For feminist theory, the development of a language that fully or adequately represents women has seemed necessary to foster the political visibility of women. This has seemed obviously important considering the pervasive cultural

> condition in which women's lives were either misrepresented or not represented at all.
> (1990:1, original emphasis)

'Representation' is a term that implies much about the author/character relationship — or, more specifically, the male author/female character relationship — and is defined in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* as 'to be a symbol of' (Turnbull et al, 2010:1252). For Butler's purposes, representation is not reality, and in no way communicates a state of reality. Rather, it is a figurative construct imbued with the intentions and anxieties of the creator of that representation. The representation of female characters by male authors is problematic in that, because they are not grounded in reality, they cannot reflect reality. They are only capable of reflecting the author's perspective. In her article, 'Curious Appetites: Food, Desire, Gender and Subjectivity in Lewis Carroll's Alice Texts', Garland specifically refers to Carroll's representation of Alice when she writes, 'it becomes clear that the little girl is controlled and manipulated by the male author, as a result of his anxieties surrounding her move from girl hood into adolescence' (2008:23).[6] Carroll, therefore, is an exemplar of how a male author not only misrepresents a female character because of his own intentions and anxieties, but also how he represents an ideal prized by Victorian society: preserving the purity and innocence of Alice throughout his novel. Gaiman's representation of Yvaine is more overtly disconnected from reality — Yvaine, as a pure,

[6] While Garland acknowledges the contributions of various critics – most notably Sigler, Auerbach and Knoepflmacher – she aptly refutes previous interpretations of both *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-glass* as having 'misrepresented, misplaced, and misinterpreted the specificities of the gendered power dynamic present in the books' (2008:22).

shining celestial creature is unable to transcend the boundaries of Faerie, the realm of the author's imagination, and cross over the wall into Victorian England. Should she attempt this, Yvaine will be reduced to nothing but stardust:

> 'I should warn you,' said the woman, 'that if you leave these lands for… over there…' and she gestured toward the village of Wall with one slim arm, from the wrist of which a silver chain glittered, '… then you will be, as I understand it, transformed into what you would be in that world: a cold, dead thing, sky-fallen.'
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:170)

Alice and Yvaine can therefore be seen to occupy their author's worlds, forced into them through the action of literally 'falling down'.

In order to understand the core issues of gender representation, a distinction needs to be made between the concepts of 'sex' and 'gender' through the consideration of their respective definitions. Butler explores the implications of traditional definitions and distinctions between 'sex' and 'gender' when she writes:

> Originally intended to dispute the biology-is-destiny formulation, the distinction between sex and gender serves the argument that whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence, gender is neither the causal result of sex nor seemingly fixed as sex.
>
> (1990:6)

While the distinction between 'sex' and 'gender' is theoretically 'intended to dispute the biology-is-destiny formulation' (Butler 1990:6), for women,

this formulation serves the purposes of the 'male-designed script' (1988:52). In *Force of Circumstance*, De Beauvoir highlights her need to 'write about myself' and what 'it meant to me to be a woman' as the initial inspiration for writing *The Second Sex*. She goes on to state:

> I looked, and it was a revelation: this world was a masculine world, my childhood had been nourished by myths forged by men, and I hadn't reacted to them in at all the same way I should have done if I had been a boy. I was so interested… that I abandoned my project for a personal confession in order to give all my attention to finding out about the condition of woman in its broadest terms. I went to the Bibliothèque Nationale to do some reading, and what I studied were the myths of femininity.
>
> (1977:94-95)[7]

While this seems a feasible interpretation within a broader scope of analysis, the representation of women of the Victorian age as fixed and submissive became a consumer industry. As Talairach-Vielmas observes, in her work *Moulding the Female Body in Victorian Fairy Tales and Sensation Novels* (2007):

> Constantly reified, extolled as an art curio connoting the wealth of its owner, the fashionably corseted Victorian woman was girdled by discourses to define her. In the streets or in women's magazines, advertisements aimed at women and constructed women as desiring and consuming subjects. In so doing, they simultaneously led them to become merchandise themselves – thereby confining them within a role as reflectors of male power, exhibiting their fathers' or husbands' economic success. Victorian fairy tales and sensation novels explore this insolubly paradoxical terrain, where women oscillate between subject and object.
>
> (2007:6)

[7] As quoted in Pilardi (1999:25).

De Beauvoir views the representation of women as a sociopolitical tool 'forged by men' (1977:94). This is reinforced by Gaiman's and Carroll's authorial control over Yvaine and Alice respectively, although Butler (1990:142-149), is much slower to blame men than De Beauvoir is, since she focuses more on the crucial role of representation, in both the political and the discursive sense. Women, in the context of gender theory, as outlined by both De Beauvoir and Butler, and following the considerations of a specific Victorian context, as outlined by Talairach-Vielmas, Altick and Petrie, are contained within masculine-ordered sociopolitical myth,[8] and do not have an identity beyond the boundaries prescribed to them. It would therefore be easy to assume that women, and the submissive stigma attached to them, are bound to be represented as dutiful characters who submit to the will of male authorship, rather than innovative self-creators with their own identity aside from sociopolitical prescription. Alice and Yvaine, as representatives of Carroll's and Gaiman's visions, find themselves removed from their true position and literally 'fall down' into alien worlds. In this sense Wonderland and Faerie become the context for representation — the worlds in which the 'myths forged by men' (1977:94) are shaped and in which the female protagonists experience their self-alienation.

[8] 'Myth' is defined, according to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, as 'something that many people believe [or accept] but that does not exist or is false' (2010:977). I am using it to refer specifically to accepted ideas, both on a social and political level within Victorian England.

In *The Second Sex*, De Beauvoir scrutinizes the modes in which women are alienated from the reality of their immediate socio-cultural environment when she writes:

> Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being. Michelet writes: 'Woman, the relative being…'… She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other.
>
> The category of the *Other* is as primordial as consciousness itself. In the most primitive societies, in the most ancient mythologies, one finds the expression of a duality – that of the Self and the Other.
>
> (1989:xxii, original emphasis)

Although De Beauvoir is by no means the first or only theorist to work with the Self/Other dichotomy,[9] it has become a truism in literary/cultural studies. De Beauvoir's explanation of the Self/Other relationship can be likened to the male author/female character relationship. Alice and Yvaine become the self-alienated Other in worlds that are essentially also Other to Victorian reality, and to male Self-hood within that reality. Within the boundaries of these Other worlds, and within the boundaries of their male-authored stories, Alice and Yvaine enjoy a sense of purpose and importance as the female protagonists. This stands in opposition to their unimportance beyond the boundaries of Wonderland and Faerie respectively, and the expectation placed on them to fulfil a socially-ordained purpose.

[9] See Butler (1990:1-34) for a more in-depth discussion concerning various theoretical considerations of the Self/Other dichotomy.

In his seminar, *On Feminine Sexuality: The Limits of Love and Knowledge (1972-1973)*, Jacques Lacan controversially writes:

> [W]hen any speaking being whatsoever situates itself under the banner of 'woman,' it is on the basis of the following — that it grounds itself as being-not-whole in situating itself in the phallic function. That is what defines what? Woman, precisely, except that Woman can only be written with a bar through it. There is no such thing as Woman. Woman with a capital *W* indicating the universal. There's no such thing as Woman because, in her essence… she is not-whole…. There is no woman except excluded by the nature of things, which is the nature of words.
>
> (1975:72-73, original emphasis)

Lacan's views, while open to question, are nevertheless applicable to the representation of Yvaine in *Stardust* as a 'not-whole' character.

Yvaine is excluded from reality in that she will cease to exist should she cross the boundary, the wall, between Faerie and reality. Yvaine, as representing Woman within the narrative, is excluded from reality under threat of falling even further. She falls from her immortal place in the sky down to a mortal, though fantastical, world — where she is described as 'more human and less ethereal' (Gaiman, 1999:85), and should she cross the Wall she will fall even further, reduced to being a 'dead thing' (Gaiman, 1999:170). It is important to note that fantasy has no subject-substance in reality, and as Yvaine is a creature of fantasy, it may be concluded that, in *Stardust*, Woman cannot exist within reality because she cannot sustain her importance within reality. She must therefore

submit or assume the role of object-substance — in this case stardust. Similarly, Alice must relinquish her 'muchness' (Carroll, 1992:60) when she ascends back into Victorian England. In Wonderland, she is '*the* Alice' (Burton, 2010), but in Victorian England, she is defined according to her family's expectations of what is 'proper' (Burton, 2010).

Virginia Woolf further solidifies this perception of women having importance only within the parameters of the imaginative. Woolf, in her critical work *A Room of One's Own*, draws on Victorian norms such as those outlined by Patmore and Altick when she writes:

> Imaginatively [woman] is of the highest importance; practically she is completely insignificant. She pervades poetry from cover to cover; she is all but absent from history. She dominates the lives of kings and conquerors in fiction; in fact she was the slave of any boy whose parents forced a ring upon her finger. Some of the most inspired words, some of the most profound thoughts in literature fall from her lips; in real life she could hardly read, could scarcely spell, and was the property of her husband.
> (1989:43-44)

Here, Woolf highlights the paradoxical significance and insignificance of women. This is important when examining Alice's condition as fluctuating between growing up and falling down, as well as Yvaine's condition as an immortal star who initially has to submit as a slave to the mortal, Tristran,[10] and then, ultimately, has to submit, both domestically and politically, to Tristran as her husband and Lord of Stormhold.

[10] There is a discrepancy between this name as it pertains to the male protagonist of Gaiman's novel, (where the character is referred to as 'Tristran'), and Matthew Vaughn's

The real condition of woman in Victorian society is one in which she must accept her own socio-political, historical and marital insignificance, and while the scope of the imagination affords women a sense of significance, such significance proves to be illusory — or, as Woolf implies, a mechanism for making women historically 'absent' (*A Room of One's Own*, 1989:43-44). In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* the expectation placed upon Alice to grow up is significantly juxtaposed with the notion that growing up ultimately means falling down or, as is her fear of 'going out altogether, like a candle' (Carroll, 1992:12).

In *Stardust*, Yvaine is supposedly exempt from any real-world obligation because she cannot leave Faerie. Yet, her bond with Tristran — a character who is, at first, associated with the 'real' world of Victorian England, but who later embraces his role as Lord of Stormhold — and her definition as a fallen star, establish her as a character who must, according to Victorian prescription, submit. On a literal level, the condition of a fallen star in the real world is described, as previously mentioned, as 'a cold, dead thing, sky-fallen' (Gaiman, 1999:170) — a worthless, insignificant object. Furthermore, within the real world of Wall, Victoria Forrester, whom Tristran initially loves, submits to the patriarchal order in a similar way by marrying a wealthy man.

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filmic adaptation (where he is referred to as 'Tristan'). For the purpose of my dissertation the central male protagonist of *Stardust* will be referred to as Tristran throughout.

Woolf's real-life considerations of women as property can distinctly be associated, on a fictional level, with both Alice and Yvaine as the intellectual property of Carroll and Gaiman respectively.[11] They are quite literally dependent on the narratives of the stories in which they adventure. The kingdom of these two women lies in fiction. Both Alice and Yvaine are the inspired creations of male authors. Therefore, they have to submit or fall at the feet of Carroll and Gaiman respectively, who order their every move through the pages of each novel. For Carroll, Alice's adventures are only considered worthy within the realm of Wonderland, a land that many theorists, such as Jack Zipes,[12] have explored as the kingdom of the imagination. The narrative interest in Alice's journey is connected to this imaginative world of Carroll's own design, which is probably why Carroll glosses over Alice's position in the real world, merely focussing on her frustration because of the lack of stimulation the real world provides for young women, and especially for her:

> Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?"
> (1992:7)

Alice's disengagement from the act of reading may be explained because she is an active character in her own narrative, rather than a passive recipient of a story, like her sister. This illuminates Talairach-Vielmas's observation regarding Victorian women when she states that they

[11] Cognisance has been taken of Dodgson's ambivalent relationship to Alice Liddell, as noted by Martin Gardner in his 'Introduction to *The Annotated Alice*' (2000:xix).
[12] See, for example, Zipes' *Fairy Tale as Myth/Myth as Fairy Tale* (1994)

‘oscillate between subject and object’ (2007:6). As a character, Alice is an active subject within the narrative, but she is also simultaneously a puppet, or object, directed by the master-author. The reader is reminded of her agency when she refuses to engage with the book her sister is passively reading. However, her passive submission to an external influence is noted when she obediently follows the instructions to ‘DRINK ME’ and ‘EAT ME’ (Carroll, 1992:11-12), which opens her to manipulation by forces beyond her active control. Added to this oscillation of character position within the narrative, Alice endures a further subject/object or Self/Other vacillation in that the very instructions she follows create outcomes that see her fluctuate between growing and shrinking. The outcome for Alice, after she obeys the instructions to ‘DRINK ME’ and ‘EAT ME’ (Carroll, 1992:11-12), is an unhappy and uncomfortable one, emphasising her conflict with social expectations, based on how her physical dimensions oscillate.

Carroll manipulates his character’s development within the boundaries of Wonderland, with only glimpses of Alice demonstrating control. Her declaration that the Queen of Hearts and her court are nothing more than a pack of cards (Carroll, 1992:97), and the shrinking of the Red Queen to the size of ‘a little doll’ (Carroll, 1992:202) demonstrate Alice claiming control over the world she is thrust into. Such control may be seen to pose a threat to the author, who, feeling anxiety at the prospect of his child-heroine showing adult tendencies, removes her from Wonderland, and

places her back in the reality of Victorian England.[13] This act solidifies Alice's self-alienation within the narrative. Alice's daydream, and her curiosity in following the White Rabbit into Wonderland, is replaced, at the end of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, by the sister's dream — the sister representing the voice of social expectation within Carroll's text:

> But her sister sat still just as she left her, leaning her head on her hand, watching the setting sun, and thinking of little Alice and all her wonderful Adventures, till she too began dreaming after a fashion, and this was her dream: -
>
> First, she dreamed about little Alice herself: once again the tiny hands were clasped upon her knee, and the bright eager eyes were looking up into hers – she would hear the very tones of her voice, and see that queer little toss of her head to keep back the wandering hair that *would* always get into her eyes – and still as she listened, or seemed to listen, the whole place around her became alive with the strange creatures of her little sister's dream.
> …
> Lastly, she pictured to herself how this same little sister of hers would, in the after-time, be herself a grown woman; and how she would keep, through all her riper years, the simple and loving heart of her childhood; 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; and how she would feel with all their simple sorrows, and find pleasure in all their simple joys, remembering her own child-life, and the happy summer days.
>
> (1992:98-99, original emphasis)

In dreaming of the world of Wonderland that Alice tells her about, she, in essence, claims the dream from Alice, and transforms it into expectation.[14] She is no longer listening to the truth of Alice's dream, as is

[13] See Garland (2008) for further explanation of this interpretation.
[14] This belies the argument that the *Alice* texts present an empowered Alice as the main protagonist. Megan S. Lloyd, in her essay, 'Unruly Alice', describes Alice as: '[p]lucky, undaunted, and impervious to the dangers that may lie in Wonderland, Alice is a curious,

communicated in her confession that ‘she seems to listen’ (Carroll, 1992:98), but is now representing it within the boundaries of social convention. Alice is deprived of her role as an active character within her own story, but has been relegated to the role of passive representer of her dream to future generations. In her sister’s dream, Alice, although grown up, retains the purity and innocence of a child, which aligns itself strongly with the selfless, maternal, domestic role society expected women to assume, as articulated by Woolf in her essay, ‘Professions for Women’ (1966:285).

In Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland* re-visioning (2010), Alice is afforded the control of her own destiny that is denied to her in Carroll’s text. She returns to the world of Victorian England with a greater sense of purpose in her transition from adolescent to adult, and confronts other characters’ blind devotion to social convention. Empowering Alice to make these choices for her life journey presents itself at a moment when she is physically small. This stands in juxtaposition to her big, self-empowering declaration:

> Alice: From the moment I fell down that rabbit hole I've been told what I must do and who I must be. I've been shrunk, stretched, scratched and stuffed into a teapot. I've been accused of being Alice and of not being Alice, but this is my dream. I'll decide where it goes from here.
>
> (Burton, 2010)

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empowered seven-year-old girl eager to delve into a new world she chooses to enter’ (2010:9).

Alice affirms that her experience of Wonderland is one where her 'dream' (2010) is invaded by the expectations of an outside force, which has manipulated her to the point where she feels no sense of self. Alice is alienated and Othered within the text's fantasy society because she has denied the importance of her dream, and her erstwhile sense of her identity.

In her essay, 'The Dysmorphic Bodies of *Alice in Wonderland*', Lois Drawmer writes:

> The dream setting functions as an analogy of states of being, the ontology of the conscious awareness of a 'self', and anticipates the narcissistic engagement of self discovery which follows…
>
> (2004:274)

Dreams play a significant role in Alice's *becoming* in both Carroll's and Burton's texts. Where Alice's dream presents an opportunity for self-fulfilment in both texts, it stands in contrast to society's dream for Alice's life, articulated by her sister in Carroll's story. It is the dream or ideal of the accomplished woman, raised on a pedestal to extol her virtues as the 'Angel in the House' (Patmore, 1854), while simultaneously requiring the woman to submit to this expectation for her life — to preserve innocence and virtue that keep her captive within her domestic prison rather than progress towards a greater sense of independence and experience of the world. The two dreams stand in opposition to one another because Alice's

dream draws on her desire for freedom, while her sister's dream is rooted in a desire to keep Alice focused on the memory of her childhood — the former dream being progressive, while social expectation is deemed to be regressive. Robert Polhemus, in his critical work *Comic Faith: The Great Tradition from Austen to Joyce*, defines regression as follows:

> Regression means a going or coming back; it can be defined as a reverting to earlier behavior patterns so as to change or escape from unpleasant situation. It is both radical and conservative: radical in rejecting the present and in juxtaposing material from both our conscious and unconscious minds; conservative in holding on to time past…. Regression can thus be a means of seeing the world anew.
>
> (1982:248)

In Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), the anxiety generated due to the conflict between these two dreams is also experienced as relative to time and space. As Alice falls down the Rabbit-Hole, she is effectively regressing away from the expectation levied upon her to marry, and settle into her domestic role as wife and mother. As Alice falls down the Rabbit-Hole, she encounters three objects closely associated with an accomplished woman — a bookcase full of books, a pianoforte and a bed. In Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, a conversation between Mr Darcy and Elizabeth Bennett highlights the characteristics of an 'accomplished woman':

> "Oh! certainly," cried his faithful assistant, "no one can be really esteemed accomplished, who does not greatly surpass what is usually met with. A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages, to deserve the word; and

> besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions, or the word will be but half deserved."
>
> "All this she must possess," added Darcy, "and to all this she must yet add something more substantial, in the improvement of her mind by extensive reading."
>
> (1998:34)

Such expectation levied upon a young girl to become an accomplished woman generates anxiety, which Alice meets with a level of defiance in Burton's film. Alice's collision with the bookcase full of books as she passes down the Rabbit-Hole defies the expectation of 'the improvement of her mind by extensive reading' (Austen, 1998:34). Her encountering and nearly being crushed by the pianoforte defies the expectation of needing to 'have a thorough knowledge of music' (Austen, 1998:34). Her bouncing on the bed possibly alludes to the expectation levied upon Alice to be a good wife and submit to her husband's will, which Alice also defies. The fall down the Rabbit-Hole alienates Alice from social expectation, because she is defiant. However, without this expectation, Alice initially struggles to find her identity in an Other world as an Othered person. The result of this displacement of identity is evident in the fluctuation in Alice's size and a dysmorphic perception of who she is and how she fits into the world based on spatiotemporal parameters.

Even in Wonderland, Alice is made aware of what her social role is – how she should fit into society — and how to behave in order to please others. The Duchess provides her with instruction that highlights the

psychological convolution required of Victorian women: the sacrifice required in order for women to achieve acceptance in a male-dominated world:

> "[A]nd the moral of that is — 'Be what you would *seem to be'* — or, if you'd like it put more simply — never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might *appear to others* that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise."
>
> (Carroll 1992:72, emphasis added)

However, for Alice, the time is too late, as evidenced by the White Rabbit's exclamation, '"Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!"' (Carroll,1992:7). This, in turn, also represents Alice's reluctance to grow up and accept her social role on schedule. This assumption is supported by Petersen, in his work 'Time and Stress: Alice in Wonderland', where he adds that such willing defiance of time's rule of lateness, on-timeness and earliness, as evidenced by Alice following the White Rabbit, results 'in a confrontation with madness' (1985:429) and an always/eternal time. Time, in this sense, becomes suspended in anticipation of the time of change because it cannot complete its process, due to the anxieties and expectations of Carroll in his bid to keep both the fictional and real Alice small, thus making time's influence regressive — receding towards an eternity. Carroll communicates his anxieties in his diary entry dated 11 May, 1865:

> Met Alice and Miss Prickett in the quadrangle: Alice seems changed a good deal, and hardly for the better – probably going through the awkward stage of transition.

(1992:279)

It is evident that the masculine Self, represented here by Carroll as the author, is more concerned with time than the female Other. More specifically, he is concerned with the preservation of time. Kristeva, in 'Women's Time', provides insight into a possible reason for men to keep time in stasis:

> As for time, female subjectivity would seem to provide a specific measure that essentially retains *repetition* and *eternity* from among the multiple modalities of time known through the history of civilizations. On the one hand, there are cycles, gestation, the eternal recurrence of a biological rhythm which conforms to that of nature and imposes a temporality whose stereotyping may shock, but whose regularity and unison with what is experiences as extrasubjective time, cosmic time, occasion vertiginous visions and unnameable *jouissance*. On the other hand, and perhaps as a consequence, there is the massive presence of a monumental temporality, without cleavage or escape, which has so little to do with linear time (which passes) that the very word "temporality" hardly fits: All-encompassing and infinite like imaginary space….
>
> (1981:15-16, original emphasis)

Kristeva articulates the need to redefine the experience of womanhood as simultaneously consistent or predictable (returning to its origin in a cycle), and inconsistent or erratic. Linear time is seen not to fit as an adequate means of measuring and representing the experience of womanhood. Kristeva suggests that a spatial dimension be included — a space which can contain and explode linear time into infinite possibility. What she calls 'Women's Time', and its spatial association, is further explored in such works as Woolf's *Orlando*, where space anchors the experience of the

character, Orlando. A year is measured out into 365 days or 52 weeks, but Woolf reconceptualises time spatially in that Orlando inhabits a house with 365 rooms and 52 staircases (2003:54). Alice's space is Wonderland, devoid of sense or reason, constantly renewing itself in a cycle of absurdity. The order of linear time is rearranged to fit the space of Alice's imagination.

