

The Modern *Alice*

Adaptations in Novel, Film and Video Game from 2000 - 2012

by

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Abstract

Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There* have and continue to inspire many adaptations since their publication. The purpose of this thesis is to compare the treatment of the narrative, characters and dialogue of *Alice* in different forms of media. I will be looking at Frank Beddor's *The Looking Glass Wars*, Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*, Nick Willing's *Alice*, American McGee's *Alice*, and *Madness Returns*.

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Introduction

Lewis Carroll develops a fantastical world of memorable characters and adventures in his novels *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There*. Inspired by Alice Liddell and her sisters Lorina and Edith, the novels contain a world full of nonsense that is designed to entertain children. The first novel, published in 1865, features a seven year old Alice who follows a white rabbit down a rabbit hole and finds herself in the mysterious world of Wonderland. While in Wonderland, she is guided by an array of characters that have significance to either the Liddells in particular or to the Victorian audience who made the story popular. Some of the characters Alice meets while exploring Wonderland include: a White Rabbit who enters the story at the start of her adventure, a Caterpillar who makes Alice question her identity, a Cheshire Cat who proves to her that most characters of Wonderland are mad, a Mad Hatter and a March Hare who are having an unusual tea party and the Queen of Hearts who invites her to play croquet. After the commercial success of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, better known as *Alice in Wonderland*, in 1871 Carroll published *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There*, which will henceforth be referred to as *Through the Looking Glass*. The now seven-and-a-half year old Alice enters the Looking Glass world as a pawn in a chess game and with the help of characters such as the White Knight, the Red Queen, and Humpty Dumpty, Alice plays her way across the chess board. Each character that Alice interacts with is interpreted as a chess move which brings her closer to her goal of being crowned Queen and checkmating the King to win the chess game.

The popularity of these works has inspired many creators to adapt Alice's adventures to different media and narratives. An adaptation, as defined by John M. Desmond and Peter Hawkes (2, 2006), is "an *interpretation*, involving at least one person's reading of a text, choices

about what elements to transfer, and decisions about how to actualize these elements in a medium of image and sound.” Linda Cahir (16, 2006) differentiates three types of adaptations: literal, traditional and radical. A literal adaptation attempts to remain as close to the source material as possible within the confines of the new medium; a traditional adaptation takes some liberties with the source material, but remains mostly faithful to the text; a radical translation builds a new story using the same characters.

Cahir (14, 2006) observes that in analyzing an adaptation, it is important to acknowledge that infidelity to the text is expected, and that it is unfair to the adaptation to assume that it will be a literal translation of the source material. A lack of fidelity to the original narrative, in favour of more familiar patterns, suggests that some newer adapted approaches are designed to appeal to today’s audiences. By capturing the truth, or spirit of the original work, an adapter is able to create a new work that is reminiscent of the source text, which is what the audience is interested in seeing, and an independent new translation simultaneously. Richard Kreyolin (10, 2003) argues that “the key to successful [adaptation] really is - not to do a verbatim and faithful transcription – which is in many ways impossible anyway, but to capture the truth of the original work and convey that.” Adaptations can be created in the form of novels, plays, films, video games, etc., and attempt to interpret a pre-existing narrative in a new medium. Richard J. Hand (17, 2010) suggests that we should analyze what the changes are and describes five key strategies which adapters use to change the text from a literal translation; these are: omission, addition, marginalization, expansion and alteration.

In the strategy of “Omission,” narrative or textual material is removed when a source text is dramatized. In “Addition,” narrative or textual material not in the

source text is introduced to the adaptation. In “Marginalization,” thematic issues are given less prominence in the dramatization. In “Expansion,” thematic issues suggested in the source text are given more prominence in the dramatization. In “Alteration,” themes, textual style, narrative events, and details are modified.

These strategies allow adapters to translate the source text into new narratives, if they are using the same medium, or to effectively capture the spirit of the text in a new medium. Hand’s strategies of looking at an adaptation remind critics that they are not looking for fidelity in an adaptation; instead, Hand suggests that we systematically examine what has been changed in order to appreciate the new text as a separate entity. Christa Albrecht-Crane and Dennis Cutchins (12, 2010) likewise agree that an adaptation is a representation of the original text. It may contain many of the same motifs, or may differ greatly from the creator’s intent, but the intent does not make it the original work, and should not be viewed as such. They suggest that any change to the original text is inevitable. Changing the narrative allows the adaptation to conform to societal norms and to entice the audience to engage with the adaptation.