Alice rejects linear discourse early in the story when she rejects books without pictures or conversations (Carroll, 1992:7). To read a story follows a linear path — Aristotle's delineation of 'a beginning, a middle and an end' (2008:14). To imagine a story creates a space for actively encountering conversation. In this light, the difference between reading a text and imagining a text can be likened to what literary theorist Roland Barthes, in his work *S/Z*, determined to be the readerly (*lisible*) and writerly (*scriptible*) text. He defines the readerly text as follows:

> Our literature is characterized by the pitiless divorce which the literary institution maintains between the producer of the text and its user, between the owner and its customer, between its author and its reader. This reader is thereby plunged into a kind of idleness – he is intransitive; he is, in short, *serious*: instead of functioning himself, instead of gaining access to the magic of the signifier, to the pleasure of writing, he is left with no more that the poor freedom either to accept or reject the text: reading is nothing more than a *referendum*. Opposite the writerly text, then is its countervalue, its negative, reactive value: what can be read, but not written: *readerly*.
>
> (1974:4, original emphasis)

Based on this definition, it is evident that Alice's sister is associated with the readerly text, in that she is a predominantly reactive character — accepting or rejecting the text, but never actively producing the value of the text. The readerly text is a product of the context in which it is produced, much like Alice's sister is a product of the Victorian sociocultural mores that have moulded her. The relationship that the reader has to the text is diachronous and strongly influenced by the time or context in which it was created.

Standing in opposition to the readerly text is the writerly text, which Barthes defines as follows:

> The writerly text is a perpetual present, upon which no *consequent* language (which would inevitably make it past) can be superimposed; the writerly text is *ourselves writing*, before the infinite play of the world (the world as function) is traversed, intersected, stopped, plasticized by some singular system (Ideology, Genus, Criticism) which reduces the plurality of entrances, the opening of networks, the infinity of languages.
>
> (1974:5, original emphasis)

Barthes notes that 'the writerly text is *ourselves writing*' (1974:5, original emphasis) and thereby characterises the writerly text as heteroglossic or conversational. Alice aligns strongly with the writerly text in that she embraces various points of view encountering each other in the space of the present — the synchronous moment. In essence, Alice redefines the dimensions of her story by 'seeing the world anew' (Polhemus, 1982:248)

within the space of her imagination, and encounters and redirects her journey according to this new perspective.

The imaginative space for conversation, articulated in the content of the *Alice* narrative, is also evident structurally, and this understanding of textual space will be important in establishing an intertextual connection between the four texts I have selected.

Kristeva's discussion of Mikhail Bakhtin's contribution to intertextual theory sheds further light on a perception of textuality as conversational space. Bakhtin's specific semiotic focus is based on what Kristeva refers to as the 'spatial conception of language's poetic operation'. She writes:

> Defining the specific status of the word as signifier for different modes of (literary) intellection within different genres or texts put poetic analysis at the sensitive centre of contemporary 'human' sciences – at the intersection of *language* (the true practice of thought) with *space* (the volume within which significance, through a joining of differences, articulates itself). To investigate the status of the word is to study its articulations (as semic complex) with other words in the sentence, and then to look for the same functions or relationships at the articulatory level of larger sequences. Confronted with this spatial conception of language's poetic operation, we must first define the three dimensions of textual space where the various semic sets and poetic sequences function. These three dimensions or coordinates of dialogue are writing subject, addressee and exterior texts. The word's status is thus defined *horizontally* (the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee) as well as *vertically* (the word in the text is oriented towards an anterior or synchronic literary corpus).
>
> (1986:36-37, original emphasis)

Based on Kristeva's insight, it becomes clear that, according to intertextual prescripts, meaning generated by a text, in conversation with itself and with other texts, is both spatial and temporal. This synchronous and diachronous view of the text are represented as coordinates on vertical and horizontal axes respectively.

Alice's falling down the Rabbit Hole, growing and shrinking, as well as moving through the Looking-glass, can now be seen as relating specifically to spatialisation — representing the three dimensions of the textual space. The direction of the abovementioned actions is important, not only literally, as movements across and down, but also as indicators of an intertextual connection between Carroll and Alice/reader, the *Alice* texts and the greater context of Victorian mores. In her essay, 'Spatialization, Narrative Theory and Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out*', Susan Stanford Friedman reiterates the importance of the contributions made by Kristeva, and Bakhtin to literary theory:

> For Kristeva, spatialization – with its attendant graphic tropes of coordinates, axes, trajectory, horizontal, vertical, surface, intersection, linearity, loop, dimension, and so forth – allows for the visualization of the text-in-process, the text as a dynamic "productivity," and "operation" (*Desire*, 36-37).
>
> (1996:111)

When Alice redefines the dimensions of her story, she assumes a double role in both Carroll's and Burton's texts. She simultaneously occupies the role of reader and writer within the space of the *Alice* texts. She occupies

the role of reader in the *Alice* texts in that she is the observer of the world above and below, and of the world on this side and that side of the Looking-glass. Alice's disengagement from reading in the Victorian world above because of its lack of pictures or conversations (Carroll, 1992:7), results in her curiosity leading her down the Rabbit-Hole into a world of vivid imagery and nonsensical conversation — Wonderland. Alice, therefore, effectively becomes the reader of Wonderland in this sense.

In Wonderland, however, Alice also makes a bold claim as the writer of her own destiny. To reiterate what she says in Burton's film, 'But it is my dream. I will decide where it goes from here… I make the path' (2010). Alice has declared herself to be the author of her story by questioning the truth of the expectations others have for her life.

In Burton's film (2010), Alice Kingsley exists in a Victorian world where properness is the expectation, and she reads it as such. However, she negates properness as absolute (an expectation) in favour of properness as a perspective (a suggestion):

> Alice: Who's to say what is "proper"? What if it was agreed that "proper" was wearing a codfish on your head? Would you wear it?
> (Burton, 2010)

Alice exposes the limitations of the Victorian mindset by challenging why it has to be just so. Her not wearing stockings, as exposed by her mother, is scandalous within that mindset as well. She questions and later rejects

the regulated memory of her age — expectations grounded in the past — thereby countering their influence with her own imagination, the place where that which society deems impossible becomes possible. Her desire, based on curiosity, liberates her from being the proper young lady that her mother expects her to be, and she articulates this desire for freedom in Wonderland.

As I have shown, Alice assumes the role of both reader and writer. In a 1985 interview with Margaret Smaller, Kristeva provides further support of the above claim that Alice is both reader and writer of her story:

> [I]dentity may be the plurality capable of manifesting itself as the plurality of characters the author uses; but in more recent writing, in the twentieth-century novel, it may appear as fragments of character, or fragments of ideology, or fragments of representation. Moreover, such an understanding of intertextuality — one that points to a dynamics involving a destruction of the creative identity and reconstitution of a new plurality — assumes at the same time that the one who reads, the reader, participates in the same dynamics. If we are readers of intertextuality, we must be capable of the same putting-into-process of our identities, capable of identifying with the different types of texts, voices, and semantic, syntactic, and phonic systems at play in a given text.
>
> (cited in O'Donnell & Con Davis, 1989:281)

Creator/writer and reader exist in dialectical relationship — and the symbol for that relationship within the *Alice* texts is Alice herself. Her growing and shrinking adds yet another layer to the understanding of contraries within the *Alice* texts: Alice is both significant and insignificant; influenced by both expectation and desire; both subject and object; caught

between seeming and being; between Eros and Thanatos; between adult and child; between reality and imaginary; and most importantly, between growing up and falling down. In this sense, a marriage between these contraries is achieved in a single character. In considering Kristeva's model for horizontal and vertical coordinates (Figure 1), and reworking it to better understand the 'three dimensions or coordinates' (1996:111) within *Alice in Wonderland* (Figure 2), it can be seen that Alice dominates the horizontal axis.[15] Within *Through the Looking-glass*, Alice controls the narrative perspective of both the world on this side of the Looking-glass, and the world of Wonderland on the other side of the Looking-glass — in this sense, she is both 'surveyor' and 'surveyed' (Berger, 1972:47). The vertical aspect concerns the *Alice* texts and how they relate to the context of the Victorian period and the mores that were prescribed. Thus, Alice falling down the Rabbit-hole can be seen to symbolise going down under the surface of Victorian morals and manners to reveal a 'wonder-full' hypocrisy at the heart of the matter.

The *Alice* model can be represented as follows:

[15] It can also be argued that Alice is Carroll's puppet within the text, but because he writes from within her consciousness and subconscious, Alice can be seen as the signifier for both the author and the reader.

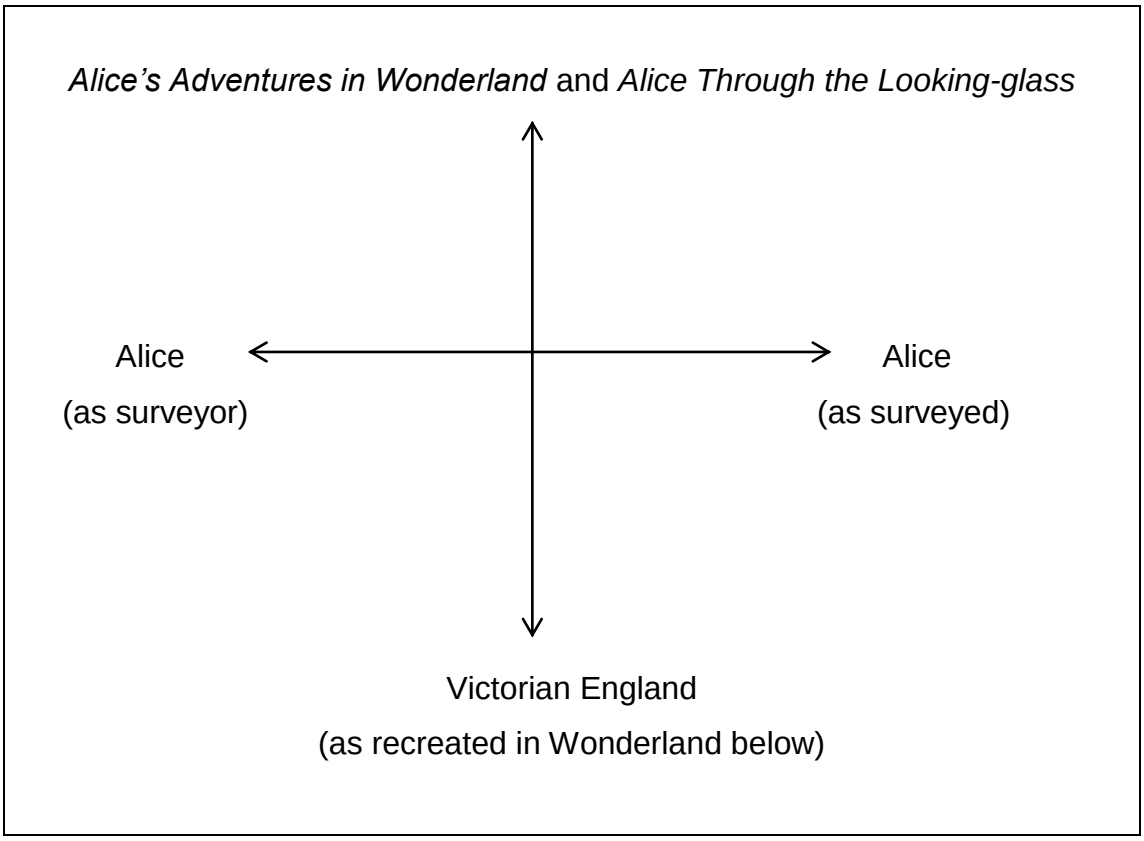

Figure 2. *Alice in Wonderland* (Adapted Horizontal and Vertical Coordinates)

Alice is shown to be a character who encapsulates various oppositions, and these comprise both her will and Carroll's — to be simultaneously free and submissive; self-fulfilled and self-alienated; influenced by both growing up and falling down — and such oppositions are crucial, to allude to De Beauvoir's statement (1973:301), in *becoming*. While I have shown that these oppositions are present in the *Alice* texts and Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*, and contribute to Alice's self-alienation as she grows up into adulthood, they are also evident in the two *Stardust* texts.

In considering Carroll's *Alice* texts and Burton's *Alice in Wonderland,* and Gaiman's and Vaughn's *Stardust*, it is necessary to revisit the concepts of

Self and Other in order to not only establish a viable intertextual link between Alice and Yvaine as self-alienated female protagonists, but to understand the relationship between and significance of Tristran and Yvaine. Because the work of De Beauvoir is fundamental to the understanding of Self and Other, other theorists, most notably Jean-Paul Sartre and Martin Heidegger, have also contributed towards the understanding of these two conditions.

While Sartre, in his essay 'Being and Nothingness' (1943), contradicts De Beauvoir when he proposes that humans have the ability to exercise choice as a freeing mechanism within a specific space, Heidegger's philosophy aligns very closely with De Beauvoir's. Eva Gothlin, in her essay 'Reading Simone de Beauvoir with Martin Heidegger' (2006:45-65), highlights this philosophical alignment through looking at the terms '*Mitsein*' and 'Dasein' in conceptualizing authenticity. The following observation is made regarding *Mitsein*:

> In *The Second Sex* the term *Mitsein* occurs… as "Being-with"; the human couple, for example, is said to be "an original *Mitsein"*… In one of the places where the couple is defined as "an original *Mitsein*" Beauvoir adds that it is out of this *Mitsein* that "their opposition took form"… For Beauvoir, humans are *Mitsein*, but this *Mitsein* can be lived either in separation and conflict or in friendship and solidarity. *Mitsein,* for her, then, does not mean that humanity is one and that everyone has the same goals and aspirations, living in some kind of friendly symbiosis.
> (2003:57-58, original emphasis)

De Beauvoir's interpretation of Heidegger's term, *Mitsein*, is key to understanding the Self/Other dynamic. By stating that it 'occurs… as "Being-with"' (2003:57), *Mitsein* can be characterised as a state of being that is relevant within a specific time and space. Gothlin also notes that, within this context, varying levels of unity and division between Self and Other can potentially manifest. *Mitsein*, or the state of Self 'being-with' Other (2003:57), cannot be achieved as a single goal of utopic coexistence. Rather, it is a manifestation of various possibilities. *Mitsein* is not only synchronous, but also exists in a state of plurality. Later, Gothlin also considers Dasein and its connection with *Mitsein*:

> For Heidegger, authenticity and inauthenticity are closely related to the fact that Dasein is *Mitsein*. Our being-in-the-world and our being-with-others are, in turn, a precondition for the fact that we can "lose ourselves" in the world and in others. Dasein is even for the most part "lost in its world" since "falling" belongs to Dasein's mode of being.
>
> (2003:59, original emphasis)

Gothlin's focus, in the above excerpt, falls particularly on Dasein's inauthentic mode — a state which Heidegger describes as follows:

> Dasein has, in the first instance, fallen away from itself as an authentic potentiality for Being its self, and has fallen into the 'world'. 'Fallenness' into the world mean an absorption in Being-with-one-another, in so far as the latter is guided by idle talk, curiosity and ambiguity. Through the interpretation of falling, what we have called 'inauthenticity' of Dasein may now be defined more precisely.
>
> (1962:175)

According to Heidegger, Dasein in this inauthentic mode, establishes that Self and Other, as existing within a particular time and space, are so influenced by this context that it defines them – hence 'Dasein is *Mitsein*' (2003:59, original emphasis). In this vein, Alice and Yvaine literally fall into contexts that exercise profound influence on their *becoming*, and challenge their desire for Authentic Being.

Alice's *becoming* has been shown to exist in relation to various binary oppositions. Within this plurality, Dasein is established through social expectation from both the world above, Victorian England, and the world below, Wonderland. This expectation generates anxiety as Alice gradually loses her sense of self. She is grown and shrunk by the forces working within these two societies. As a result, Alice disconnects from her Authentic Being — her self-identity — both on a real and imaginative level. Alice demonstrates this disconnectedness from her sense of self in her encounter with the Caterpillar, who enquires about who she is:

> "Who are *you?*" said the Caterpillar.
> This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied rather shyly, "I – I hardly know, Sir, just at present – at least I know who I *was* when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."
> "What do you mean by that?" said the Caterpillar, sternly. "Explain yourself!"
> "I ca'n't explain *myself*, I'm afraid, Sir," said Alice, "because I'm not myself, you see."
> (Carroll, 1992:35, original emphasis)

This disconnectedness, or ‘not-whole’-ness, as Lacan describes it (1975:72-73), from her identity is first experienced by Alice when she falls into Wonderland, and is confronted by the two instructions: ‘DRINK ME’ and ‘EAT ME’ (Carroll, 1992:11-12). Much like Yvaine’s experience of falling down, Alice’s fall, on an initial level, takes her away from her point of reference in Victorian England above, and into the fantastical Wonderland. However, the instruction to ‘EAT ME’ (Carroll, 1992:12) threatens a further fall. As I have previously noted, this fall aligns itself with the warning Yvaine receives regarding crossing the Wall from Faerie into the reasonable world, and which Alice refers to as ‘going out altogether’ (Carroll, 1992:12).

Significantly, the same level of anxiety is experienced when, after following instructions on a bottle to ‘DRINK ME’ (Carroll, 1992:12), she starts to grow in the extreme, thereby becoming an imposing display of substance within a relatively, and uncomfortably, restrictive space in Wonderland.

> Luckily for Alice, the little magic bottle had now had its full effect, and she grew no larger: still it was very uncomfortable, and, as there seemed to be no sort of chance of ever getting out of the room again, no wonder she felt unhappy.
>
> (Carroll, 1992:28)

Alice is trapped, both by her significance and her insignificance in Wonderland — a state which is seen to anticipate her experience of womanhood in Victorian England — raised on a pedestal as an exemplar

of the submissive 'Angel in the House' (Patmore, 1854). Such an alignment of the experience of substance and nothingness reinforces the notion that these opposites exist within the same space. For Alice, this 'not-whole'-ness (Lacan, 1975:72-73) from any singular sense of identity is called by a different name — Madness.[16]

> "Oh, you ca'n't help that," said the Cat: "we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad."
> "How do you know I'm mad?" said Alice.
> "You must be," said the Cat, "or you wouldn't have come here."
>
> (Carroll, 1992:51)

The Cheshire Cat indicates that Madness is a central characteristic of the society of Wonderland. His implying that Alice must be mad, demonstrates that she is under pressure, based on a particular social perspective, to integrate into this society of the imagination.

In *Stardust*, Gaiman's heroine, Yvaine, while initially exempt from the considerations of the human journey from childhood to adulthood because she is immortal, experiences the same pressure to conform to social prescription. From her lofty position in the skies, she is a reader of the passage of time and of human experiences. Yvaine is afforded less opportunity than Alice to demonstrate her potential for agency within Gaiman's narrative. However, she does note that her true nature rests in

[16] For an in-depth analysis of madness as it relates to the condition of womanhood, see Elaine Showalter's article entitled 'Victorian Women and Insanity', in which she specifically notes that 'the domestication of insanity, its assimilation by the Victorian institution, coincides with the period in which the predominance of women among the insane becomes a statistically verifiable phenomenon' (1980:159).

the active mode. Her existence is directed by a single purpose: she is a star, and, as stated in Vaughn's film, 'stars shine' (2007). In addition, Yvaine is a significant star in the sky, noted for guiding people and directing their movements. As a star, she assumes an almost godlike position, observing the movements of those below. In this sense she is an immortal Self. However, her lofty position is not infallible, as she is knocked out of the sky as a consequence of the actions of the Lord of Stormhold, and she is forced to abandon her position of Self-hood and fall into Other-ness — the point at which she is represented most prominently within the narrative.

Her passivity is not only connected to her submission to the master-author, Gaiman, but also to Tristran. She is, quite literally, broken, chained to him and forced to abide by his decision to bring her to Victoria as a trophy. In her work, 'Inventions and Transformations: Imagining New Worlds in the Stories of Neil Gaiman', Mathilda Slabbert notes the following regarding Yvaine's captivity:

> Trist[r]an first holds the injured Yvaine captive by tying her to him with a magic silver chain. The traditional subservience of the female to the male hero is underplayed by Trist[r]an's use of a delicate silver chain, suggestive of jewellery, but yet a tool which entraps her and forces her submission. The presence of the chain and the suggestion of male dominance are ironically emphasized by Yvaine's inability to escape; even without the chain, she has broken her leg.
> (2009:71)

This forced submission, and dislocation from her authentic existence in the night sky demonstrates that Yvaine, as a woman, is 'not-whole' (Lacan, 1975:72-73):

> "I broke my leg," said the young lady.
>
> "I am sorry, of course," said Tristran. "But the *star*."
>
> "I broke my leg," she told him sadly, "when I fell." And with that, she heaved her lump of mud at him. Glittering dust fell from her arm, as it moved.
>
> The clod of mud hit Tristran in the chest.
>
> "Go away," she sobbed, burying her face in her arms. "Go away and leave me alone."
>
> "You're the star," said Tristran dawning.
>
> "And you're a clodpoll," said the girl, bitterly, "and a ninny, a numbskull, a lackwit and a coxcomb!"
>
> "Yes," said Tristran. "I suppose I am that." And with that he unwound one end of the silver chain, and slipped it around the girl's slim wrist. He felt the loop of the chain tighten about his own.
>
> She stared up at him, bitterly. "What," she asked, in a voice that was suddenly beyond outrage, beyond hate, "do you think you are doing?"
>
> "Taking you home with me," said Tristran. "I made an oath."
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:81-82, original emphasis)

She is the object that Tristran believes Victoria most desires, the object that will win her heart. Two specific Others are created as a consequence of Tristran's pledge to Victoria — because Faerie is equated with other lands historically acknowledged as having fallen under the British Empire, it too must be thought of as a colony, an Other to the imperial Self; and

the fallen star is associated with the exploited resources of the colony. Yvaine, within the context of Tristran's initial impetus for venturing beyond the Wall, is the object or Other on these two levels.

> "Anyway, should you not be running off to retrieve my fallen star? It fell to the East, over there." And she laughed again. "Silly shop-boy. It is all you can do to ensure that we have the ingredients for rice pudding."
>
> "And if I brought you the fallen star?" asked Tristran lightly. "What would you give me? A kiss? Your hand in marriage?"
>
> "Anything you desire," said Victoria, amused.
>
> "You swear it?" asked Tristran.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:38)

The promise that Tristran makes to Victoria to retrieve the fallen star, as an act of devotion, is reminiscent of the colonial exploits of the Victorian Age. Indeed, the name Victoria evokes the ruling queen of the British Imperial Age, while Tristran is depicted as an explorer and coloniser of the unfamiliar world of Faerie, of which he will eventually become king. Tristran's reference to the lands he will visit and the prizes he will bring back for Victoria allude to all the countries explored and colonised for England:

> "I would go to America – all the way to San Francisco, to the gold-fields, and I would not come back until I had your weight in gold. Then I would carry it back here, and lay it at your feet.
>
> "I would travel to the distant northlands did you but say the word, and slay the mighty polar bears and bring you back their hides."

> …
>
> Tristran's eyes blazed in the moonlight. "I would travel to far Cathay for you, and bring you a huge junk I would capture from the king of the pirates, laden with jade and silk and opium.
>
> "I would go to Australia, at the bottom of the world." Said Tristran, "and bring you. Um." He ransacked the penny dreadfuls in his head, trying to remember if any of their heroes had visited Australia. "A kangaroo," he said. "And opals," he added. He was fairly sure about the opals.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:36-37)

West, North, East, South. There is not a place in the world that Tristran has not promised to visit in his quest to win the hand of Victoria. In his imagination, the world has been conquered and its resources exploited in the name of Victoria, and now Tristran seeks to cross the boundary of the Wall to seek the fallen star in the land of Faerie — a land of the imagination, like Wonderland. The quest for the star implies a colonisation of the imagination, which is equated to the star that must be exploited and enslaved because Victoria wills it. Yvaine is expected to comply with Victoria's will as indicative of a larger social expectation.

The influence of time and space on Yvaine is also noteworthy. Time's influence upon her is noted as both relevant and irrelevant. Time is irrelevant in that she is an immortal, though fallen, star. Time only influences Yvaine through Tristran's insistence on meeting Victoria's deadline in delivering the fallen star. Tristran does not want to be late in delivering Yvaine to Victoria, and is therefore obsessed with time, much like the White Rabbit is obsessed with his watch and the lateness of the

hour. This is emphasised more strongly in the film adaptation of *Stardust* (2007) in that Victoria says that the fallen star must be brought back to her for her birthday, giving Trist[r]an a week to retrieve it.

Yvaine's space is set apart from linear time, as stated earlier, due to her immortality — her space of existence as a star being the night sky, and her space of existence in human form being within the boundaries of Faerie. Yvaine also exists within the repeating, eternal cycle of time — a condition of 'female subjectivity', and more readily associated with 'imaginary space', as noted by Kristeva (1981:15-16). As a star, her nocturnal cycle of being awake and shining begins when she becomes apparent at nightfall, disappearing at daybreak. This cycle renews itself again and again. It is only when she falls from the sky and is enslaved by Tristran that she is forced to conform to linear time — the Self's time, and by extension, Victorian society's prescribed time. In Vaughn's film (2007), this is clearly demonstrated by the dialogue between Trist[r]an and Yvaine:

Trist[r]an:	Don't you ever sleep?
Yvaine:	Not at night. May have escaped your notice, genius, but that's when the stars have rather better things to do. They're coming out, shining, that sort of thing.
Trist[r]an:	Yeah, well, it may have escaped yours, but you're not in the sky anymore. Coming out is off the agenda. Shining has been suspended until further notice. Oh, and sleeping during the day is O-U-T. Unless you have some magical ability to sleep while you're walking.

(Vaughn, 2007)

With their opposing experiences of time, Yvaine's falling down from the sky and Tristran's growing up and ascending to the position of Lord of Stormhold as well as their initial master-slave dynamic within the space of Faerie, Tristran and Yvaine align themselves with Heidegger's concept of *Mitsein* (2003:59) in both Gaiman's and Vaughn's texts. The influence of the space of Faerie upon these characters, and the influence of the wider context of Victorian England, binds both of these characters to the social expectations that require them to fulfil a particular role.

Within Victorian England, Tristran is bound to the expectation of a promise he makes to Victoria Forester (Gaiman, 1999:38). This promise is initially perceived as placing the full weight of the burden of that expectation squarely on his shoulders. However, once Tristran develops a greater sense of responsibility for his own life, this initial perception of submission is overturned:

> [Victoria] nodded, and raised her head, so her pretty chin pointed toward Tristran. 'But I gave you my word, Tristran. And I *will* keep my word…. I am responsible for all that you have gone through – even for your poor burned hand. And if you want me, then I am yours.
>
> 'To be honest,' he said, 'I think that I am responsible for all that I have done, not you. And it is hard to regret a moment of it, although I missed soft beds from time to time,…. But you did not promise me your hand if I came back with the star, Vicky.'
>
> 'I didn't?'
>
> 'No. You promised me anything I desired.'
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:178, original emphasis)

Tristran denies Victoria's authority over his life, disempowering her by revealing her misinterpretation of the terms of their deal. He transforms her expectation (that he should prove his worth by retrieving the star) into his expectation that she will marry him. This can be seen as symbolic of society bowing to masculine authority — Tristran's authority over his own life in the real world. As a gesture of defiance against social expectation and Victorian mores, Tristran is eventually described as turning away from 'the lights of Wall' and claiming his new life in the East, with his star-bride, Yvaine (Gaiman, 1999:190).

Within the boundaries of Faerie, Tristran is bound to the expectation of his bloodline, and while he is initially reluctant to be 'lord of anywhere… or of anything', as he claims (Gaiman, 1999:187), he eventually embraces his obligation to fulfil this role because it enables his authority rather than disabling it. Yvaine's experience of both worlds does not afford her the same opportunity for self-empowerment as Tristran has. Rather, she is disabled by the expectations placed on her to submit by both Victorian England and Faerie. The threat of her insignificance is more profound in the real world (Gaiman, 1999:170).

Yvaine's celestial importance is also afforded very little dignity in Faerie. She submits to masculine expectation on various levels — as a fallen star; as Tristran's wife and Lady of Stormhold – but her initial enslavement by

Tristran in order to fulfil his promise to Victoria is significant as indicating the magnitude of such submission:

> The star let go of the chain. 'He once caught me with a chain much like yours. Then he freed me, and I ran from him. But he found me and bound me with an obligation, which binds my kind more securely than any chain ever could.'
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:171)

This masculine expectation binds Yvaine to Tristran's will, and his will is strongly aligned with Faerie because he rules the kingdom as Lord of Stormhold. Gaiman not only binds Yvaine to Tristran for the duration of his life, but also after his death, and this, in turn, binds her to her fallen state — the inauthentic mode of Dasein. Yvaine's longing for self-fulfilment and restoration to her position in the heavens — an authentic mode of Dasein — is at odds with her obligation as caretaker of her late husband's throne. Infinite purpose is transformed, through the fall, into an eternal disconnectedness — a self-alienation.

When the screenwriters, Jane Goldman and Matthew Vaughn, adapted Gaiman's novel, the focus of the relationship between Yvaine and Trist[r]an shifted from an earth-based disconnectedness below to an alliance above between twin stars. As Cristina Bacchilega and John Rieder note in 'Mixing It Up: Generic Complexity and Gender Ideology in Early Twenty-First Century Fairy Tale Films':

> Contemporary fairy tales, in both mainstream and eccentric texts, play out a multiplicity of "position takings" (Bourdieu 1985) that do not polarize ideological differences as they did during the 1970s but, rather, produce complex alignments and alliances.
>
> (2010:25)

In *Stardust*, Gaiman is not merely writing a story set *in* Victorian England. He is also writing *about* Victorian England. He retrospectively reveals the innate hypocrisy of a historical period noted for the resurgence of the fairy tale, while, at the same time, advocating sensibility above fantasy. Gaiman's insight aligns with Kristeva's consideration of the text-context relationship along the vertical axis of her model (Figure 1), as a postmodern retrospective of Victorian fairy tales.

Tristran, as a male character, becomes the author of his own destiny, an authority which is grounded in the Victorian world. Unlike Alice, he is not a child venturing into a fantasy world. He is a young man of seventeen (Gaiman, 1999:31) venturing across the wall on his lofty quest, inadvertently to colonise Faerie, as the eventual Lord of Stormhold, and exploiting the resources, the fallen star Yvaine, to prove his devotion to a very aptly named young lady named Victoria (Gaiman, 1999:36-39). He is the surveyor of the world beyond the wall and its eventual conqueror, and because the narrative predominantly follows Tristran's perspective, according to Kristeva's model of horizontal and vertical coordinates (Figure 1), he could be seen to occupy the position along the horizontal axis belonging to the writing subject.

Yvaine's presence within the story alludes to her being an observer or reader of events as she once looked down into the worlds of Faerie and England to 'read' the people in them. In Vaughn's film (2007), Yvaine's soliloquy, as she rides in the caravan of Ditchwater Sal, reveals her as observer/reader:

> Yvaine: You know when I said I knew little about love? That wasn't true. I know a lot about love. I've seen it, centuries and centuries of it, and it was the only thing that made watching your world bearable. All those wars. Pain, lies, hate.... It made me want to turn away and never look down again. But when I see the way that mankind loves.... You could search to the furthest reaches of the universe and never find anything more beautiful. So yes, I know that love is unconditional. But I also know that it can be unpredictable, unexpected, uncontrollable, unbearable and strangely easy to mistake for loathing, and... What I'm trying to say, Tristan is.... I think I love you. Is this love, Tristan? I never imagined I'd know it for myself. My heart.... It feels like my chest can barely contain it. Like it's trying to escape because it doesn't belong to me anymore. It belongs to you. And if you wanted it, I'd wish for nothing in exchange — no gifts. No goods. No demonstrations of devotion. Nothing but knowing you loved me too. Just your heart, in exchange for mine.
>
> (Vaughn, 2007)

The enslavement of Yvaine as the prized fallen star, the injury of her leg and the chronic limp that she must endure, the declaration of love that she expresses, and her eventual marriage to Tristran, according to Gaiman's Epilogue to *Stardust*, deny her immortality by denying her an opportunity to return to the sky. She is presented with a choice of whether to stay with or to leave Tristran (Gaiman, 1999:166), but her choice to stay —

apparently an act of empowerment — disempowers her authentic nature. She remains down below in Stormhold and is no longer connected to the 'infinite stars' above (Gaiman, 1999:194). Instead, Yvaine is trapped in a masculine-ordered world as the wife of the 'last surviving male heir of the Stormhold bloodline' (Vaughn, 2010):

> Yvaine became the Lady of Stormhold, and proved a better monarch, in peace and in war, than any would've dared to hope. She did not age as her husband had aged, and her eyes remained as blue, her hair as golden-white, and – as the free citizens of the Stormhold would have occasional cause to discover – her temper as quick to flare as on the day that Tristran first encountered her in the glade beside the pool.
>
> She walks with a limp to this day, although no one in the Stormhold would ever remark upon it, any more than they dare remark upon the way she glitters and shines, upon occasion, in the darkness.
>
> They say that each night, when the duties of state permit, she climbs, on foot, and limps, alone, to the highest peak of the palace, where she stands for hour after hour, seeming not to notice the cold peak winds. She says nothing at all, but simply stares upward into the dark sky and watches, with sad eyes, the slow dance of the infinite stars.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:194)

Within the context of the events that transpire after Tristran's death, Yvaine's character arc follows a similar course to another literary immortal. In J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings,* Appendix A, the story of Aragorn, a man, and Arwen, an elf, is chronicled. While her kin pass over into the Undying Land, her choice to stay with Aragorn means that she cannot be reunited with them after his death. As with Yvaine, this

dislocation from her kind is experienced in silence. Tolkien describes Arwen's state of being, after Aragorn's death, as follows:

> But Arwen went forth from the House, and the light of her eyes was quenched, and it seemed to her people that she had become cold and grey as nightfall in winter that comes without a star… and she went out from the city of Minas Tirith and passed away to the land of Lórien, and dwelt there alone under the fading trees until winter came. Galadriel had passed away and Celeborn also was gone, and the land was silent.
>
> (2001:1038)

While Yvaine does not exclude herself from society to the same extent as Arwen, the sense of isolation that these characters experience, in having chosen to remain behind, indicates that these choices have contributed to their self-alienation. However, it must also be noted that choice is invalidated because, whether Yvaine and Arwen choose to or not, the result is still based on a submission to Tristran and Aragorn (as both marital partners and monarchs) respectively.

Like Alice, who becomes Queen Alice in *Through the Looking-glass*, Yvaine becomes a person of authority and influence within a world that is removed from Victorian society — aligning itself with Woolf's observation that '[i]maginatively she is of the highest importance' (1989:43). However, she is also removed from her own natural state as a star and silenced by this isolation, seeming to be the leader of Stormhold, but not truly belonging to those she leads. This intensifies her Other-ness. Unlike Alice, she can never cross over the threshold between Faerie and

Victorian England. While the world of imagination that is Faerie gives life to the star,[17] beyond the wall, in Victorian England, governed by rationality and science, she would cease to be. Yvaine is influenced by the social mores of Victorian England through her interaction with Tristran, but is denied access to that society because it would effectively undo her existence. This may be considered as another indication of her 'not-whole'-ness (Lacan, 1975:72-73).

Based on Kristeva's model of horizontal and vertical coordinates, in the graphic model of *Stardust* (Figure 3) the horizontal axis would demonstrate the dynamic between Tristran and Yvaine, while the vertical axis would demonstrate Gaiman's postmodern retrospective on Victorian culture, particularly as it relates the expectations placed upon women to fulfil their roles as wife and mother:

[17] See Woolf (1989:43-44).

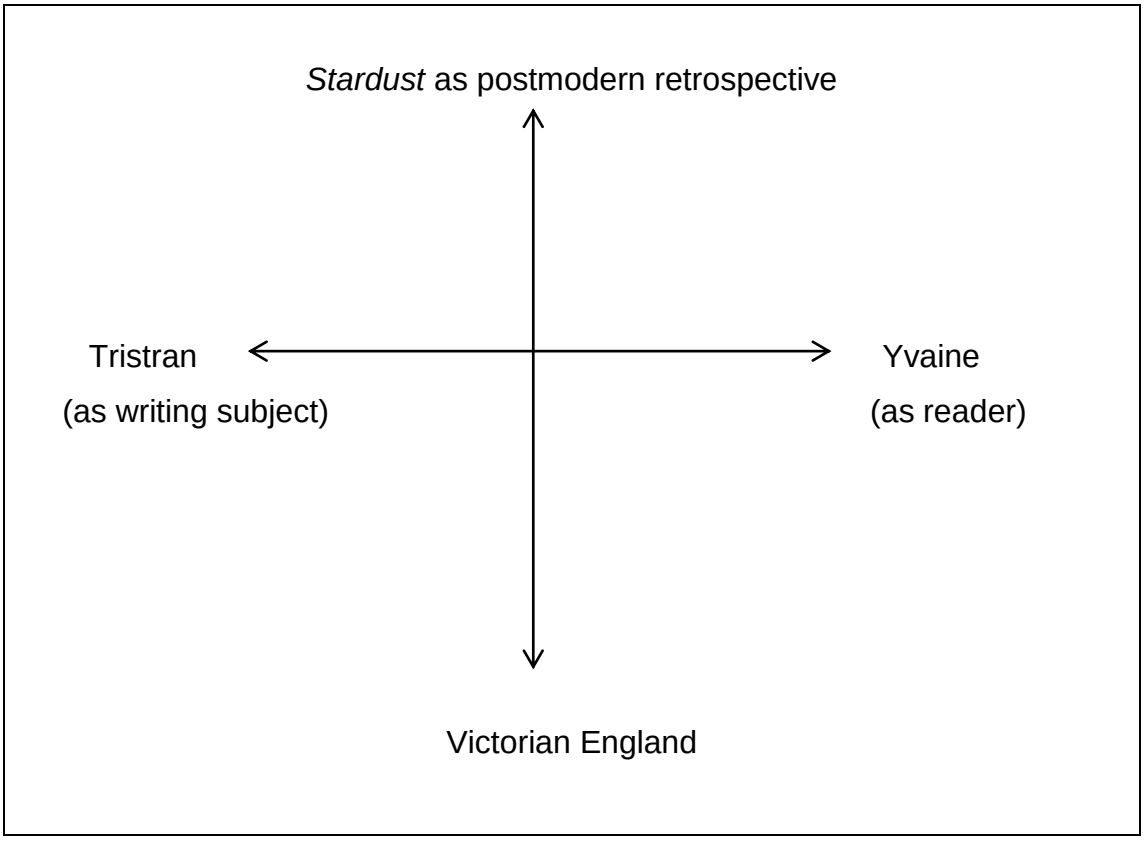

Figure 3. *Stardust* (Adapted Horizontal and Vertical Coordinates)

In writing the *Alice* texts and *Stardust*, Carroll and Gaiman provide insight into the mode of being of Victorian women represented by Alice's sister and Victoria respectively. Both Alice and Yvaine are strongly influenced by Victorian mores, because their journey is weighed against these two representatives of Victorian womanhood, and these rigid social expectations for women to fulfil their domestic obligation as wife and mother ultimately disconnect them from their authentic purpose.

In order to assent to social expectation, as seen in the four texts I have explored in this chapter, the female must fall or be low, and this lowness facilitates the experience of what it is like to be the Other in a masculine-

ordered world. Within Victorian society, fairy tales represent a falling away from the rationality of what is regarded as the superior occupations of the mind in scientific discovery. However, what the four texts establish is the capacity to connect these two seemingly disparate experiences within the same space — the imagination. However, where the masculine Self is empowered within this space — for example, the Mad Hatter and the Cheshire Cat are shown to be influential in the mad world of Wonderland, or Tristran assuming the responsibilities of his influential position as Lord of Stormhold — the feminine Other, beset with the anxieties and intentions of the male author, and pressed upon by the expectations of Victorian society, must submit or be relegated to being 'not-whole' (Lacan, 1975:72-73). This dislocation from her authentic self must, in turn, be presentable — hidden behind an angelic façade of idealised domesticity.

For Alice and Yvaine, social expectation requires that they assume a role, like an actress on the Victorian stage, devoting themselves to 'a male-designed script' (Heilbrun, 1988:52). They are required to be readerly rather than writerly, proper rather than indecorously self-alienated rather than self-realised. They are required to become Woman.

CHAPTER 2: THE DANCE OF VICTORIAN SOCIETY AND FANTASY LITERATURE

In Kristeva's model of horizontal and vertical coordinates (1969:145), the vertical axis represents the text-context relationship. In this chapter, I will apply the vertical relationship between the text and its social context in Kristeva's model to my selected texts. This will be done on two levels: I will examine how the *Alice* texts and *Stardust* relate specifically to the sociocultural mode of the Victorian age, and I will explore how these two novels conform to the genres of fantasy and romance for children. The filmic re-visionings of these texts will also be scrutinised in the same light. In expanding on this text-context relationship, I will show that literature for children, however duplicitously, served the same function as myth: to assist in social reproduction, by educating children into their socially prescribed roles. I will use the analogy of the dance to illustrate this. The previous chapter's analysis of Victorian womanhood will be further developed as I explore the way education and social conditioning informs the girl-child's transition into adulthood.

In an article for *The Guardian* online, Gaiman writes:

> Once upon a time, back when animals spoke and rivers sang and every quest was worth going on, back when dragons still roared and maidens were beautiful and an honest young man with a good heart and a great deal of luck could always wind up with a princess and half the kingdom – back then, *fairytales were for adults.*
>
> (2007, emphasis added)

Gaiman's observation provides valuable insight into the original purpose of fairy tales – that is, as a didactic literary form designed specifically for adult audiences. The adaptation of fairy tales, and, by extension, fantasy literature, for child audiences is relevant to my study in this chapter, since the Victorian age saw precisely this transition from adult-oriented to child-oriented fantasy literature. Victorian children's literature exhibits two generic impulses — simultaneously falling down to the level of the child reader and appealing 'upwards' to the desires of the adult reader. This is supported by Knoepflmacher's claims regarding the original and developed readership of fairy tales (1983:497), and Gaiman makes a similar point in the interview quoted above (2007).