In order to understand how to successfully market to the audience, adapters must keep in mind that most audience members want to be entertained. They want to escape, and immerse themselves in another world where they can temporarily forget their worries and troubles (LeRoy 33, 1964). Generally, they expect to be happier, or at least satisfied, at the end of their experience and do not wish to think of the social, political or cultural references which may be infused in the text. As a result, many adapters find a story which has made either the adapter or the public happy, and create their interpretation of it for others to enjoy. Linda Hutcheon (172, 2006) contests that engaging with an adaptation provides familiarity, be it in characters or plot, to the

audience, while allow for “surprise and novelty” in the work. By choosing to adapt a work which has already garnered attention, adapters are immersing the audience in a world which has already proven to be entertaining. Christine Geraghty (15, 2008) argues that in using a classic title, adapters are able to borrow the fame and credibility associated with that title. In fact, many adapters draw inspiration from previous works to create a new representation of a beloved classic.

While LeRoy may advocate escapism when examining an adaptation, the audience may come in with a preconceived notion as to what the adaptation will entail. McFarlane (7, 1996) discusses the audience as critics to the fidelity of the text. He acknowledges that

whatever their complaints about this or that violation of the original, they have continued to want to see what the books ‘look like’. Constantly creating their own mental images of the world of a novel and its people, they are interested in comparing their images with those created by the film-maker. But as Christian Metz says, the reader ‘will not always find *his film*, since what he has before him in the actual film is now somebody else’s phantasy’.

Each contemporary narrative media has strengths which can be effectively used to convey story or to develop characters. For example, novels are able to add in much more detail and to explore inner thoughts in ways which other media forms have difficulty or cannot express (Kreyolin 51, 2003). The author is able to narrate from various perspectives and can provide insight on the characters’ thoughts and feelings, which may be difficult to convey in different mediums. Conversely, a film or video game must be presented in one tense, be it past or present,

a novel is able to switch easily between past, present and future. Joy Gould Boyum (8, 1985) also asserts that novels are able to convey more complex ideas because the author is able to describe the internal and external workings of the characters in the context of the story. Boyum believes “that a work of literature ... is by definition a work of complexity and quality which is addressed to an educated elite; that movies, in contrast are mere entertainment, directed at anyone and everyone.” She suggests that it does not matter what medium the book is being adapted to, rather it is important to consider the audience that it is being targeted at and to see what would appeal to them. Films are also able to target a larger audience because they are easily accessible entertainment.

One of the most popular means to adapt narrative is with film; the visual form is an easy and effective way to reach a large audience. Guerric DeBona (3, 2010) claims that “adaptive filmic text is ‘parasitic’” and that it is a paraphrase of the novel. As a result, many ideas, or unique features of the original text, are either removed or modified made because the narratives are most often designed for the mass audience, instead of a targeted niche.

In addition, films and video games differ from novels in that they focus on external factors such as images and sound to tell a story (Kreyolin 51, 2003). The adapter often relies on these visual and auditory cues to convey the characters’ thoughts and to tell the story, whereas novels must narrate through the actions. Kreyolin contrasts the strengths of adapting to a novel, to adapting to a film or video game noting that each medium uses a different strategy to convey the narrative. Entertainment needs stars, happy endings, escapism and a light atmosphere (Lovell and Sergi 19, 2009). Incorporating these elements is particularly important because people want to be entertained.

Many video games adapters draw inspiration from classics or childhood favourites when creating an interactive game. Despite the fact that video games are not as popular a medium for adaptation, adapting in a form which works to incorporate the world defined by a source text in an interactive medium is extremely rewarding for the audience. Torben Grodal (197, 2000) argues that video game adapters give the audience an opportunity to actively participate in the creation of the narrative and to experience the joys and perils of the characters in the source text.