In his critical essay, 'Escape', Coveney observes:

> The child indeed becomes a means of escape from the pressures of adult adjustment, a means of regression towards the irresponsibility of youth, childhood, infancy, and ultimately nescience itself.
>
> (1992:327-328)

Assigning a regressive value to the child and a progressive value to the adult has met with much criticism, most notably from psychoanalysts. Despite Susan Hancock's pejorative Freudian view of fantasy literature for children as 'an inferior, regressive literature' (2005:42), it serves to reflect specific social conventions – in this case, of the Victorian era. The important insights brought to bear on the study of children's literature by

the critic Jacqueline Rose refute Freud's and Hancock's assignation of a regressive value to the child. She writes:

> Childhood persists – this is opposite, note, from the reductive idea of regression to childhood most often associated with Freud. It persists as something which we endlessly rework in our attempt to build an image of our own history.
>
> (1984:12)

Rose provides a key understanding of the relationship between the adult and the child, which has had a far-reaching influence on critical studies of children's literature. In her view, childhood becomes the target of adults' unconscious desires as they imbue their own history with an idealised and unrealistic notion of children. Accordingly, Rose sees the creation of child characters such as Peter Pan and Wendy in J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, and Alice in Carroll's *Alice* texts, as examples of adult authors manipulating and distorting the realities of children's experiences for didactic, sexual and educational purposes. Here, Rose's insight aligns with prolific children's literature critic, Jack Zipes, who, in his article 'Second Thoughts on Socialization through Literature for Children', defines 'literature for children' as a 'script coded by adults for the information and internalization of children which must meet the approbation of adults' (1981:19). The adult, and, by extension, the world of the adult – the context of the real – exerts a strong influence on the development or *becoming* of the child. The adult author, as a representative of his or her society, is actively involved in educating or socialising girl-children into their specific role as 'Angel[s] in the House' (Patmore, 1854).

The process of *becoming* a Woman, specifically within the gender norms of the Victorian age, is crucial for my dissertation. This process is not merely facilitated by lessons taught in classrooms, but also enabled through the less formal and equally didactic design of children's verse and fantasy literature of the Victorian age. In this sense, the magical realms that form the context of fantasy literature can be viewed as a means through which the context of social reality is represented and understood.

The process of becoming a woman is distinguished by women's adapting to the 'reality' of their gendered life scripts. In this regard, and because fantasy is so often considered to be divergent from reality, it is instructive to consider what constitutes reality. Naturally, there are several views of this. One expositor is G.S. Brett, who scrutinises Plato's view of the Imagination or Phantasy, and its ability to represent reality, in his work *History of Psychology*, first published in 1912 in three volumes:

> Imagination is a mental activity in a sensuous form; sensation, memory, and opinion are all accompanied by an imagination. Phantasy… in Plato suggests the unreal as opposed to the real; the art of phantastic… is the art of producing appearances; so being concerned more with the cognitive value of mental processes than their intrinsic characteristics, Plato pays little attention to this power of producing unreal appearances. There is a science of imitations called 'representation'… which aims at truth more than the art of fantastic: to this the preference is given, and among the cognitive faculties we shall find conjectural representation… included.
>
> (1962:79)

The traditional Platonic view, as outlined above by Brett, shows the imagination to be 'unreal' (1962:79) and a faculty that may be construed to promulgate untruth. However, there is another point that Plato emphasises – the 'science of imitations called "representation"… which aims at truth' (1962:79). In light of Plato's remarks, the divide between Victorian England and the worlds of 'Phantasy' – the portals through which the imagination *and* reality are accessed – is blurred. While one might initially assume that the worlds of 'Phantasy', Faerie and Wonderland, have no influence on the reasonable world of Victorian England, upon closer scrutiny, it becomes clear that the two seemingly contrary worlds of 'Phantasy' and Victorian England *do* mirror each other. Their relationship is a marriage of contraries that informs the development or progress of the protagonists of *Stardust* and the *Alice* texts.

Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge adds to the understanding of the influence of the imagination in Chapter 13 of his *Biographia Literaria* (1817), where he writes:

> The imagination then I consider either as primary or secondary. The primary imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the finite I AM. The secondary imagination I consider as an echo of the former, coexisting with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the *kind* of its agency, and differing only in *degree*, and in the *mode* of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate; or, where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and unify. It is essentially *vital*, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially dead.
>
> (in Wu, 2006:691-692, original emphasis)

According to Coleridge, the imagination has the capacity, not only to create, but also to recreate. The world of the imagination is simultaneously independent of the influence of reality, and a reflection of it. Both primary and secondary functions can be associated with Eros or the creation drive. The secondary function is most relevant to my discussion in this chapter, particularly with regard to the imagination's ability to recreate and represent in order to facilitate a dialectical unity between apparent opposites.

Coleridge refers specifically to the unity between life and death, implying that death is an echo or recreation of life. Similarly, we can infer that, for Plato and Coleridge, the world of the imagination is an echo/recreation of the real world. The marriage between the imaginative and the real is at the very heart of the enduring popularity of fairy tales. Northrop Frye, in his work *Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance*, notes the following with regards to the connection between imagination and reality:

> [T]here has been a kind of reversible shuttle moving between imagination and reality, as Stevens uses those words. One direction is called "romantic," the other "realistic." The realistic tendency moves in the direction of the representational and the displaced, the romantic tendency in the opposite direction, concentrating on the formulaic units of myth and metaphor. At the extreme of imagination we find the themes and motifs of folktale, elements of the process that Coleridge distinguished as fancy, and described as "a mode of memory" playing with "fixities and definites." At the extreme of realism comes what is often called "naturalism," and the extreme of that the

> shaping spirit wanders among documentary, expository, or reminiscent material, unable to find a clear narrative line from a beginning to an end.
>
> (1976:37)

The escaptist or realist aspect of fantasy literature indicates that the purpose of these stories is both progressive, elevating the story to a specific sociocultural relevance within a defined real-world context, and regressive, in creating a space in which reality is disrupted and embraces the scope of the imagination in its infinite possibility. In this way unity is achieved between the context of Victorian England and the fantasy world that reflects and represents it. As Joanna Russ declares, in her Introduction to *The Penguin Book of Modern Fantasy by Women*: 'Fantasy is reality' (1995:xii).

In a similar vein, the German critic, Johann Jakob Bodmer, writes about the ability of the imagination to transform reality and to enable the reader to learn about and see the world anew through the adventures of the central protagonists of fantasy literature:

> The imagination is not merely the soul's treasury, where the senses store their pictures in safe-keeping for subsequent use; besides this it also has a region of its own which extends much further than the dimensions of the senses … . It not only places the real before our eyes in a vivid image and makes distant things present but also, with a power more potent than that of magic, it draws that which does not exist out of the state of potentiality, gives it a semblance of reality and makes us see, hear and feel these new creations.
>
> (cited in Furst, 1970:332)

Bodmer's insight may be read in the light of Jung's assigning a feminine gender to the soul or anima, as well as the imagination, a connection that is also made by Woolf (1989:43-44) This is interesting because Alice and Yvaine are the imaginary products of two male authors, Lewis Carroll and Neil Gaiman, who have placed these characters within the context of a masculine-ordered Victorian society. The unconscious connection between male author and female character serves as a microcosm of collective unconscious of the Victorian age. While Gaiman is often seen as a postmodern author[18], by setting *Stardust* in Victorian England, he implicitly reinforces the importance of the Victorian age for fantasy. Accordingly, I refer throughout the dissertation to the Victorian age as the primary socio-historical context of the novels.

The text is a social and discursive representation of the context within which it was created. Following Rose's and Zipes's insights, literature for children forms an ideological space within which the adult instructs the child according to certain sociocultural expectations and sensibilities, while simultaneously acknowledging the child's sense of wonder, curiosity and imagination, because it is his own. In this way, the adult is essentially choreographing the child's development into adulthood – guiding the child within a framework of moves and gestures around the metaphorical

[18] Mathilda Slabbert, in 'Inventions and Transformations: Imagining New Worlds in the Stories of Neil Gaiman', refers to 'Gaiman's creative contributions to the postmodern fairy tale genre' (2009:69), and Joseph McCabe characterises Gaiman's works having 'crossed boundaries' (2004:1), a trait which can be closely associated with the literary techniques used in postmodern narratives such as pastiche, intertextuality and metafiction (Allen, 2000:174-208).

Victorian ‘dance floor’. Dance provides an appropriate metaphor for exploring the interaction between male authors and female characters as a microcosm of the interaction between context and text because dance brings together the gendered aspects of social interaction while focusing on the wider context of these meetings, thus highlighting, again, the role of society in shaping the text.

Within a standard Victorian dance, a partnership exists between a leader, who is usually a man, and a follower, usually a woman. As the leader progresses forward along the dance floor, he guides the follower, who must react with regressive movements. This progressive/regressive relationship on the dance floor is mirrored in the gender politics of the Victorian age – in order for Man to progress or grow up into self-empowerment, Woman must regress or fall down into weaker positions. These movements are produced by a social process instigated to differentiate between appropriate masculine and feminine roles. This process is reinforced and perpetuated in and by canonical texts, such as fairy tales. In my view male adult authors leads their female child-like protagonists through a set of choreographed movements with the purpose of controlling and possessing his unconscious anima-muse because he is empowered by Victorian mores to do so.

Cheryl Wilson explains that Victorian women were expected to assume a submissive role, despite shifting attitudes towards key gender issues:

> Despite changing conceptions of gender roles and sexuality at the fin-de-siécle, in certain arenas, pushing women onto the path from virginal courtship, to heterosexual marriage, to domestic bliss remained the status quo …. Women are, essentially, at the mercy of any potential suitor, and they are continually thrust into a series of partnerships — the body is forced to act, despite the wishes of the mind and heart.
>
> (2008:192)

Wilson observes that the dance is an essential part of the courtship rituals that will eventually culminate in a girl becoming a woman and assuming her place as 'Angel in the House' (Patmore, 1854). Indeed, both the *Alice* and *Stardust* texts make reference to dance, either as a means of instruction or as a means of courtship. Lewis Carroll includes reference to the quadrille, described by Martin Gardner in *The Annotated Alice* as 'one of the most difficult of the ballroom dances fashionable at the time Carroll wrote his tale' (2000:100). Gardner continues that the real inspiration for the Alice character, Alice Liddell, and her siblings, 'had been taught the dance by a private tutor' (2000:100). In Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), Alice's mother forces her to dance the quadrille with Hamish as part of their courtship.

> Alice: Hamish, do you ever tire of quadrille?
> Hamish: On the contrary. I find it invigorating
>
> (Burton, 2010)

Hamish is empowered to control the outcome of the conversation and, by extension, the outcome of the dance as a courtship ritual, because Alice's question demonstrates her reliance on his answer. This shows that authority resides with him and not with her. In using the pronoun 'you'

(2010), Alice is deflecting the control of both the dance and the conversation onto Hamish. He gladly accepts superiority as an 'I' (2010) over the actions and thoughts that make Alice contrary to him. Hamish finds the quadrille 'invigorating' (2010) because it reinforces his role as a dominant man, while Alice is drained by its reminder of her subservient destiny.

Dancing is also associated with Yvaine and her nature as a star via the metaphor of the 'dance of the spheres'. Tristran holds authority over the reader's perception of the movement of stars as a dance:

> He stared up at the stars: and it seemed to him then that they were dancers, stately and graceful, performing a dance almost infinite in its complexity.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:57)

Despite the infinite scope of Yvaine's nature as a star, Tristran, male and mortal, demonstrates entitlement through his possession of her. Vaughn's *Stardust* (2007) transforms the dance above into the dance below, when, under the tutelage of the charismatic and effeminate Captain Shakespeare (who is absent from Gaiman's text, but may be viewed as an androgynous mediator between Tristran and Yvaine), Yvaine is taught to waltz, and later dances a waltz with Tristran. While dancing with Tristran, Yvaine gives the first hint of her love for him. Her natural purpose as a star that shines is transformed into her ability to shine only for Tristran. This can be seen as the moment of Yvaine's disempowerment and an exploitation of her natural ability by a male 'coloniser'. Because

this moment centres around a dance, it can be viewed as a symbolic parallel of the 'dance' of gender and power. This extends to the relationship between the adult author and the child reader. Rose notes that this dynamic is similar to the coloniser and colonised, where the adventures that characterise literature for children may be seen as 'the inheritors of a fully colonialist concept of development, and a highly specific and limited conception of the child' (1984:57). Rose and Zipes concur in seeing literature for children as a method for adult authors to construct childhood and children in powerful ways, both within the confines of the text and in social interactions. The manipulation of the child's development by the intentions of the adult author is brought about by the capacity of the text to reflect the mores of the sociocultural context of its production. Such intentions shift literature for children and, by extension, fantasy literature, away from merely being a pleasurable experience towards what Rose calls 'the almost educational *use* to which it could be put and the contribution which it makes to the child's mastery of the real world' (1984:55).

Dance, like the other dimensions of girls' social education, served a specific male-centred purpose. Fairy tales served a similar purpose – to reinforce patriarchal order and marriage as the inevitable goal of Victorian womanhood. The goal of educating the girl-child, through various forms of masculine-prescribed sociocultural ritual and literary forms, is noted by Lissa Paul, as a central point of departure for both feminist and children's literature critics. In 'Enigma Variations: What Feminist Theory Knows

about Children's Literature', she states that '[a]s it happens, the forms of physical, economic, and linguistic entrapment that feminist critics have been revealing in women's literature match the images of entrapment in children's literature …. After all, the nineteenth century, give or take a few decades either side, corresponds to 'The Golden Age of Children's Literature', to the age of Lewis Carroll … and to the age when traditional folktales and fairy tales were gathered up into the children's literature canon' (cited in Hunt, 1987:150).

In her essay, 'Foolish Virgins', E. Lynn Linton defends the sentiment of the age in equipping a girl-child with the necessary education to prepare her for her career as wife and mother:

> Teach young women from their childhood upwards that marriage is their single career, and it is inevitable that they should look upon every hour which is not spent in promoting this sublime end and aim as so much subtracted from life ....
>
> She is indifferent to politics, to literature – a word, to anything that requires thought. She reads novels of a kind, because novels are all about love, and love had once something to do with marriage, her own peculiar and absorbing business. Beyond this her mind does not stir.
> (1867:212)[19]

Linton's derogatory comment that 'novels are all about love', underrates the contribution made by fiction in creating a romanticised vision of a girl becoming a woman, marrying 'Prince Charming' and 'living happily ever

[19] A similar sentiment is expressed in several eighteenth-century conduct books for women, such as Wilkes (1766).

after', which was key, in Victorian fiction, to women's socialisation. The literary form most aligned to this end is the fairy tale.

In 'Second Thoughts on Socialization through Literature for Children', Zipes reinforces the didactic aspect of fairy tales and the intention behind their instruction:[20]

> That literature for children has its bourgeois origins in instruction is well-known. The didactic aspect, the moral lesson, the doctrinaire ideology of the Protestant Ethic were part and parcel of scripture to be learned by heart and engraved in the minds of children. Entertainment and amusement were by-products. To enjoy literature was permissible as long as it was done with a clean mind. Within the bounds of proscription and inscription fantasy's wings were clipped. The humor of the imagination was suspect and had to be restrained. The logos of the word was to initiate the young into society through school texts, religious tracts, homilies, and didactic stories. Literature for children was first and foremost a rationalization of a social hegemony. It served to substantiate the other social and cultural institutions of the bourgeois, public sphere.
> (1981:20)

Zipes points to the connection of fairy tales to their 'real' social context when he discusses the 'didactic aspect' of literature for children (1981:20). A clear Protestant ethic is reinforced through fairy tales and children's nursery rhymes in order for them to be valid within their sociocultural context. Zipes comments that lessons, pertaining to a specific moral code, were 'learned by heart and engraved in the minds of children' (1981:20). These 'lessons' may be said to colonise the child's mind within an adult-coded social context, and reinforce what Rose reveals to be the innate

[20] In several of his works, Zipes refers to this as the 'domestication of the imagination' (for example, 1994:94, where he observes that '[t]he domestication is related to colonization insofar as the ideas and types are portrayed as models of behavior to be emulated').

relationship between adult author and child reader (1984:57). In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Carroll parodies these moral lessons and reveals them to be absurd within the context of Wonderland:

> Down, down, down. Would the fall *never* come to an end? "I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?" she said aloud. "I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think –" (for, you see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the school-room, and though this was not a *very* good opportunity for showing off her knowledge, as there was no one to listen to her, still it was a good practice to say it over) "– yes, that's about the right distance – but then I wonder what Latitude or Longitude I've got to?" (Alice had not the slightest idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but she thought they were nice grand words to say.)
>
> (1992:9, original emphasis)

'[L]essons in the school-room' (Carroll, 1992:9) find a superficial validation in Alice's descent into Wonderland. The more Alice attempts to recall these lessons, the more their importance is reduced to grand words that sound impressive, but which have little meaning. This may imply that rational lessons within a masculine-ordered reality are losing relevance in falling away from the context in which they are regarded as important, or that Alice is not falling away, but rather falling towards a fantasy world that liberates her from the influence of any masculine authority and allows her to develop her own sense of what is important and what is not. In terms of this sentiment, Alice would not be regarded as a particularly apt pupil in the world above. The most accessible and effective means of instructing children in moral and social virtues in Victorian society was through verse, and Carroll transforms such instructional verse into an absurdity in *Alice in*

Wonderland. In 1715, Isaac Watts published, as one of his *Divine Songs for Children*, ‘Against Idleness and Mischief’:

> How doth the little busy bee
> Improve each shining hour,
> And gather honey all the day
> From every opening flower!
>
> How skilfully she builds her cell!
> How neat she spreads the wax!
> And labours hard to store it well
> With the sweet food she makes.
>
> (cited in Carroll, 1992:16)

As idleness and mischief are encouraged in a world of nonsense, such a verse seems irrelevant, and is thus transformed by Carroll into:

> How doth the little crocodile
> Improve his shining tail,
> And pour the waters of the Nile
> On every golden scale!
>
> How cheerfully he seems to grin,
> How neatly spreads his claws,
> And welcomes little fishes in,
> With gently smiling jaws!
>
> (Carroll, 1992:16)

Here morality, education, and religion are challenged in a strongly subversive way. Nothing in Wonderland is as it is in the world ’above ground’ in Victorian society. The religious basis for the ‘Protestant work ethic’ of the ‘little busy bee’, reinforced through education, is challenged by the Darwinian ‘little crocodile’ who embodies ‘the survival of the fittest’. Science and religion come to blows in an attempt to demonstrate that

those who are small — a ‘little busy bee’ and ‘little fishes’ — are mere prey for the powerful predatory forces that police the moral and social status quo. Children are also small: like ‘little fishes’, they reside in schools and are prey to the ‘gently smiling jaws’ of the crocodile as male representative of progress.

In *Through the Looking-Glass*, Alice is confronted by the rules of decorum in her interaction with the Red Queen, who seems obsessed with manners and decorum.

> “Where do you come from?” said the Red Queen. “And where are you going? Look up, speak nicely, and don’t twiddle your fingers all the time.”
>
> Alice attended to all these directions, and explained, as well as she could, that she had lost her way.
>
> “I don’t know what you mean by *your* way,” said the Queen: “all the ways about here belong to *me* – but why did you come out here at all?” she added in a kinder tone. “Curtsey while you’re thinking what to say. It saves time.”
>
> (Carroll, 1992:124, original emphasis)

Alice’s interaction with the Red Queen parodies the social expectations for a young girl during the Victorian age. She is supposed to be, to quote John Berger, ‘an object of vision: a sight’ (1972:47). What she looks like while she speaks is more important than what she actually says. Social satirists of this period, including Lewis Carroll and the controversial Oscar Wilde, had much to say about the domestication and silencing of women. In *A Woman of No Importance* (first published in 1893), Wilde expresses a similar sentiment to Carroll’s regarding both Hester and Mrs Arbuthnot.

When Hester voices her opinion about the disenfranchisement of the lower classes and of women, later apologising for the inappropriateness of her tirade, Lady Hunstanton reveals the sexist attitude of the charismatic Lord Illingworth when she says:

> Lady Hunstanton: My dear young lady, there was a great deal of truth, I dare say, in what you said, and you looked very pretty while you said it, which is much more important, Lord Illingworth would tell us.
>
> (2008:121)

These expectations of appearing pretty and demure, which define women's socialised personae, are advocated in the fairy tales that gained popularity during the Victorian period. Zipes observes similar trends in Kuhn and Merkel's observations regarding children's literature in Germany:

> Kuhn and Merkel point to the following important social tendencies in Germany which informed socialization through literature: 1) Males continued to receive preferential treatment at home and in schools so that active, virtuous, and industrious heroes remained dominant as models in most stories and in the new adventure books. However, girls began to constitute an important market as they increasingly entered the educational system, and a special category of literature was fully developed for female domestication.
>
> (1981:23-24)

Even in the world of Wonderland, in *Through the Looking-Glass*, Alice continues to be advised by the Red Queen about her domestic destiny. Alice is frequently reminded of who she is expected to be and how she is

expected to behave. This stands in strong contrast to her curious, outspoken nature.

> "Speak when you're spoken to!" the Queen sharply interrupted her.
>
> "But if everybody obeyed that rule," said Alice, who was always ready for a little argument, "and if you only spoke when you were spoken to, and the other person always waited for *you* to begin, you see nobody would ever say anything, so that –"
>
> "Ridiculous!" cried the Queen. "Why don't you see, child –"
> …
> "I didn't know I was to have a party at all," said Alice, "but, if there *is* to be one, I think *I* ought to invite the guests."
>
> "We gave you the opportunity of doing it," the Red Queen remarked: "but I daresay you've not had a lesson in manners yet?"
>
> "Manners are not taught in lessons," said Alice. "Lessons teach you to do sums, and things of that sort."
>
> (Carroll, 1992:192-193)

Here Alice makes a profound comment about manners. According to her, lessons enable one to do something, but manners are not geared towards 'doing'. This implies that manners define who one is and whether one will be accepted as assenting to social expectation. Within the fantastical world of Wonderland, Alice is mentored by the Red and White Queens, who advise her about how she should present herself in civilised society. Manners and decorum, as socially-conditioned behaviour cues, are Alice's primary antagonists within this fairy tale text. They will enable her to integrate into civilised 'grown-up' society, but will also disable her sense of who she is. As Alice is falling down the Rabbit-Hole, she struggles to

reconcile what she knows from her lessons with the curiosity that comes from not knowing:

> Presently she began again. "I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth! How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downwards! The antipathies, I think –" (she was rather glad there *was* no one listening, this time, as it didn't sound at all the right word) "– but I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is, you know. Please, Ma'am, is this New Zealand? Or Australia?" (and she tried to curtsey as she spoke – fancy, *curtseying* as you're falling through the air! Do you think you could manage it?) "And what an ignorant little girl she'll think me for asking! No, it'll never do to ask: perhaps I shall see it written up somewhere."
>
> (Carroll, 1992:9, original emphasis)

In this passage, Alice moves from scientific curiosity about her journey down the Rabbit-Hole to an eventual silencing of that curiosity. Alice ceases to express curiosity, significantly, when she attempts to curtsey while speaking, which proves to be unsuccessful. For Alice, as a girl becoming a woman, 'manners' cannot be reconciled with intellectual curiosity, expressed in the questions she asks. Alice decides not to ask questions for fear of seeming uneducated, effectively choosing silence. This passage demonstrates that a tug-of-war exists for women between nature, what one is born as, and nurture, what one is expected to become. De Beauvoir's statement is relevant here, and bears repeating: 'One is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one' (1973:301). When Alice falls down the Rabbit-Hole, and goes through the looking-glass, she at first embraces her curious nature, but at the same time cannot escape realising that it will not survive in her adult self. This demonstrates

Carroll's colonising intentions, an author role indicated by Rose (1984:57). He is the chief instigator of Alice's shifts and transitions, because she is a product of his imagination. Gaiman exercises a similar influence over Yvaine, delineating the boundaries of her 'human' existence (1999:170), and imposing the colonial desires of various male characters, most notably Tristran, to alienate her from her true purpose. In this sense, she is 'possessed' by Gaiman as a product of his imagination. This understanding of the author/character dynamic is reinforced through a consideration of the impact of Carl Jung's work on archetype categorisation. Many characteristics of Jung's archetypes are echoed in the characterisation of key players within the fantasy narrative.

Two significant archetypes in Jung's system of analytical psychology, which prove relevant for an exploration of the complex relationship between fantasy writing and its social context, are an invested and often 'hidden "sacred" conviction' (1988:189) manifest in women and an emotionally-driven manifestation of man's 'relation to the unconscious' (1988:175) – represented by the two gendered archetypes of the 'animus' and the 'anima' respectively. Jung discusses these archetypes in his work, *Man and his Symbols* (1964, reprinted in 1988). The anima was of particular interest to Jung as its development within a man, specifically, enables a greater emotional, and often instinctive, wisdom. Jung describes 'anima' as the soul-muse through which wisdom is gained and mortal limits are transcended. However, Jung did caution that, should the anima dominate the unconscious development of man, such an 'invasion'

(1996:124) would reveal a weak and inferior ego in man as his investment in the imaginary and illusory would supersede his connection to reality. According to Jung, in *Alchemical Studies*, such an invasion may be overcome if '[t]he anima is… forced into the inner world, where she functions as the medium between the ego and the unconscious, as does the persona between the ego and the environment' (1978:180). In exactly the same way, Alice and Yvaine are cast down into the imaginary or fantastical worlds of Wonderland and Faerie respectively. It is helpful to explore the experience of being low in opposition to 'being above'. This is where the journeys of Alice and Yvaine find common ground. They are both fallen heroines: Alice falls down the Rabbit-Hole (Carroll, 1992:9) in *Alice*, and Yvaine falls from the sky (Gaiman, 1999:54-55) in *Stardust*.

To incite the falling action, one must initially exist at a point above the destination that one is falling to. The most frequently encountered female archetype in fantasy and children's fiction relating to this movement from a point above to one that is submissive or low is the 'damsel in distress'. Jung's insight into how myth reinforces identity implies that the 'damsel in distress' archetype establishes and reinforces the development of 'ego-identity' (1988:137) as a girl transitions into womanhood. Jung writes of a young married woman whom he had studied:

> As one might expect, this educated woman had no difficulty in accepting this interpretation at an intellectual level, and she set about trying to change herself into a more submissive kind of woman …. As she grew to know herself better, she began to see that for a man (or the masculine-trained mind in women) life is something that has to be taken by storm, as an act of the heroic will; but for a

> woman to feel right about herself, life is best realized by a process of awakening.
>
> (1988:137)

For Jung, the process of becoming a woman can be likened to waking from a dream. Girlhood is the dream, from which women must awake. This is relevant to Alice, as both her adventures, down the Rabbit Hole and through the Looking-glass, are associated with day-dreams. However, Jung also highlights that, apart from her feminine submissive role, a woman may also possess a 'masculine-trained mind' (1988:137), which must actively seek to conquer, and which aligns itself to another fairy-tale archetype – the Knight.[21]

In her article, 'The Damsel, The Knight, and the Victorian Woman Poet', Dorothy Mermin writes of the Victorian poet Elizabeth Barrett:

> Looking back at her childhood from the vantage point of fourteen years old, Elizabeth Barrett writes that at four-and-a-half, "my great delight was poring over fairy phenomenons and the actions of necromancers – and the seven champions of Christendom … beguiled many a weary hour. At five, I supposed myself a heroine and in my day dreams of bliss I constantly imaged to myself a forlorn damsel in distress rescued by some noble knight." Which was she in these daydreams: the forlorn damsel, or the noble knight? "I supposed myself a heroine," but "I imaged *to* myself a damsel rescued ….".
>
> (1986:64)

[21] I am aware of feminist critiques of Jung's theory of archetypes, such as Goldberg (1976), Rowland (2002) and Wehr (1987). Goldberg, in her work 'A Feminist Critique of Jung', highlights the negative impact of the absolute ideal, as represented in Jung's archetype categorisation, on the experience of womanhood within a real-world paradigm (1976:448). However, Jung's theory of archetypes is important to consider as fantasy literature relies on these categorisations in order to create identifiable characters, as indicated by Walker and Lunz in 'Symbols, Fairy Tales and School-Age Children' (1976).

In the *Alice* texts, Alice, much like Elizabeth Barrett, is shown to be simultaneously 'heroine' and 'damsel' (1986:64), and her continual fluctuations in size mirror either her fear of becoming a victim – her changes might result in her 'going out altogether, like a candle' (Carroll, 1992:12) – or claiming control and reducing those who have social prestige to 'nothing but a pack of cards' (Carroll, 1992:97).[22]

An example of the interaction between the heroine and the damsel, as the active and passive female archetypes found in fantasy, occurs when Alice asks Aunt Imogene in Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* whether she has seen the White Rabbit:

Alice:	Aunt Imogene, I think I'm going mad. I keep seeing a rabbit in a waistcoat.
Aunt Imogene:	Can't be bothered with your fancy rabbit now. I'm waiting for my fiancé.
Alice:	You have a fiancé?
Aunt Imogene:	Hmm.
Alice:	[*sees White Rabbit again*] There! Did you see it?
Aunt Imogene:	[*ignores*] He's a prince. But alas, he cannot marry me unless he renounces his throne. It's tragic, isn't it?
Alice:	Very.

(Burton, 2010)

This interaction not only highlights the difference between the active and passive female archetypes in fairy tales, but also provides an important

[22] Sometimes Alice does not embrace this sense of power, as when she grows to an 'uncomfortable' size in the White Rabbit's house (Carroll, 1992:28-29), literally outgrowing the domestic setting and the domestic expectation levied upon young girls during the Victorian period.

insight into the collective memory of Victorian society. The hypocrisy of the collective memory is exposed when Aunt Imogene, representing social wisdom, rejects the existence of Alice's White Rabbit, rather investing herself in the memory of her fiancé, an imaginary prince who will somehow rescue her from her tragic life. This is, clearly, a choice of a convenient form of unreality over a less palatable one. Alice acknowledges the tragedy of playing the archetypal 'damsel in distress' waiting for her 'Prince Charming', and rejects a life of waiting by actively pursuing the White Rabbit. Burton implicitly, though Alice, re-values activity over passivity, epitomising, in the process, how fairy tales are influenced by the society in which they were created and are therefore imbued with the values of that society.

On first reading *Stardust,* Yvaine may appear more as a damsel in distress than a 'heroine'. But we can weigh Gaiman's novel up against medieval folklore, particularly the Arthurian legend as penned by Chrétien de Troyes, and note that one of his poems refers specifically to the gallant Knight of the Round Table, Yvain (De Troyes, 1987). Such heroic associations cannot be ignored, and are further reinforced in Vaughn's film (2007), where Yvaine plays a more active role in vanquishing the evil enchantress, Lamia, than in the printed text.

In Gaiman's text, the enchantress, as another female fairy tale archetype, is represented by the Lilim, and identified in Vaughn's filmic adaptation (2007), as Lamia, played by Michelle Pfeiffer, whose quest it is to possess

Yvaine, the fallen star, played by Claire Danes. Pfeiffer and Danes are noted for their timeless, blonde-haired, blue-eyed beauty, as well as their resemblance to each other – Danes played Pfeiffer's daughter in the film *To Gillian on her 37th Birthday* (Pressman, 1996). By casting these two actresses, Vaughn highlights Lamia and Yvaine as mirror-opposites of each other: Lamia is corrupt and obsessed, while Yvaine is innocent and curious. In an interview with *The Guardian*, Pfeiffer discusses her initial meeting with Vaughn regarding his vision for Lamia:

> [H]e explained that he wanted "to do a social commentary on, you know, our obsession with youth and perfection and beauty, and what he saw as the extremes that women go to in order to obtain that, to retain it…". [23]
>
> (Lane, 2007)

Both the enchantress, Lamia, and the heroine/damsel, Yvaine, are associated with the theme of beauty, which is central to many Grimm fairy tales. The now old and ugly Lamia seeks the fallen star, the beautiful and immortal Yvaine, in order to reclaim her youth and beauty through the consumption of the star's heart:

> Her hair was so fair it was almost white, her dress was of blue silk which shimmered in the candlelight. She glittered as she sat there.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:81)

[23] The depiction of the ageing woman's obsession with youth and beauty in both *Stardust* texts is reminiscent of Naomi Wolf's findings in *The Beauty Myth* (1991:232). She elaborates on how the ideal of youth and beauty, as established within a specific Western sociocultural mode, is equated with power, and how ageing is a 'disease', which robs women of the power they once enjoyed.

However, within a few paragraphs of this description of Yvaine, another quality to her character is added – that of the broken and enslaved.

In moving from the sky above and colliding with the world below, breaking her leg in the process, Yvaine loses her independence and nature as a star. Tristran claims her as his prize, transforming her into an object of his desire. He effectively becomes her colonizer who has claimed the fallen, broken star in the name of (Queen) Victoria, and imposes his order of doing things upon her — initially by urging her to sleep at night, a time when, according to her nature, she does not sleep, but rather comes out and shines (Gaiman, 1999:81-82).

Like many Victorian women, Yvaine's distress is caused by her eventual saviour, Tristran Thorne, and, by extension, the bloodline to which he belongs. It is the rivalry for Stormhold that initiates Yvaine's fall:

> Then [the dying Lord of Stormhold] threw the stone into the air. The living brothers caught their breath, as the stone arced up over the clouds. It reached what they were certain must be the zenith of its curve, and then, defying all reason, it continued to rise into the air.
>
> Other stars glittered in the night sky, now.
>
> "To the one that retrieves the stone, which is the Power of Stormhold, I leave my blessing, and the Mastership of Stormhold and all its dominions," said the eighty-first lord, his voice losing power as he spoke, until once again it was the creak of an old, old man, like the wind blowing through an abandoned house.
>
> The brothers, living and dead, stared at the stone. It fell upwards into the sky until it was lost to sight.

> "And should we capture eagles and harness them, to drag us into the heavens?" asked Tertius, puzzled and annoyed.
>
> His father said nothing. The last of the daylight faded, and the stars hung above them, uncountable in their glory.
>
> One star fell.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:49)

`

This scene creates an interesting dichotomy. Yvaine's fall creates a series of events that culminate in the adult Tristran's becoming Lord of Stormhold. As the stone, which is described by the dying lord as embodying the 'Power of Stormhold' (Gaiman, 1999:49), rises into the air, the star falls. Because the stone is a symbol of the authority of the Lord of Stormhold, it too is considered to be masculine. In knocking Yvaine out of the sky, the stone may be construed as the masculine dislodging the feminine from her natural place – in this case, the star's position in the night sky.

The oxymoron 'fell upwards' (Gaiman, 1999:49) is an arresting and unusual collocation. The stone, as a symbol of authority, cannot embody a submissive stance, and is therefore not associated with down-ness or low-ness. Instead the desire and authority of the dying Lord of Stormhold propels it upwards. This, in turn, may be contrasted with the movement of the star, Yvaine. Although she occupies a position in the heavens above the worlds of Victorian England and Faerie, her authority is usurped in that the stone knocks her down from the sky. In this act, mortal masculine authority forces an immortal feminine elementto submit. This event causes a destabilisation of the narrative's certainty in universal law as

Yvaine's absolute authority, as a star, gives way to the masculine desire for power.

Such playfulness with a well-known expression – falling down – is characteristic of postmodern literature, and hints at categorising *Stardust* as a postmodern fairy tale which stands in contrast to Victorian sensibility. In *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction*, Christopher Butler writes:

> A great deal of postmodernist theory depends on the maintenance of a sceptical attitude: and here the philosopher Jean-François Lyotard's contribution is essential. He argued in *La condition postmoderne* (published in French in 1979, in English in 1984) that we now live in an era in which legitimizing 'master narratives' are in crisis and in decline.
> …
> This heralded a pluralist age, in which, as we shall see, even the arguments of scientists and historians are to be seen as no more than quasi narratives which compete with all the others for acceptance.
>
> (2002:13, 15)

Butler observes that a central code accepted as the truth – such as the Christian ethos that exemplified the Victorian Age – is the target of postmodern scepticism towards a central master-truth. The acknowledgement of the postmodern preoccupation with various truths, in competition with each other for acceptance, helps us to read *Stardust* as a postmodern fantasy narrative based on a fairy tale. Multiple perspectives of the star falling are represented in Gaiman's novel – from Tristran and Victoria on the other side of the Wall, to the Lilim and the sons of the Lord of Stormhold. All carry equal weight within the story, and each perspective

carries its own desire. Through this, the fall of the old master- narrative style, traditionally characterised by its reliance on a single, omniscient, and predominantly *male* authority gives way to a new, fractured narrative, where multiple characters' perspectives, both male and female, are included. In *Stardust*, the opposing actions of growing up and falling down, which, in the *Alice* texts, are compounded within the journey of the single character of Alice and related by a single narrator, are fractured. Alice's journey as a character who experiences both growing up and falling down becomes, in the postmodernist text, the journey of Yvaine as a 'fallen star' (Gaiman, 1999:45), juxtaposed with the journey of Tristran as he 'grows to manhood' (Gaiman, 1999:27). Both Yvaine and Tristran disconnect from their original states — Yvaine as a star aloft in the sky, and Tristran as a lowly shop boy on the other side of the wall — in order to achieve unity:

> He looked upon the lights of Wall for what he knew it (it came to him then with certainty) was the last time. He stared at them for some time and said nothing, the fallen star by his side. And then he turned away, and together they began to walk toward the East.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:190)

In Yvaine and Tristran being united in marriage (1999:191-194), Gaiman achieves dialectical unity between the actions and qualities they represent. Yvaine's lowly status dialectically complements Tristran's pre-eminence.

In returning to Jung's observations, both Alice and Yvaine may be considered to be aspects of the male author's personal unconscious that is female. They are the 'anima' or 'soul-image' (Jung, 1990:171), and exist in symbiotic, dialectical relationships with the imaginations of the authors, Carroll and Gaiman.

Jung elaborates on the purpose of this imaginary relationship, by stating that it enables a type of fantasy that he terms 'active fantasy' (1990:255):

> [A]ctive fantasy is the chief mark of the artistic mentality, the artist is not just a reproducer of appearances but a creator and educator, for his works have the value of symbols that adumbrate lines of future development.
>
> (1990:255)

In the light of Jung's insights, Alice's *becoming* is not only indicative of a static representation of Victorian girlhood. Jung provides a further intertextual layer to understanding what connects a Victorian-penned fantasy narrative and a postmodern fantasy narrative set in the Victorian period. Alice's story *becomes* Yvaine's story as Gaiman, unconsciously, builds on the fantasy discourse by re-imaging the function of the 'anima' archetype for future generations while hearkening back to a bygone age. This is in line with Rose's observations regarding adult investment in childhood as they re-imagine their own histories (1984:12), since Gaiman in *Stardust*, is imagining how it might have been to be a Victorian fantasy writer. Jung also notes that active fantasy is characterised by an artist/author as 'creator and educator' (1990:255), emphasising the didactic role of fiction in the same way as critics such as Zipes,

Knoepflmacher and others have done. The author connects to a larger context in his role as educator – teaching, leading and guiding his readers according to a prescribed sociocultural syllabus. However, lessons that are 'taught' by the author to his girl-child or young female protagonists are only deemed as important or significant as the author wills them to be.

Carroll reveals the lessons of manners to be contrived and superficial — the Red Queen is nothing more than a piece on a chess board (Carroll, 1992:113): the Queen of Hearts, who wields authority in maintaining her upside-down order in Wonderland, is nothing more than a playing card (Carroll, 1992:97). These Queens have their place and purpose according to the design of the game, and in being manipulated by the Master Gamesman[24] — that is, Carroll himself — they produce a predetermined order. Their interaction with Alice serves Carroll's agenda of teaching his heroine the social mores that require her to grow up. The Red Queen advises that manners have a function in the grown-up world, but Alice, as a child, does not understand their purpose as part of social conditioning: she knows that 'Manners are not taught in lessons' (Carroll, 1992:193), after all. The Red Queen therefore functions as one of Alice's matriarchal mentors, teaching Alice experientially about what it means to become a woman.

[24] Other fantasy and science fiction narratives make use of the figure of a Master Gamesman or controller of the game. Examples of this figure can be seen in Iain M. Banks's *Player of Games* (originally published in 1988) and the Games maker in Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* (originally published in 2008).

Ostry (2003) makes the following observation regarding the advice about manners and decorum disguised within children's fantasy:

> This advice is needed because the child is still unformed; tellingly, "the first non-literary books written for children were books of civility or manners" (Wallace 174). Ann Taylor remarks in 1818 that "[t]he young and the ignorant are prone to be self-opinionated and impatient of control, simply because they *are* young and ignorant, ignorant especially of *themselves*" (12). Learning about the self is not the same as self-expression here, however, as parents and other mentors dictate moral lessons to the child. Indeed, some writers would have the child venture on nothing alone.
>
> (2003:28, original emphasis)

She also provides a most important insight regarding the purpose of images of growth, as well as regression, in children's fantasy:

> Physical growth is not as much discussed as is moral growth, but when it is discussed, it is treated as the natural miracle it is. Writers often use the word "wonder" to describe the "expanding" body …. Natural wonders are explicitly and constantly linked to God: "All our researches into the wonders of nature should lead us to nature's God…" (*Little Truths* 92).
>
> …
>
> The body's growth, particularly the transition to adulthood, is often described in conjunction with other natural phenomena, such as the metamorphosis of butterflies. According to Chris R. Vanden Bossche, "[t]he change from cloistered adolescent to debutante was often compared to the butterfly's emerging from its chrysalis…" (83). The most common comparison is with plants.
>
> (2003:31)

Alice experiences growth and change through her interaction with the Caterpillar in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and the live flowers in *Through the Looking-Glass*. That this interaction happens in a place

called *Wonder*land further confirms Ostry's observation. Significantly, Alice's interactions with the Caterpillar and the flowers both focus on manners.

> "Come back!" the Caterpillar called after her. "I've something important to say!"
>
> This sounded promising, certainly. Alice turned and came back again.
>
> "Keep your temper," said the Caterpillar.
>
> "Is that all?" said Alice, swallowing down her anger as well as she could.
>
> "No," said the Caterpillar.
>
> Alice thought she might as well wait, as she had nothing else to do, and perhaps after all it might tell her something worth hearing. For some minutes it puffed away without speaking; but at last it unfolded its arms, took the hookah out of its mouth again, and said "So you think you've changed do you?"
>
> "I'm afraid I am, Sir," said Alice. "I ca'n't remember things as I used – and I don't keep the same size for ten minutes together!"
>
> "Ca'n't remember *what* things?" said the Caterpillar.
>
> (Carroll, 1992:36, original emphasis)

Alice's interaction with the Caterpillar informs an understanding of the expectation resting on Alice as she stands on the brink of adulthood. Appropriate behaviour is reinforced by the Caterpillar advising Alice to keep her temper (Carroll, 1992:36).[25] Burton (2010) frustrates this expectation in his twenty-first-century re-visioning of Alice as a wilful and

[25] Marcia Lieberman adds that '[g]ood-temper and meekness are so regularly associated with beauty, and ill-temper with ugliness, that this in itself must influence children's expectations' (1972:385).

rebellious character who heeds the Caterpillar's advice on a more literal level: She maintains her authority by holding onto, or 'keeping', her sense of anger and defiance. Burton's postmodernist re-visioning of Alice allows her to recreate her own happy ending as one not simply confined to the expectation of marriage, but liberated into an independent feminine perspective of the world beyond the merely domestic. This, in turn, disconnects her from Victorian social mores, and from Carroll, as Burton's Alice does grow up and grows into the role of 'author of her own destiny'.