In addition, the player is able to assume the perspective of certain characters and to immerse him/herself in a world which has, until now, only been written in a novel. Hutcheon (133, 2006) reminds audiences that there are many ways to be immersed in a text. “The act of reading a print text immerses us through imagination in another world, seeing a play or film immerses us visually and aurally, and interacting with a story in a videogame or in a theme park adds a physical, enacted dimension.” Each method of immersion has its own benefits, but the each work to entertain the intended audience.

Historically Lewis Carroll’s novels, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, have been adapted many times in mediums which include: movies, video games, novels, etc. attracting audiences of varying ages. Over time, the audience of *Alice* has changed from the three young girls to a broader, older audience. In this thesis, I describe how the audience of *Alice* has changed and what revisions have been made in the process of adapting and modernising the works. Initially, the novels were written for the Liddell sisters, three girls aged 8, 10 and 13. Since then, there have been a number of changes made to the narrative, characters, and dialogue of *Alice* that conform to popular culture for entertainment. As a result, many of the adaptations that come out are re-imaginings that follow the conventions of popular games, films or novels.

In essence, everything except the characters and some of the most core ideas are kept intact while the rest are discarded in favour of more popular formulaic creations.

I compare five different 21st century adaptations of the *Alice* books to demonstrate what changes were made. In each of the adaptations, Alice and the characters of Wonderland have been repurposed to create a story that fits its respective medium. For this study, I will be considering only traditional adaptations of *Alice* which were released between 2000 and 2012 and are easily accessible by the North American market. Traditional adaptations allow the director to actively make decisions about their interpretation of the source text without losing the essence of Carroll's novels. I will examine: Frank Beddor's 2006 novel *The Looking Glass Wars* which follows Alyss through her journey of becoming Alice Liddell and later returning to Wonderland, Tim Burton's 2010 Disney representation *Alice in Wonderland* which shows an aged Alice returning to save Wonderland, Nick Willing's 2009 TV Mini-series *Alice* which places Alice in a futuristic, desolate Wonderland ruled by the Queen of Hearts, *American McGee's Alice* a video game released in 2001 featuring a mentally unstable Alice who must return to dark and twisted Wonderland, and lastly *Alice: Madness Returns* the 2011 sequel of *American McGee's Alice* which features the asylum patient Alice returning to Wonderland to try and reconcile her guilt while defeating the new evil of her world.

I will examine Carroll's treatment of the narrative, character and dialogue and compare his strategies to those used by adapters of *Alice*. However, in order to understand why these concessions have been made, I will first discuss the audience that Carroll was trying to keep entertained in order to see why some of his initial decisions may have been made.

Alice's Audience

Lewis Carroll's iconic works, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, have been the target of many adaptations since their conception. In order to fully understand how the audience of *Alice* has changed over time, and for various adaptations, we will first examine the initial audience of the "golden afternoon", the boat trip outing during which Carroll composed the story. Lewis Carroll's biographies tell of his affection for young girls, and of his belief that childhood is one of the most important times for the development of imagination and for the exploration of new ideas (Cohen 135, 1995). He believed that a child's mind was a divine, wonderful place, and that a child's appreciation of his works was praise enough. He would often spend afternoons on boat trips, picnics, or photography sessions with his young companions and entertained them with stories; as a result, many of his works are, or contain, parodies of Victorian nursery rhymes. There were many children who influenced Carroll's artistic endeavours; however, the daughters of Henry Liddell, the dean of the Christ Church of Oxford where Carroll was a don and mathematician, most heavily inspired the novels.

The Victorian audience which helped to popularize the novels was particularly fond of English nursery rhymes and folk literature, which contained nonsense verse (Avery 289, 1993). They showed particular interest in books such as The Grimm Brothers' fairy tales and *The Arabian Nights* which contained tales of characters embarking on fantastical journeys (Moran 91, 2006). The interest of these predecessors made the Victorian audience more accepting of Carroll's novels of nonsense. Although these novels have come to be beloved children's classics, much of the content would not have been deemed appropriate for children. Gillian Avery (298, 1993) believes that Carroll "wrote entirely to please [himself], instead of following accepted ideas of what was thought appropriate for children." Carroll's novel does not hesitate to make

jokes about death or to parody religious texts. Avery observes that Carroll parodied religious texts which were regularly recited during Sunday service.