In Carroll's *Alice* texts, the Caterpillar's advice strongly reinforces expected behaviour from women in Victorian society. In *Writing a Woman's Life*, Heilbrun observes: 'And, above all other prohibitions, what has been forbidden to women is anger, together with the open admission of the desire for power and control over one's life (which inevitably means accepting some degree of power and control over other lives)' (1988:13). She shows that there is a link between anger and power, and that for Alice to be told to keep her temper (Carroll, 1992:36) — to silence her anger — will disempower Alice, replacing temper with temperance. The link between anger and power is ultimately demonstrated in the Queen of Hearts, a powerful and anger-driven woman. Jennifer Geer, in her article '"All sorts of pitfalls and surprises": Competing Views of Idealized Girlhood in Lewis Carroll's Alice Books', states:

> …It also prefigures her more dramatic challenge to the Queen of Hearts during the trial scene, in which Alice effectively, if only momentarily, takes on the Queen's role of the screaming, domineering woman. For an instant,

> Alice assumes a position directly contrary to those prescribed by domestic ideology or ideals of girlhood. Instead of comforting adults or joyfully playing, Alice contradicts the King and screams at the Queen.
>
> (2003:9)

Alice's waiting for more of the Caterpillar's profound advice – for her curiosity to be saved from anticipation – aligns with the 'damsel in distress' trope typical of Grimm's Fairy Tales;[26] and the fluctuations in her apparent physical size in Wonderland are indicative of the contradictory instructions she receives simultaneously to grow up and stay low.

The Caterpillar later addresses Alice's fluctuation in size:

> The Caterpillar was the first to speak.
> "What size do you want to be?" it asked.
>
> "Oh, I'm not particular as to size," Alice hastily replied; "only one doesn't like changing so often, you know."
>
> "I *don't* know," said the Caterpillar.
>
> Alice said nothing: she had never been so much contradicted in all her life before, and she felt that she was losing her temper.
>
> "Are you content now?" said the Caterpillar.
>
> "Well, I should like to be a *little* larger, Sir, if you wouldn't mind," said Alice: "three inches is such a wretched height to be."
>
> "It is a very good height indeed!" said the Caterpillar angrily, rearing itself upright as it spoke (it was exactly three inches high).

[26] In the Grimm's fairy tale 'Snow-White and Rose-Red', Snow-White is described as "fair-haired and quiet, and liked to sit still at home" (1903:73), and in 'Briar Rose', the search for the sleeping princess by the heroic prince states that 'he came to the tower and went up the winding stairs. There was the princess fast asleep' (1903:66). Such descriptions confirm the damsel-in-distress persona as passive.

> "But I'm not used to it!" pleaded poor Alice in a piteous tone. And she thought to herself, "I wish the creatures wouldn't so easily be offended!"
>
> "You'll get used to it in time," said the Caterpillar; and it put the hookah into its mouth, and began smoking again.
>
> (Carroll, 1992:41)

Here the Caterpillar highlights the link between her size, figured as spatial 'muchness' (Burton, 2010) or, in this case, smallness, and declares that her smallness is something she will get used to in time (Carroll, 1992:41). This implies that adulthood, for women, no longer concerns adventure or questioning, but is represented as a matter of conforming, appearance, acceptance, and, ultimately, of accepting a 'small', submissive role. The importance of appearance and conforming is reinforced when Alice interacts with the live flowers in *Through the Looking-Glass*:

> "It isn't manners for us to begin, you know," said the Rose, "and I really was wondering when you'd speak! Said I to myself, 'Her face has got *some* sense in it, though it's not a clever one!' Still, you're the right colour, and that goes a long way."
>
> "I don't care about the colour," the Tiger-lily remarked. "If only her petals curled up a little more, she'd be all right."
>
> (Carroll, 1992:121, *original emphasis*)

Manners for the flowers are indicated by silence and, to reinforce what the Red Queen remarked, to '[s]peak when you're spoken to' (Carroll, 1992:192), and the appearance of her 'petals' — her dress — in measuring whether she is acceptable or not.

Although Carroll subverts the morals and manners of the world above in Victorian society in his distorted view of the world 'below', he adheres to the conventions of the fairy tale genre or literature for children. His texts clearly serve an educational purpose. However, I argue that, rather than educating children about the expectations placed on them in growing up, he warns against the influence of the superficial social mores that determine that women should be kept low. A reading against the grain of Carroll's moralistic injunctions, spoken by the pompous Caterpillar and the meaningless Red Queen, demonstrates that these are satires of the voice of moral 'reason' where acceptable behaviour for women is concerned. Anthropologist David D. Gilmore comments on gender hierarchy in his work 'Above and Below: Toward a Social Geometry of Gender':

> Throughout history, people everywhere have expressed social distinctions and moral judgements by means of stratigraphic and topographical tropes and clichés – "orientational metaphors of up-down" as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980:14) call them. When it comes to "gender schema" (Bem 1983), males are almost always on top in such vertical analogies and metaphors. In sociospatial terms, men therefore are physically superior because they are on the visible surface of things; women are placed "below", hidden from sight, corresponding to a lower status in nature's order, literally obscured by a superior male overlay ….
>
> (1996:54)

Growing up and falling down, according to Gilmore's assertion, should be seen as metaphorical movement within a particular sociocultural framework – a hidden commentary on the social status of male and female. Within the context of the fairy tale, these 'vertical analogies and

metaphors' (Gilmore, 1996:54) are prevalent as instructional/educational metaphors. Marcia Lieberman, in ''Some Day My Prince Will Come': Female Acculturation through the Fairy Tale', states:

> In the preface to *The Green Fairy Book*, in 1892, Lang noted that the stories were made not only to amuse children, but also to teach them. He pointed out that many of the stories have a moral, although, he wrote, "we think more as we read them of the diversion than of the lesson." The distinction that Lang drew between diversions and lessons is misleading, for children do not categorize their reading as diverting or instructive, but as interesting or boring. If we are concerned, then, about what our children are being taught, we must pay particular attention to those stories that are so beguiling that children think more as they read them "of the diversion than of the lesson"; perhaps literature is suggestive in direct proportion to its ability to divert.
>
> (1972:384)

Lieberman emphasises that the diversion and the lesson are intrinsically connected and that diversions disguise lessons in fairy tales. These forms of instruction are further evaluated as 'interesting' and 'boring' respectively. Certainly, for Alice, this is true when she rejects books 'without pictures or conversations' (Carroll, 1992:7), and chooses to follow the White Rabbit down into Wonderland. The lessons learnt from boring books passively read, in the world above, are diverted (and subverted) by the active adventures in the world below. Fairy tales are a form of boring lessons above, taken from the world of adults and Victorian sociocultural mores, to be subverted by the diversions below. In the process, the child mind is diverted from the real into the imaginative world, where lessons are experienced rather than learnt.

To understand the universal appeal of the fairy tale, both as a 'master narrative' and a postmodern narrative, is to understand a universal truth about the human condition. The *Alice* texts and *Stardust* share a common universal truth: everyone has an appropriate social position and category to which they belong. Fairy tale worlds mirror the social framework of expectations levied upon a receptive audience, playing on their fears and desires and fostering an acceptance of the dominant ideology of a particular historical period. In *Postmodern Fairy Tales: Gender and Narrative Strategies*, Cristina Bacchilega writes:

> Like a magic mirror, the fairy tale reflects and conforms to the way things "truly" are, the way our lives are "truly" lived. As with all mirrors, though, refraction and the shaping presence of a frame mediate the fairy tale's reflection. As it images our potential for transformation, the fairy tale refracts what we wish or fear to become. Human – and thus changeable – ideas, desires and practices frame the tale's images. Further, if we see more of the mirror rather than its images, questions rather than answers emerge. Who is holding the mirror and whose desires does it represent and contain?... This mirroring … is no value-free or (??) distillation of human destiny, but a "special effect" of ideological expectations and unspoken norms.
>
> (1997:28-29)

This is supported by William Bascom in his article, 'Four Functions of Folklore', where he describes folklore as 'a mirror of culture' (1954:338).

Bacchilega's observations resonate with the central hypothesis of this chapter: there is a substantial connection between the real world and fairy tale worlds and the latter reflects the ideologies of the former. In *Alice*, the

link is between Victorian England and Wonderland; in *Stardust*, Gaiman links his retrospective of Victorian England and the land of Faerie. However, such a substantial connection also presents specific concerns regarding the author's ability to maintain control in distinguishing fantasy from reality, especially when considering that Carroll and Gaiman facilitate, and limit, the interaction between these two worlds via the portals which Alice and Yvaine encounter in the *Alice* texts and *Stardust* respectively. Rose cautions against the authors losing 'control' of their narrative in investing too much of themselves in their fantastical narratives, and blurring the distinction between 'coloniser' and 'colonised' when she writes:

> Writers for children must know who they are. They must know and understand children, otherwise they would not be able to write for them in the first place. But they must also know who *they* (as adults) are, otherwise that first knowledge might put their identity as writers at risk. What is at stake here is a fully literary demand for a cohesion of writing. It is a demand which rests on the formal distinction between narrator and characters, and then hold fast to that distinction to hold off a potential breakdown of literary language itself. The ethics of literature act as a defence mechanism against a possible confusion of tongues.
>
> … [T]he question of form turns into a question of limits, of irrationality and lost control, of how far the narrator can go before he or she loses his or her identity, and hence the right to speak, or write for a child. Writing for children rests on that limit …
>
> (1984:70)

Carroll's emotional investment in Alice Liddell, and her literary representation, means that he does not always respect the limits of literature for children. At times, he shapes his female child-character

according to his own projections, even while she exercises a limited agency and travels in and out of Wonderland. Gaiman, writing within a more sceptical era, exercises more restraint in his depiction of Yvaine, even though, paradoxically, she remains trapped in Faerie at the end of the novel. The characters' relationship to their imaginary worlds and their movement into and within these spaces is the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3: THE RABBIT-HOLE, THE WALL AND THE MIRROR

In understanding how Alice and Yvaine 'grow up' and 'fall down', the portals through which they gain access to their fantasy worlds are important. In this chapter, I will look specifically at the portals that connect the worlds of the real and the fantastical in the *Alice* and *Stardust* texts, and how they relate to the horizontal axis in Kristeva's model of horizontal and vertical coordinates (1969:145). The real and the fantastical world appear to be diametrically opposed. However, I will demonstrate that magical portals offer a means through which their dialectical synthesis can be explored. What the horizontal axis represents – the relationship between the writing subject and the addressee (Kristeva, 1986:36) – is closely connected to dialectics, particularly as it establishes a 'unity of opposites' (Homer, 2005:23). The means through which synthesis between opposites is achieved in *Alice* is through the portals of the Rabbit-Hole and the Looking-glass, and in *Stardust*, it is achieved through the portals of the Wall and the mirror.

Entry into fantastical worlds, and the opportunity to explore the landscape of the fantastical, can be strongly equated with the dual impulses that create literature. As Kathryn Hume observes in her work, *Fantasy and Mimesis*:

> [L]iterature is the product of two impulses. These are *mimesis*, felt as the desire to imitate, to describe events, people, and objects with such verisimilitude that others can

> share your experience; and *fantasy*, the desire to change givens and alter reality – out of boredom, play, vision, longing for something lacking, or need for metaphoric images that will bypass the audience's verbal defences.
>
> (1984:20, original emphasis)

In her article, 'Inside and Outside the Mouth of God: The Boundary between Myth and Reality', Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty observes that myth is grounded in 'the image of entering the mouth of God' (1980:95) and that the childlike imagination is a means through which the reader can access the fantasy world beyond. Tolkien comments on the function of what he calls the 'Secondary World', as it facilitates an emotional, spiritual and psychological investment in, and making sense of, what one encounters inside:

> What really happens is that the story-maker proves a successful "sub-creator." He makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is "true": it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside. The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed.
>
> (1996:37)

The portals in the *Alice* and *Stardust* texts are, therefore, not merely boundaries marking the end of one world and the beginning of another. Within the texts, they serve as symbolic mechanisms for the transition and transformation of the childlike protagonists of these texts, and this *becoming*, in turn, establishes a bridge or 'mouth of God' (O'Flaherty, 1980:95) that allows readers to connect with and invest in the 'Secondary

World' (Tolkien, 1996:37).[27] They distinguish the here-and-now from the there-and-then and are the points where these two spatiotemporal contraries (the synchronic and the diachronic) meet and are transformed. Rabindranath Tagore, in his book *A Miscellany*, provides the following explanation with regards to how the 'unity of opposites' (cited in Homer, 2005:23) is, at its core, creative, and how boundaries, manifest as portals in the four texts, facilitate the process of creation of the self:

> Life is perpetually creative because it contains in itself that surplus which ever overflows the boundaries of the immediate time and space, restlessly pursuing its adventure of expression in the varied forms of self-realization.
> …
> At the root of all creation there is a paradox, a logical contradiction. Its process is in the perpetual reconciliation of two contrary forces
>
> (1996:580)

In stating that the creative process is 'perpetual', Tagore intimates that the relationship between opposites, as it transcends boundaries, is infinite in possibility. Such a dynamic can be described as being in a state of play, as Matthew Kaiser observes in detail in his article 'The World in Play: A Portrait of a Victorian Concept', in which he applies this description to the role that the Rabbit-Hole plays in Carroll's *Alice* text:

> The modern sensation is *play*, specifically the bewildering experience of a world in play. A world in play is not the same thing, of course, as a world *at* play, which is how the Victorians depicted that apocryphal age known as Merry

[27] Reader transitioning and 'living' the adventures of a 'Secondary World' is overtly experienced in such fantasy novels as Michael Ende's *Neverending Story* (1997) where Bastian becomes actively invested in Atreyu's quest.

> Old England, a time when omnipresence of play was still satisfying, its expression enchanting. A world in play means two things. First, it means a world in flux: an inconstant and unsettling condition, a queasy state, as Marx describes it, in which "all that is solid melts into air." But a world in play also means a world that throws itself headlong *into* play, *inside* it, where it constructs a parallel universe, a ludic microcosm of itself, which eventually displaces that world. The membranes of play, its elastic fibers, stretch to the point where they encircle all of existence. Modern life is drawn inescapably into play, subjected simultaneously to a miniaturizing, reductive pressure and to an increasingly erratic, oscillating motion. Recall for a moment *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) in which Victorian England, in the shape of a little girl, leaps into a microcosm of itself, a world of toy-like objects and childish creatures, riven with epistemological undecidability and political strife, where a queen with a penchant for beheadings reigns. Lewis Carroll's rabbit hole captures, in whimsical fashion, the precise psychological state that many Victorians associate with modernity: a narrow space without a floor, constricting but unfixed, finite but unending, a world in play.
>
> (2009:105-106, original emphasis)

Kaiser's observation highlights the Rabbit-Hole as a portal categorised by the contrariness and infinite possibility of its design. Its purpose is to facilitate Alice's movement between the world above and the world below, but its design is in constant flux and imbued with contradictions. This, in turn, anticipates the design of the world below: Wonderland.

To further contextualise what the Rabbit-Hole represents in *Alice*, the impetus behind Alice's tumbling down the Rabbit-Hole must be considered — namely, her curiosity about the White Rabbit:

> There was nothing so *very* remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so *very* much out of the way to hear the Rabbit say to itself "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!" (when she

> thought it over afterwards it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural); but, when the Rabbit actually *took a watch out of its waistcoat-pocket*, and looked at it, and then hurried on, Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.
>
> (Carroll, 1992:7-8, original emphasis)

The element of time comes into play here, both in terms of exerting influence and in Kaiser's sense of being in flux. As with fairy tales, and the proverbial ritual of starting these types of stories with the words 'Once upon a *time*…', a time which can be considered to refer to there-and-then rather than here-and-now, Carroll initially establishes a scenario in which two contrary responses to time are expressed — namely anticipation, and anxiety — and both perspectives are initially invested in a future scenario. Alice's curiosity builds up her anticipation of discovering the source of the White Rabbit's anxiety — his exclamation, 'I *shall* be too late!' (Carroll, 1992:7, emphasis added) is directed at a future concern for his lateness. However, there are also paradoxical elements — the future lateness of the White Rabbit, as well as Alice's curiosity which moves her forward, are contrasted with her remembering this incident in later life. Past and future are weighed against each other: the past is indicative of the past-established and familiar systems of social mores Victorians would have become accustomed to, and the future indicative of the encroaching *fin-de-siècle* which brought with it anxiety about the new modern age. This, in turn, is reflected in the past-future dynamic that sends Alice tumbling

down the Rabbit-Hole. In his article, 'Time and Stress: Alice in Wonderland', Petersen also notes these opposing forces relating to time that are paradoxically at work in this passage when he states:

> Einstein, after struggling with the disharmony between nature and theory for many years, finally reached the insight, "Time is the culprit." He said later that following that realization it only took him five weeks to conceive the special theory of relativity. Yet Einstein was not the first to find that "time is the culprit," nor to discover that common sense may be no more than the product of our particular cultural prejudices. Lewis Carroll appears to have centered his work on similar insights. For example, K.C. Cole, in exploring the nature of sine waves, has found that in *Alice in Wonderland*, Carroll conceived of Alice herself as a clock pendulum in her encounter with the opposing forces of gravity during her back-and-forth fall through the bottomless rabbit hole. The loss of a comprehensible space-time frame of reference is also the first thing she encounters, setting the stage for the pool of tears and stressful events to follow. We should remember too that all is set in motion by the "Type A" behavior of the White Rabbit.
>
> (1985:427)

The description of Alice's 'back-and-forth fall' highlights a dual motion, which aligns strongly with Kristeva's model of horizontal and vertical coordinates (1969:145). Where the fall down the Rabbit-Hole is a vertical movement within a specific space, the 'clock pendulum' movement represents a horizontal movement strongly influenced by time.

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, I noted that the experience of womanhood cannot be measured and represented by linear time. This would certainly be true if Alice were not influenced by the designs of her male author, and the temporal anxieties of the male characters who

surround her during her time in Wonderland. The synchronous relationship between text and context within Kristeva's model is counter-balanced by the dynamic between author and character, which is diachronous or time-influenced. This dynamic is founded upon Carroll removing Alice from the influence of time and placing her in Wonderland – the space below – where time is suspended and therefore made irrelevant according to the author's will. Through this act, Carroll is engaging in fantasy/Phantasy in the psychoanalytical sense – 'Phantasy' is defined, in *The Language of Psycho-analysis*, as an '[i]maginary scene in which the subject is a protagonist representing the fulfilment of a wish… in a manner that is distorted to a greater of lesser extent by defensive processes' (Laplanche and Pontalis 1973:314).

Like the White Rabbit, Carroll seems fraught with anxiety about the ageing of his child-muse, Alice Liddell, and his attempts to preserve her as a child. He recorded his anxiety in his diary entries of May, 1865, and this unhappiness about Alice growing up and growing older is remedied, if only in fiction, by his containment of Alice within the space of Wonderland. In Wonderland, the anxiety concerning the lateness of the hour expressed by the White Rabbit falls away, becoming irrelevant, and, despite her fluctuation in size, Alice remains a child within Carroll's narrative. However, in reality, Dream Alice, perfectly preserved in the space of the stories of Wonderland, is transformed into a child of the past, 'too late' to be reclaimed in the present except as a memory:

> Stand forth, then, from the shadowy past, "Alice," the child of my dreams. Full many a year has slipped away, since that "golden afternoon" that gave thee birth, but I can call it up almost as clearly as if it were yesterday – the cloudless blue above, the watery mirror below. The boat drifting idly on its way, the tinkle of the drops that fell from the oars, as they waved so sleepily to and fro ….
>
> (Carroll, 1992:281)

Here, Carroll articulates the dialectic relationship between above and below, likening it to the relationship between the dream of birth and the shadow of death, Eros and Thanatos. Drawmer (2004) also suggests that Alice falling down the Rabbit-Hole has strong associations with birth:

> *Alice* begins and ends with a framing device – the dream, but the first part of the 'real' story begins with a birth metaphor; the embodiment of female function. Alice falls down the rabbit hole, a long, dark tunnel which parallels the journey of the baby from foetal symbiotic state of plenitude with the mother's body, to isolated individualism in the external world.
>
> (2004:273)

However, the creation of Alice defies natural, maternal origins in that dream-Alice is a child moulded by a paternal mind. Burton reinforces this notion of Carroll as 'father' to the dream-Alice as, in his film (2010), Alice Kingsley's father, played by actor Marton Csokas, bears a striking resemblance to Lewis Carroll as he has been captured in photographs.[28] In this sense, Burton is mirroring Carroll's influence on the dream-Alice in Csokas' portrayal of Alice's father. Beyond the male author/female

[28] The name Charles Kingsley is a direct reference to the celebrated Victorian author of the same name, who penned *The Water-Babies A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby* in 1863 (see Kingsley, 2003). Both Carroll and Kingsley shared a common interest in Darwinism, and Burton pays homage to their legacies in progressive thought and fantasy literature in the nineteenth century through his portrayal of this character.

character dynamic noted in Alice's fall down the Rabbit-Hole, the mirror also functions as another portal that has strong associations with the influence of the male gaze.

The Looking-glass, or mirror, is another portal which facilitates Alice's *becoming* according to society and Carroll's design. In *Through the Looking-Glass*, the first image of Alice resonates with yet another birthing metaphor, as Auerbach observes:

> She sits in Tenniel's first illustration to *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* in a snug, semi-foetal position, encircled by a protective armchair and encircling a plump kitten and a ball of yarn. She seems to be a beautiful child, but the position of her head makes her look as though she had no face. She muses dreamily on the snowstorm raging outside, part of a series of circles within circles, enclosures within enclosures, suggesting the self-containment of innocence and eternity.
>
> Behind the purity of this design lie two Victorian domestic myths: Wordsworth's "seer blessed," the child fresh from the Imperial Palace and still washed by his continuing contact with "that immortal sea," and the pure woman Alice will become, preserving an oasis for God and order in a dim and tangled world.
>
> (1973:31-32)

John Tenniel's illustration of Alice and Dinah as found in *Through the Looking-glass*

(1992:109)

Auerbach highlights two opposing feminine states, as they relate specifically to Alice in the moments leading up to her curiosity with regards to the Looking-glass House — a comfortable stasis and the anticipation of a *becoming*. Alice's foetal stasis reveals her as a character contained, preserved and kept low in a state of childhood by Carroll. This stasis, in the author's mind, represents an ideal of youth and beauty as desired states of feminine being. In this moment, Alice becomes a dialectical representation of Victorian womanhood and the contradictions of social expectation. In hiding her face from the reader, Tenniel objectifies Alice as a Child-Venus about to be born through the looking-glass.

> "How would you like to live in a Looking-glass House, Kitty? I wonder if they'd give you milk in there? Perhaps Looking-glass milk isn't good to drink – but oh, Kitty! now we come to the passage. You can just see a little *peep* of the passage in the Looking-glass House, if you leave the door of our drawing-room wide open; and it's very like our passage as far as you can see, only you know it may be quite different on beyond. Oh, Kitty, how nice it would be if we could get through into Looking-glass House! I'm sure it's got, oh! such beautiful things in it! Let's pretend there's a way of getting through into it, somehow, Kitty. Let's pretend the glass has got all soft like gauze, so that we can get through. Why, it's turning into a soft mist now, I declare! It'll be easy enough to get through – "She was up on the chimney-piece while she said this, though she hardly knew how she had got there. And certainly the glass was beginning to melt away, just like a bright silvery mist.
>
> In another moment Alice was through the glass, and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room.
>
> (Carroll, 1992:111-112)

Although the Looking-glass is closely associated with the stereotypical female obsession with appearance, it is not her appearance in the Looking-glass that intrigues Alice in the above excerpt. She is fascinated with the world on the other side of the Looking-glass portal, a reflection of the room — a domestic microcosm of Victorian England. Through Alice's perception and understanding of this connection between Victorian society and the glimpse of the world she sees in the Looking-glass, a 'unity of opposites' (Homer, 2005:23) is achieved, and it is Alice's perspective that facilitates this synthesis.

The process of the child becoming adult (in this case, Alice becoming woman) is outlined by Jacques Lacan. Fundamental to his analysis of ego-formation is a stage of development closely associated with the looking-glass — the 'mirror stage'. He explains it as follows:

> The *mirror stage* is a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation – and which manufacturers for the subject, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented body image to a form of its totality that I shall call orthopaedic – and, lastly, to the assumption of the armour of an alienating identity, which will mark with its rigid structure the subject's entire mental development.
>
> (Lacan, 1949:4)

In considering how this relates specifically to Alice, as she contemplates the Looking-glass House, it is important to note that Alice doesn't acknowledge her mirror image as Self at all — she acknowledges the

house, but not her place in it. Alice's dissociation with Self is commented on by Drawmer (2004), who states concerning Lacan's 'mirror stage':

> The mirror image, then, precipitates a split subjectivity, in which we both (misrecognise the inverted/reflected organic unity to be 'ourselves', which comes at the price of the separation from the maternal body and loss of the Real and plenitude. Lacan uses the term *meconnaisance* to describe this moment… 'failure to recognise' and 'misconstruction'.
> (2004:279-280)

This lends further justification to my earlier argument about Carroll suspending Alice's development by suspending the moment of misrecognition of self. Alice does, indeed, misrecognise the Looking-glass House, but, more importantly, she fails to acknowledge herself in the reflection and this dissociates herself from herself. She refers to the images in the mirror as 'they' rather than 'us':

> "Now, if you'll only attend, Kitty, and not talk so much, I'll tell you all my ideas about Looking-glass House. First, there's the room you can see through the glass – that's just the same as our drawing-room, only the things go the other way. I can see all of it when I get upon a chair – all but the bit just behind the fireplace. Oh! I do so wish I could see *that* bit! I want so much to know whether they've a fire in the winter: you never *can* tell, you know, unless our fire smokes, and then smoke comes up in that room too – but that may be only pretence, just to make it look as if they had a fire. Well then, the books are something like our books, only the words go the wrong way. I know *that*, because I have held up one of our books to the glass, and then they hold up one in the other room …"
> (Carroll, 1992:110, original emphasis)

Alice's choice of the words 'they' and 'other' indicates a defamiliarisation of the world as she perceives it through the Looking-glass. She distinguishes between several contraries, and, in doing so, provides valuable insight with regards to perception, expectation and desire. Firstly, Alice does not acknowledge the Looking-glass's purpose, namely to reflect back that which is in front of it. While she names it 'Looking-glass House', her experience of what she sees can be better associated with the Looking-glass as a window. Mirrors and windows are consistently referred to in Victorian literature as 'opposites' — the mirror facilitates a self-interrogation, but the window facilitates an other-interrogation or looking away from self to the world beyond. Eudora Welty, in her work, *One Writer's Beginnings*, makes a poignant observation with regards to the act of creative framing, which assists us to understand Alice's experience with perspective in front of the Looking-glass:

> The frame through which I viewed the world changed too, with time. Greater than scene, I came to see, is situation. Greater than situation is implication. Greater than all of these is a single, entire human being, who will never be confined in any frame.
>
> (2003:90)

In disregarding her image in the mirror, and disengaging from the purpose of the mirror in making the one who is looking aware of their own position in time and space, Alice is defying social expectations for her life which, as she is a girl about to become a woman, demand that she be 'an object of vision: a sight' (Berger, 1972:47). She does not see the mirror as reflecting back, but rather as showing beyond. In doing so, she denies

being ‘confined to any frame’ (Welty 2003:90). However, the reader is left to wonder whether Alice is able to maintain this strong sense of defiance of social and gendered expectations. In *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, the conclusion is stated from Alice’s sister’s point of view — her daydream of who Alice might become claims Alice’s dream from her, transforming it into social expectation. In *Through the Looking-Glass*, Carroll leaves the reader to question the authenticity of Alice’s experiences in Wonderland. Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland* (2010) does create a feasible conclusion to Alice’s adventures in that she refuses a marriage proposal, and sets sail into the unknown to establish her own authority in exotic lands — making her a coloniser of a new world; a Selfed woman with agency in the heterosexual matrix.

In Alice’s observations regarding the Looking-glass House and her disengagement from seeing the mirror as reflecting back, she perceives the world inside the Looking-glass as a world of the Other. Alice does not see their world as reflective of our world — in other words, she does not see the Other world as reflective of the Self’s world. She notices that everything within this Other room that she sees seems to ‘go the other way’ or to ‘go the wrong way’ (Carroll, 1992:110). Here she is viewing and remarking on this Other room from the perspective of the Self. In going through the Looking-glass, Alice effectively relinquishes the influence of the Self in order to embrace the Other. To extend the metaphor, the act of going through the Looking-glass to the other side, based on the understanding of what constitutes the Other, can also be seen to be a

falling down away from Selfhood into Otherness. However, Alice is able to return to the world of the Self, but still cannot decide whether the world of the Other, embracing the nature of the Other as reflective of the world of the Self, is a dream:

> "Now, Kitty, let's consider who it was that dreamed it all… You see, Kitty, it *must* have been either me or the Red King. He was part of my dream, of course – but then I was part of his dream, too! *Was* it the Red King, Kitty? You were his wife, my dear, so you ought to know – Oh, Kitty, *do* help to settle it! I'm sure your paw can wait!" But the provoking kitten only began on the other paw, and pretended it hadn't heard the question.
>
> Which do *you* think it was?
>
> (Carroll, 1992:208, original emphasis)

The interaction between Alice and Kitty, centred on the construction of the tale, is grounded in modernism and represents Carroll's moving away from the Victorian zeitgeist, and embracing the artistic avant-garde. By concluding this interaction, and the story, with a question to the reader, Carroll destabilises certainty in traditional narrative convention. The effect of this narrative destabilisation does not enable Alice to claim final authority. As the primary readership of Carroll's *Alice* text would have been Victorians, we can infer that society reasserts its authority over Alice and re-establishes her as 'Other'/alien according to their design. M.H. Abrams, in his *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, describes the avant-garde movement within modernism as follows:

> A prominent feature of modernism is the phenomenon called the **avant-garde**…; that is, a small, self-conscious

> group of artists and authors who deliberately undertake, in Ezra Pound's phrase, to "make it new." By violating the accepted conventions and proprieties, not only of art but of social discourse, they set out to create ever-new artistic forms and styles and to introduce hitherto neglected, and sometimes forbidden, subject matter. Frequently, avant-garde artists represent themselves as "alienated" from the established order, against which they assert their own autonomy; a prominent aim is to shock the sensibilities of the conventional reader and to challenge the norms and pieties of the dominant bourgeois culture.
>
> (2005:176, original emphasis)

While Abrams comments specifically on this characteristic of modernism as it pertains to 'artists and authors', Alice's questioning of the way things are in asserting autonomy as Queen Alice of Wonderland, and the narrator asking the reader whether she was merely 'dreaming' Wonderland, challenges the traditional resolution expected of literature for children. There is no 'happily ever after' except that which the reader *chooses* to make. Carroll shifts the authority away from the author and places it with the reader. This shift aligns with intertextual considerations, particularly Barthes' claim, in his work *Image – Music – Text*, that '[t]he birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author' (1977:148). It can thus be supposed that Carroll is anticipating the modernist thought and intertextual philosophy that marked the birth of the twentieth century — in effect, these artistic movements become Carroll's dream.

Carroll's refusal to maintain authorial control may be interpreted in two ways: firstly, as a means, once again, of suspending progress and the inevitable 'ever after' ending that is essential to fairy tale structure; and

secondly, as a means of surrendering Alice to social expectation. Both are consistent with the conclusion of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, where Alice's sister, as representative of Victorian society, claims Alice's dream and transforms it into social expectation. Rather than dissociating herself from social expectation, as she does in venturing through the Looking-glass, Alice, in the end, becomes a reflection of it — a child becoming a mirror in which the male-ordered ideal is reflected. Marina Warner, in her book *Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other World: Ways of Telling the Self*, highlights the following with regards to Carroll and his fascination with his dream-Alice:

> Carroll combined a passion for new gadgets and devices, a fascination with children, with dream experiences, with magic and spirit voyaging, with doubles also known as alters, or other selves; he was preoccupied with images that duplicate persons, either in the looking-glass, as reflections, or in the lens at the end of a telescope. At the end of one telescope he glued a tiny picture of Alice Liddell, as if to fix the line which closes *Through the Looking-Glass*:
>
> > Still she haunts me, phantomwise.
> > Alice moving under skies
> > Never seen by waking eyes…
> > Life, what is it, but a dream?
>
> (2002:189)

In Carroll's bid to undo the ending of *Through the Looking-Glass*, he effectively makes Alice into what Berger terms, 'an object of vision: a sight' (1972:46). Her image is fixed to the telescope to bring into focus, to distort, and to manipulate according to Carroll's own will. In fixing her to the telescope, Carroll also transforms her into a heavenly creature, an

ideal to be studied by a scientific gadget, much like the stars are gazed at through the telescope. Through this gesture by the author, Alice finds commonality with Yvaine – a star to be gazed at through telescopic lenses by learned, rational scientists of the Victorian period. At this point the reflective medium and the masculine authorial gaze can be regarded as one and the same.

Within the fairy tale genre, the exploration of the mirror and its being associated with male gaze is noted, most prolifically in the story of Snow White. From a masculine point of view, there are two fundamental female fairy tale archetypes:

> The "angel-woman" and the "monster-woman" then are ideas about women, which have been author(iz)ed by a male voice in the case of "Little Snow White" that voice is the mirror, the looking glass which defines the very identity of Snow White ("the fairest of all") and her stepmother (the ex-"fairest of all") and the nature of their relationship (rivalry)... "the Queen and Snow White are in some sense on while the Queen struggles to free herself from the passive Snow White in herself, Snow White must struggle to repress the assertive Queen in herself…".
>
> (Bacchilega, 1988:3)

Through the gaze of male authorship, Alice and Yvaine become indicative of the 'angel-woman'. In *Stardust*, Yvaine represents the ideal, but her inability to enter Victorian England through the hole in the wall means that she can never assert her presence within reality. She is Lacan's (1949:4) mirror-stage phantasy disconnected from its source –birthed, as it were, as she falls into the imaginary world of Faerie: 'In the constellation of

Orion, low on the Eastern horizon, a star flashed and glittered and fell' (Gaiman, 1999:37).

This perspective of the falling star is seen from the side of the wall that is rooted in reality. From this perspective, the star acquires a divine quality in its close resemblance to the biblical 'Star of Bethlehem' that heralded the coming of Jesus. (Matthew 2:7-10). This is reinforced by the first image in Vaughn's film (2007) which shows the star, much like the biblical one, prominently displayed in the night sky. The star's symbolic value as proclaiming the coming of a saviour-figure may be validated in that Tristran, who crosses the wall in search of her, does eventually claim the lordship of Stormhold. Yvaine, as the divine celestial feminine figure, can therefore be seen as a means through which masculine authority is proclaimed. This is further solidified in that she is described as 'low' (Gaiman, 1999:37) in the sky even before her fall from the sky into the realm on the other side of the wall.

In looking at Yvaine, it is important to understand the function of the wall that divides Victorian England from Faerie. Because Tristran is able to move freely between both worlds, the wall facilitates his transition into adulthood. For Yvaine, as representative of the ideal or divine feminine, the wall cannot be regarded as a portal that facilitates transition. Rather, the wall becomes a boundary, which contains and preserves her within the realm of the imagination,[29] as a mirror would contain and preserve the

[29] See Woolf (1989:43-44).

ideal image of the self. Darrel Schweitzer, in his essay 'Tapdancing on the Shoulders of Giants', comments on the regulation of the wall as a boundary:

> The one gap in the wall is zealously guarded. This duty is a coming-of-age ritual for young men.
>
> (2007:120)

The wall serves a dual function, both facilitating and restricting. It can be assumed that the wall becomes a dialectical locus. It is the equivalent of the mirror in *Alice.* On one side of the wall/mirror is the reality of Victorian England, represented by the town of Wall, and on the other is the fantastical realm of Faerie, represented by its seat of power in Stormhold. Where science/rationalist epistemology predominates reality – emphasized in Vaughn's film (2007) where Dunstan Thorn, Trist[r]an's father, writes to the Royal Academy of Science – magic predominates fantasy. 'Reality' is a masculine-ordered domain which, as Schweitzer notes (2007:120), must defend itself against the influence of the imagination.

In viewing the wall as a mirror, it is fruitful to consider how it functions as a mirror, bearing in mind Alice's encounters with and journeys through the looking-glass. While Alice is seen to conquer the barrier of the Looking-glass and move into the world on the other side, her transition into Wonderland is not absolute. Eventually she is pulled back into reality. In this way she is reintegrated into a masculine order. The same cannot be

said of Yvaine. She does not transition from reality into fantasy or vice versa, but while her confinement within a fantastical realm is justified as her existence in human form cannot be logically or scientifically explained, she does facilitate an understanding of Victorian mores based on what is granted to her, and what is denied her. She shows an instinctive understanding of this when, as she approaches the wall with Tristran, on the verge of crossing over into reality, she is described as having 'hesitated' (Gaiman, 1999:165).

In this sense, Yvaine functions as a mirror revealing the Victorian psyche as split into the male/rational/scientific that stands in opposition to the female/imaginative/poetic, with the former seeking to triumph over the latter. Yvaine, in a biblical reference, allows Tristran this authority when she declares: 'Whither thou goest…' (Gaiman, 1999:166).This is a reference to a verse in the Old Testament book of Ruth 1:16. Victorian mores were founded on Christian ethos and Yvaine's statement demonstrates her surrender to a Victorian prescription requiring women to be submissive. Gaiman includes religious iconography — specifically as it contributes to a collective mythos manifest in worlds of the imagination — in another of his works, *The Sandman* series (first published in 1989), where dreams become reality within the state known as 'the Dreaming'. Stephen Rauch notes that '[i]n the Dreaming, time is eternal; its inhabitants do not age (as we understand aging), although they do change over time as a result of experience …. Time in the Dreaming is also cyclical in many ways; for example, Old Testament figures Cain and

Abel both inhabit the Dreaming … the mythical act of Cain killing Abel is repeated over and over' (2007:12). As an eternal figure Yvaine is integrated into this collective mythos, and what is noted about Alice prior to her contemplation of the Looking-Glass House also rings true of Yvaine – she exists as part of a pageantry of 'circles within circles, enclosures within enclosures, suggesting the self-containment of innocence and eternity' (Auerbach, 1973:31).[30] In Vaughn's film, the revelation of the star, Yvaine, as manifest in human form, is done within the womb-like enclosure of a large crater, created as a consequence of her violent fall to earth, and in which she is framed as being contained.

Tristran's origins make him a human manifestation of the dialectical synthesis between reality and the imaginary, closely associated with the function of the wall. He is a product of both worlds – Dunstan Thorn, his father, from Victorian England, and his mother, Una, from the realm of Faerie:

> He squeezed her hand in his. 'You know,' she said, 'a star and a mortal man…'
>
> 'Only half mortal actually,' said Tristran, helpfully. 'Everything I ever thought about myself – who I was, what I am – was a lie. Or sort of. You have no idea how astonishingly liberating that feels,'
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:184)

[30] See Kristeva, 'Women's Time' (1981:15)

Tristran, therefore, represents a synthesis of these worlds — a 'unity of opposites' (Homer, 2005:23) — and his dual nature ultimately liberates him and enables him to claim authority of both his mortal and magical sides. Rather than allowing a balance to be maintained between the worlds, Tristran ultimately claims authority over the world of Faerie as Lord of Stormhold. He effectively becomes a coloniser of the imagination, grounding it in the mores of Victorian England. On both sides of the wall, Tristran is important because he is male, and as a character in a modern fairy tale, he represents a globalised male, privileged in his ability to transcend time and space. Zygmunt Bauman, in his work *Globalization: The Human Consequences*, notes the following with regards to the effects of globalisation on the modern human condition:

> It emancipates certain humans from territorial constraints and renders certain community-generating meanings extraterritorial – while denuding the territory, to which other people go on being confined, of its meaning and its identity-endowing capacity. For some people it augurs an unprecedented freedom from obstacles and unheard-of ability to move and act from a distance. For others, it portends the impossibility of appropriating and domesticating the locality from which they have little chance of cutting themselves free in order to move elsewhere. With "distances no longer meaning anything," localities separated by distances, also lose their meanings. This, however, augurs freedom of meaning-creation for some, but portends ascription to meaninglessness for others. Some can now move out of the locality – any locality – at will. Others watch helplessly the sole locality they inhabit moving away from under their feet.
>
> (1998:18)

According to Bauman, Tristran is a character who can freely generate meaning and overcome the restrictions of boundaries. This establishes

him as a here-and-now character reflective of modern global sentiments. Yvaine is restricted, not only by space, being confined to the land of Faerie, but also by time in that she is revealed as a product of a discourse generated long ago and far away.

Yvaine only gains importance as a prize, a conquest for the enhancement of Tristran's male prestige. She is objectified, and through this objectification, she becomes a fractured character – alienated from her purpose by being split from the night sky. Gaiman denies her a re-union of self in restoring her to the night sky, and thereby also denies her the ability to free herself from obstacles and claim a 'happily ever after'. As eternal, she is 'ever after', but, as Bauman asserts, by denying her her true purpose, Gaiman, as author, and Tristran, as her colonizer, deny her 'the freedom of meaning-creation' (Bauman, 1998:18). This aligns itself with Carroll's reluctance to give the *Alice* narratives satisfactory endings. Both Gaiman and Carroll keep their heroines low or fallen away from independence, purpose and happiness in order to ground them in the Victorian expectation of masculine dominance and feminine submission.

Several other characters need to be scrutinised with regards to a counter-balancing archetype within the *Alice* and *Stardust* texts. They are the Duchess, the Red Queen and Queen of Hearts from *Alice*, and the witch-queen from *Stardust*.

The role that these characters play is dialectical, in the same way as Tristran. They are included as round characters within the plot of *Alice* and *Stardust* — characters who are as complex and important as Alice and Yvaine — but their purpose, as designated by the authors of *Alice* and *Stardust*, is primarily concerned with illustrating what the protagonists are not. They are merely, to draw on an image from *Through the Looking-Glass*, pieces on a literary chess board manipulated by Carroll and Gaiman in such a way as to facilitate the journey of the main protagonists towards their desired goal, and to show that defiance is always met with extreme punishment. The othering of these women brings to light the two female archetypes previously referred to in this chapter – the divine and virtuous heroine who ascends (the 'angel-woman'), and the corrupted, vixen-like villain who falls (the 'monster-woman') (Bacchilega, 1988:3) – and their relationship to the boundaries that seek to confine them. Barbara Creed notes, in her work *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*, that '[a]lthough the specific nature of the border changes … the function of the monstrous remains the same — to bring about an encounter between the symbolic order and that which threatens its stability' (1993:11). If this is true of the 'monster-women', then their defiance lends credit to their mirror opposites, the 'angel-women', who remain submissive as part of the masculine narrative design.

The difference between these two archetypes is found in their relative degrees of alienation. For a character like Alice or Yvaine to be embraced as divine, virtuous and even naïve or uncorrupted, she must be alienated

from being characterised as a vixen. As such, Alice and Yvaine are denied their sexuality – Alice as a result of Carroll's intention to keep her childlike, despite the inevitability of her growing up (1992:99); and Yvaine through her immortal nature, which keeps her separate from the greed and lust of the beings – both mortal and magical – who pursue her and wish to cut out and devour her heart.

What the Duchess, the Queen of Hearts, the Red Queen and witch-queen bring to the proverbial literary table is their obsession with the superficial, and specifically with beauty – the way things seem to be as opposed to the way they are. This is noted in the prevalence of the Looking-glass in both *Alice* and *Stardust*. While I have discussed the influence of the Duchess, the Queen of Hearts and the Red Queen upon the *becoming* of Alice, the influence of the witch-queen warrants further consideration, and will be explored in detail in the following pages.

Susan Cahill, in her article 'Through the Looking Glass: Fairy-Tale Cinema and the Spectacle of Femininity in Stardust and The Brothers Grimm' notes the following with regard to the filmic adaptations of *Stardust* and *The Brothers Grimm*:

> Both films are consciously self-reflexive in terms of the fairytale [sic] genre, and both offer ironically humorous takes on the genre relying on the audience's familiarity with its tropes and motifs, *Stardust* more successfully than *The Brothers Grimm*. Where both films lose their humor [sic] and irony, however, is in relation to the older woman. Both films take as their main fairy-tale referent the story of "Snow White," and both stage confrontations between older

> threatening women and younger heroines. At stake in the confrontations in the films are beauty, longevity and power for the older women. Neither succeeds. Though intergenerational female conflict is endemic in fairy tales, and "Snow White" is exemplary of this type of story, it is worth asking why these contemporary films return to and restage the relationship. The repetition of this trope in the films points to particular unease concerning, among other things, the maintenance of beauty through artificial means and the position of the older women within such a beauty economy. The films also often echo a conservative impulse to erase and destroy the older, and often more powerful women in favor [sic] of youth and beauty.
>
> (2010:58-59)

While Cahill's observations pertain specifically to the filmic adaptation of *Stardust* (2007), and are therefore directly pertinent to Yvaine's relationship with the witch-queen, her views can also be extended to the portrayal of Alice in Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* (2010).

In the film *Stardust*, Yvaine is shown as a fair beauty, with pale skin and hair. This is also true of Burton's portrayal of Alice, whose pale skin borders on being corpselike in appearance and alludes to a sense of transcendence beyond the limitations imposed on her as mortal. The worlds of the imagination that these two characters inhabit facilitate the preservation of her purity. She possesses an incorruptible, curious, childlike nature, which radiates from within and is reflected in an outer beauty. This contradicts the older women's quest to conceal the truth of the lack of substance, ugliness or emptiness within. Cahill continues:

> *Stardust* emphasizes the visual from its opening sequence, in which Ian McKellan, as narrator, poses the questions: "Are we human because we gaze as the stars, or do we

> gaze at them because we are human? Pointless really. Do the stars gaze back? Now that's a question." Accompanying the voice-over are shots of the night sky before the camera brings us from the lens of a telescope through to the eyepiece and into a room in the Royal Academy of Science in the nineteenth century. These opening shots establish the film's interest in the gaze, and particularly, anxiety concerning who it is that is doing the gazing: "Do the stars gaze back? Now that's a question." It is an overwhelmingly male perspective that we are exposed to in this sequence; we hear a male voice and see an image of a room filled with nineteenth-century gentlemen scientists. [Laura] Mulvey characterizes the cinematic gaze as male, associated with knowledge and mastery: "the determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly" (487). Women within cinema, and culture in general, are coded as occupying the place of the image, as "connot[ing a] to-be-looked-at-ness" (487). *Stardust* replays such a visual dynamic, articulating an unease concerning female relationships to spectacle and spectatorship.
>
> (2010:60)

Similar insights regarding woman's submission to the 'male gaze' can also be found in Berger's *Ways of Seeing*, where he summarises the connection between Woman and the male gaze as follows:

> Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object – and most particularly an object of vision: a sight.
>
> (1972:45-46)

The proverbial dance that occurs between light and dark, good and evil, and by extension between Self and Other, is reinforced yet again through what Berger terms 'surveyor' and 'surveyed'. He names the surveyor male, and the surveyed female. While such insights are most evident in

visual media, and in particular, the filmic adaptation of *Stardust*, as Cahill states (2010:60), they are also evident in Carroll and Gaiman's original texts.

In *Stardust*, the introduction of the witch-queen and her sisters – collectively called the Lilim – is particularly centred on a mirror in the small cottage they inhabit, and is described as being 'as high as a tall man, as wide as a church door' (Gaiman, 1999:51). The description continues:

> There were three other women in the little house. They were slim, and dark, and amused. The hall they inhabited was many times the size of the cottage; the floor was of onyx, and the pillars were of obsidian. There was a courtyard behind them, open to the sky, and stars hung in the night sky above. A fountain played in the courtyard, the water rolling and falling from a statue of a mermaid in ecstasy, her mouth wide open. Clean, black water gushed from her mouth into the pool below, shimmering and shaking the stars.
>
> The three women, and their hall, were in the black mirror. The three old women were the Lilim – the witch-queen – all alone in the woods.
>
> The three women in the mirror were also the Lilim; but whether they were the successors to the old women, or their shadow-selves, or whether only the peasant cottage in the woods was real, or if, somewhere, the Lilim lived in a black hall, with a fountain in the shape of a mermaid playing in the courtyards of stars, none knew for certain, and none but the Lilim could say.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:51-52)

The description of the mirror as being 'as high as a tall man' (Gaiman, 1999:51) establishes the mirror as a male-ordered medium. Through it,

we glimpse their singular obsession with artifice through their obsession with acquiring and devouring the star's heart.

The motive behind the witch-queen's desire to possess the star's heart and reclaim 'the glory of (their) youth' (Vaughn, 2007) is best expressed by poet Kahlil Gibran. In *The Prophet*, he writes:

> beauty is… an ecstasy
> … a heart enflamed and a soul enchanted.
> … an image you see though you close your eyes and a
> song you hear though you shut your ears.
> … a garden for ever in bloom and a flock of angels
> ever in flight.
> People of Orphalese, beauty is life when life unveils
> her holy face
> But you are life and you are the veil.
> Beauty is eternity gazing at itself in a mirror
> But you are eternity and you are the mirror.
>
> (1985:82-83)

According to Gibran, beauty is the singular desire, and while the Lilim are three, they are represented by the witch-queen, Lamia, on their quest to claim the heart of the star. Beauty therefore becomes the singular goal, reflected in 'a heart enflamed and a soul enchanted' (Gibran, 1985:82). The heart of the star becomes a mirror which reflects the eternal quest for youth and beauty. As the witch-queen pursues Yvaine at the magical inn, intent on cutting out her heart, she calmly says:

> 'The burning golden heart of a star at peace is so much finer than the flickering heart of a little frightened star …. But even the heart of a star who is afraid and scared is better by far than no heart at all.'
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:132)

In devouring the heart, the witch-queen would be devouring the symbol of the life-force of '[b]eauty (as) eternity gazing at itself in a mirror' (Gibran, 1985:83).

The world in the 'black mirror' (Gaiman, 1999:51) is one in which the Lilim, in their dark paradise, are transformed from one witch stereotype – the *ugly* crone – into the other, *beauty*-obsessed witch-queen, in their dark paradise. The Lacanian 'mirror stage' (1949:4) shows that the witches' dual nature can be defined as a split between the real self as imperfect and corrupted by the influence of time on appearance, and the projection of an ideal self – young and beautiful – as the image preserved and reflected in the mirror. The transformation of one of the witches from her aged state into a dark and mysterious beauty happens in front of the mirror. This is described as follows:

> (In the mirror, three women stared out.)
>
> There was a shivering and a shuddering at the centre of all things.
>
> (Now, two women stared from the black mirror.)
>
> In the cottage, two old women stared, envy and hope mixing in their faces, at a tall, handsome woman with black hair and dark eyes and red, red lips.
>
> (Gaiman, 1999:53)

What the reader is encountering the same three women within and outside the mirror. If it is to be assumed, as Joan Riviere argues, in

‘Womanliness as a Masquerade’, that ‘genuine womanliness and the ‘masquerade’’ are one and the same (1986:49), then the only true difference to be noted with regards to who the witch-queen was, and the beauty that she transforms into in front of the mirror, is the influence of the ‘change of seeming’. The vision of who she seems to be in the mirror changes into who she is – she becomes a superficial façade emptied of any consideration other than the quest for eternal beauty. She is Berger’s ‘object of vision’ (1972:46), and therefore there is little distinction between what seems to be and what is. With the brothers Grimm lending weight to such sentiments in their transcription of the ‘Snow White’ tale, and present-day concerns with ideal beauty, *Stardust* becomes more than just a modern-day commentary and homage to nineteenth-century values concerning beauty. Anne Balsamo notes, in *Technologies of the Gendered Body: Reading Cyborg Women,* ‘[t]he body becomes… the site at which women, consciously or not, accept the meanings that circulate in popular culture about ideal beauty… The female body comes to serve as a site of inscription, a billboard for the dominant meanings that the female body is to have in postmodernity’ (1996:78). This obsession transcends time and culture to assume a universal importance.

Riviere goes on to state that the woman is ‘“disguising herself” as merely a castrated woman’ (1986:49). This aligns with Laura Mulvey’s observation in her article ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’ in which castration imposes a twofold expectation – ‘[e]ither she must gracefully give way to the word, the Name of the Father and the Law, or else

struggle to keep her child down with her in the half-light of the imaginary' (1999:834). If Yvaine is to be considered a child of light, as a star, then the Lilim – a derivative of the name Lilith, which may be translated from the Sumerian as 'the maiden who has stolen the light', as stated in Siegmund Hurwitz's work, *Lilith: The First Eve (Historical and Psychological Aspects of the Dark Feminine)* (1999:51) — may be seen as those who literally steal the light and attempt to keep her in the world of Faerie.[31] However, they must eventually concede to the powerful male Stormhold bloodline when Trist[r]an — as depicted in Vaughn's film (2007), claims the star/light for himself and seals his authority over her through marriage. The Lilim's desire to possess the star because of their lack of youth and beauty also aligns with Lacan's insight, in 'The Meaning of the Phallus', regarding the masquerade and the feminine desire for the phallus (1985:83-85).

The witch-queen has thus fallen victim to 'myths forged by men' (De Beauvoir, 1977:94). From Snow White's wicked stepmother consumed by her quest for eternal beauty in the story by the brothers Grimm, to the superficial Red Queen obsessed with proper decorum rather than a depth of understanding about the world[32] and to the Queen of Hearts, whose

[31] Lilith is described by Raphael Patai as follows: 'Lilith's epithet was "the beautiful maiden," but she was believed to have been a harlot and a vampire…' (1964: 295). The name of 'Lilim', and Lamia as their representative, is thus inherently linked to beauty, and on a spiritual level, their quest may be seen as a means of reclaiming what was taken from the Lilith figure – beauty and power – noted in her fall from grace and being replaced by Eve at Adam's side. The name 'Yvaine' sounds remarkably close to the name Eve when the dynamic between the 'angel-woman' and 'monster-woman' (Bacchilega, 1988:3) is considered.

[32] A.L Taylor writes, in 'Chess and Theology in the Alice Books', 'As for the Queens, they "see" so much of the board that they might be expected to know what is happening fairly

authority at the trial concerning who stole the tarts disintegrates into chaotic nonsense[33] in Carroll's *Alice*, to Gaiman's quest for the heart of Yvaine by the youth- and beauty-obsessed Lilim in *Stardust*, all expose a male-designed preoccupation with a Woman's purpose in society being equated with the mandatory masquerade or the requirement to be decorative. This is observable from folklore through to nineteenth-century children's literature and modern-day fantasy. Woman's domain is the world of the imagination, an Other world entered through a Looking-glass, down the Rabbit-Hole and by crossing a wall. It is the place where Alice and Yvaine as protagonists, and the Red Queen, Queen of Hearts and witch-queen as antagonists, wield their greatest influence — the worlds of the fallen women.

The division between the privilege of the Self and the obligation of the Other is noted in both *Alice* and *Stardust*. In Victorian society, fairy tales represent a falling away from the rationality of what were regarded as the superior occupations of the mind in scientific discovery. Gaiman and Carroll, by contrast, establish the capacity to connect these two seemingly disparate worlds — the rational world and the world of the imagination. In creating portals like the Rabbit-Hole, the Looking-glass and the wall, through which these disparate worlds can connect, a dialectic relationship

well. But, as will appear, their manner of 'seeing' is so peculiar that they know less about it than anybody' (1992:374).

[33] The depth of hierarchical structure in the reasonable male-ordered world above is shown to be superficial and insignificant in Wonderland below, as demonstrated by the nonsensical authority of the Queen of Hearts (Carroll, 1992:96-97). The idea of losing one's head is significant in relation to the madness of the world Alice moves through. Things that are commonplace become enveloped in nonsense – the caucus-race running around in circles, the Mad Hatter's tea party, and painting the roses red.

between the action of falling down and growing up is achieved – that falling down becomes a necessary opposition to growing up, with both sharing equal importance as they reveal an essential truth about each other.

CONCLUSION

The *Alice* texts, collectively known as *Alice in Wonderland* (1897), present the reader with a much-loved central character in Alice. While her adventures in Wonderland may be construed as a means of escaping the pressures of growing up, as articulated by Coveney in 'Escape' (1992:327-328), my analysis of the text has highlighted the underlying social expectation which directs Alice to return to the real world and assume the role of a grown-up submissive and domesticated woman. This fundamental understanding of the spatiotemporal mechanisms which push her towards conformity are also experienced by Yvaine in *Stardust* (Gaiman, 1999) as her social role is established, not through what she is allowed to do, but rather through what is forbidden to her. This social expectation for women to become submissive 'Others' (De Beauvoir 1989:xxii) is portrayed as movements of 'falling down' and a 'falling away' from the freedoms of Selfhood.

In conclusion, I wish to consider whether things have changed for women's gendered socialization since the writing of Carroll's *Alice* texts. While the narrative of *Stardust* is rooted in a Victorian setting, Gaiman's creation of the fallen star, Yvaine, within a modern fairy tale demonstrates that the echoes of Victorian social expectation for women to submit to men are still being articulated beyond this historical context.

The *Alice* and *Stardust* texts demonstrate that the tug-of-war between progressive and regressive movement is a core theme that is fundamental to the design of fantasy and children's literature. The struggle between growing up, as a progressive movement, and falling down, as a regressive movement, is not only relevant to the Victorian expectation for children to assume a particular role in a society based on gender division, where boys grow up into the privilege of authority and influence of manhood, and girls fall down into the domestic submission of womanhood.

According to De Beauvoir, these opposing movements, and the expectations attached to them, establish a universal Self/Other dichotomy that transcends any specific historical period – where the masculine is Self, and the feminine is Other (1989:xxii). Accepting the role one is expected to fulfil as either male or female is dependent on a social process which can best be described, in De Beauvoir's classic phrase, as *becoming* – '[o]ne is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one' (1973:301).

In the *Alice* texts and *Stardust*, the *becoming* of Alice and Yvaine is experienced both spatially and temporally. In this dissertation, Kristeva's model of horizontal and vertical coordinates (1969:145) has provided a means through which these aspects of the characters' *becoming* are scrutinised.

The vertical axis of Kristeva's model indicates the text/context relationship and the spatial dimension of the characters' development. The imagination, as defined by Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* (1989:43-44), is the space where Alice and Yvaine wield the most influence. This stands in direct opposition to the real world, where the masculine 'Self' maintains authority. Alice's space is Wonderland, the world below: Yvaine's space is Faerie, the world beyond. Their importance in these 'Other' worlds is a characteristic of the role fairy tales play in socialising young girls into becoming passive 'damsels in distress', and therefore passive women – the proverbial 'Angel in the House' (Patmore, 1854) – particularly within Victorian society, as outlined by such critics as Altick (*Victorian People and Ideas,* 1973:54) and Petrie ('Victorian Women Expected to be Idle and Ignorant', 2000:184).

Fairy tales reinforce gender roles through their narratives of *becoming* – of 'once-upon-a times' and 'happily-ever-afters'; of heroes and damsels in distress; of evil step-mothers and virtuous fairy godmothers; of princes and princesses. They are recited to children as bedtime verse, in the hopes that they will accept these archetypes as the norm, and the girl-child will dream, as Snow White sings in the Disney animated film (1937), that 'someday [her] prince will come'.

Carroll, particularly, equates fairy tales with dreams. Visions and experiences of unreality are found down the Rabbit-Hole and through the Looking-glass. These fantastical fairy tale realms stand as 'Other' —

below and beyond the boundaries of the ‘Selfed’, or complacently ordered, Victorian England. For some, the lands above, below and beyond offer a sense of purpose and citizenship, while, for others, the experience of these lands restrict, imposing limitations more than they grant liberties.

The relationship between male authors and female characters is reinforced in the horizontal axis of Kristeva’s model (1969:145). In both Gaiman’s *Stardust* and Carroll’s *Alice* texts, it is evident that male authority imposes a frame around the central female protagonists that restricts them to experiencing importance only within the space of the dream or fantasy realm. They progress and regress according to masculine design, and cannot be seen to fulfil their desires in these texts.

Carroll establishes Alice’s ‘Otherness’ through the actions of falling down the Rabbit-Hole and moving through the Looking-glass. The fall is a vertical movement, which can be seen to represent how Alice is moving away from social convention, while, ironically, at the same time, she grows up towards its influence. Movement through the Looking-glass establishes Alice as being influenced by the male gaze – not as a force that is separate from herself, but as an internalized drive within her psyche. Carroll pulls Alice back into reality, enabling Victorian society to take ownership of her dream not only in *Alice’s Advetures in Wonderland*, where her sister imbues the dream with society’s expectations for Alice’s

life, but also in *Through the Looking-glass*, where Alice is left wondering whether what she experienced was a dream or not.

In Gaiman's novel, Yvaine is established as 'Other' through her disconnection from humanity – she is immortal and falls beyond Victorian reality into the realm of Faerie. Within this realm she is portrayed as the quintessential 'damsel in distress' – broken, fragile and enslaved by Tristran (Gaiman, 1999:81-82).

The added dimension that film directors Burton and Vaughn bring to the traditional tellings of Carroll's and Gaiman's stories respectively, liberates both Alice and Yvaine by affording them a happy ending in the world they *choose* to inhabit. Alice returns to the real world and claims her place as a liberated woman; Yvaine uses the Babylon candle to return herself and Trist[r]an to the sky. This provides an intertextual commentary through intentional 'rereading' and 'rewriting' (Kristeva, 1980:86) of the original texts from which the films are adapted. Within the broader ambit of intertextual analysis, this is significant as it supports the relationship between the four texts. This relationship does not rely on preserving the purity of the original texts as authored by Carroll and Gaiman, but through empowering the reader – a group which the directors Burton and Vaughn are included – to re-imagine the stories. In *Desire in Language*, Kristeva discusses the distinction between reader and writer in terms that highlight the productivity of the intertextual relationship:

> [I]n the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another; any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is an absorption of and a reply to another text … ; the writer's interlocutor, then, is the writer himself, but as reader of another text… The one who writes is the same as the one who reads …. Since his interlocutor is a text, he himself is no more than a text rereading itself as it rewrites itself.
> (1980: 36, 66, 69, 86)

With Gaiman actively involved as producer of Vaughn's re-visioning of his *Stardust* novel, the author is most overtly experienced as re-reader and re-writer of his own text. While Carroll's and Gaiman's novels may seem to disempower their female protagonists, the conclusions of these films serve to satisfy the audience's need for a sense of closure, while at the same time not requiring the viewer to interrogate uncertainty. In this sense, Carroll and Gaiman's novels have been transformed and imbued with the new twenty-first-century ideology of popcorn cinema, in which they are endowed with new, empowering denouements.

The effect of this reversal of the characters' fortunes significantly affects the female viewer or spectator due to the alienating experience of encountering a blonde-haired, fair-skinned, blue-eyed beauty being granted her cinematic liberation. Susan Sontag notes the following in her article 'Women's Beauty: Put Down or Power Source?' with regards to women's perception of themselves when compared to an Other, idealised image:

> What is accepted by most women as a flattering idealization of their sex is a way of making women feel

> inferior to what they actually are – or normally grow up to be. For the ideal of beauty is administered as a form of self-oppression.
>
> (2006:118)

The cinema screen, therefore, acts as a mirror revealing to the female spectator what, in many cases, she is not and encouraging her, through visual cues, to embrace a specific, and unrealistic, female ideal of 'youth' and 'beauty' (Vaughn, 2007). In her article, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, Mulvey notes:

> [I]t is an image that constitutes the matrix of the imaginary, of recognition/misrecognition and identification, and hence of the first articulation of the "I," of subjectivity. This is a moment when an older fascination with looking… collides with the initial inklings of self-awareness. Hence it is the birth of the long love affair/despair between image and self-image which has found such intensity of expression in film and such joyous recognition in the cinema audience. Quite apart from the extraneous similarities between screen and mirror (the framing of the human form in its surroundings, for instance), the cinema has structures of fascination strong enough to allow temporary loss of ego while simultaneously reinforcing the ego. The sense of forgetting the world as the ego has subsequently come to perceive it… is nostalgically reminiscent of that pre-subjective moment of image recognition.
>
> (1999:836)

Within the wider scope of the fairy tale genre and within the current fascination with cinematic retellings of classic Grimm tales such as 'Snow White' and 'Sleeping Beauty', further scrutiny must be paid to how, in adapting these stories for cinema audiences, traditional gender stereotypes are being reinforced or rejected, and what purpose these fairy tale films serve in generating a global sociocultural expectation with

regards to accepted gender roles. As Philip Green observes in his article 'Ideology and Ambiguity in Cinema':

> Into what social role, then, are we interpellated? First, and above all, we are interpellated as passive social spectators rather than social actors. As moviegoers, most of the time we are thrilling to or laughing at the exploits of bug-eyed monsters, femme fatales, serial killers, highschool nerds, confused young lovers, tough cops, and so on …. But movies, at least the products of dominant cinema (mainstream Hollywood cinema and its imitators), do not demand that we engage in action. They encourage us to enjoy, to take pleasure in, even the most horrific of socially realistic narratives …
>
> (1993:103)

The frustration of the reader in encountering Gaiman's unhappy ending for Yvaine, and the encouragement by Carroll to have his reader actively involved in the judgement of the authenticity of Alice's adventures in Wonderland dissolve within the ideological framework of cinema. According to Green, readers as active participants in generating meaning are transformed by the cinema experience into 'passive social spectators' (1993:103). This implies that the viewers are reduced, and fall down into a fairy tale realm — a cinema Wonderland — from which they passively derive their growing up. The endurance of these gendered expectations and roles demonstrates that Victorian social expectation has been transcribed onto modern society, and it is my assertion that cinema enables a greater scope for the communication of dominant and submissive gender roles.

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