Although readers are most familiar with the published edition of *Alice in Wonderland*, containing John Tenniel's illustrations, Carroll had, in fact, created an earlier edition entitled *Alice's Adventures Underground*. Carroll's initial version was hand written and populated with illustrations that Carroll had drawn himself; it was later gifted to Alice Liddell, who had requested that he record the stories of that day. Although the exact details of the creation of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* are uncertain, but Duckworth claims that Carroll invented large parts of the story on their boat ride and that the stories were mainly told for the benefit of Alice. The story incorporated many memories that Liddell sister shared with Carroll; to illustrate, in the chapter "A Caucus Race and a Long Tale" Alice is acquainted with many unusual characters running a nonsensical race "Dodgson himself was the Dodo (presumably a confession that when he stammered his name came out as 'Do-do-Dodgson'), Duckworth was the Duck, Lorina was the Lory, Edith was the Eaglet – and Alice, of course, was Alice" (Hudson 126, 1976). The Liddells are extremely influential to the development of the *Alice* novels, and their memories and adventures with Carroll are immortalized in his novels. In comparing the novel novels, readers can see that there are many narratives changes between the original manuscript of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* and the edition containing Tenniel's illustrations (Hudson 124, 1976). For instance, the adventures of the Mad Hatter and the Cheshire Cat were added later and have become key figures of *Alice in Wonderland*.

Perhaps what was most important about the *Alice* books is that they were directed towards children.

The *Alice* books affect children of all places at all times in a similar way. They tell the child that someone does understand; they offer encouragement, a feeling that the author is sharing their miseries and is holding out a hand, a hope for their survival as they pass from childhood into adulthood. (Cohen 140, 1995)

Carroll reiterates his love of childhood by publishing *The Nursery Alice* after the initial novel. The shorter version of *Alice* attempts to explain and simplify *Alice in Wonderland* so that children under the age of five may understand them. He also offers a reassuring voice throughout the entire process of reading the text, stating exactly what is happening, to reassure the child that nothing bad will happen to Alice. He constantly interjects with questions and phrases such as “Would you like to hear what it was she dreamed about?” (Carroll 3, 1981) to remind children that he is there as their guide, and that they are only reading a story about a girl’s dream. In “What Went Wrong with Alice?”, Beverly Clark compares the adaptation *The Nursery Alice* (1889) to the *Alice* that is commonly read. Clark argues that Carroll himself wanted children of all ages to understand and enjoy his works. By simplifying the language and providing a caring guide throughout the reading process, Carroll demonstrates that he intends children to be his audience.

Carroll’s love of children does not always translate in the modern adaptations of *Alice*. In fact, many of the adaptations are most certainly not intended for children, and distinguish themselves in their thematic content, use of sexual images, and scenes of violence. Although Carroll’s *Alice* may have some elements of darkness, adapters thrive on the many jokes of death in the novels and create a darker world than imagined by Carroll. Many of the Victorian jokes or parodies, specifically about manners and the search for a key to the door in the hallway, have

been omitted in order to speed up the progression in the story and to include more modern and popular references.

One of the most radical changes that every known adaptation makes is to amalgamate Carroll's two novels into one cohesive narrative, which is then adapted into its respective medium. The practice of incorporating both novels into a singular narrative may have been established in 1951 with the Disney animated film, *Alice in Wonderland*. The studios attempt led to a whimsical Wonderland and infused the work with bright colours, cute characters and catchy songs with which to remember *Alice*. The Disney version effectively captured the essence of the two novels into one work and set the basis for most works to come. However, the more recent adaptations have diverged from the childish tone and capitalised on the darker undertones of the novels such as the ideas of madness, murder, and death are prevalent throughout the texts.

Frank Beddor's *The Looking Glass Wars* is marketed as a young adult novel, specifically targeting ages 11 and up. The story begins on an upbeat note with Princess Alyss Heart celebrating her birthday. In her honour, the Queen is holding a parade where the town people are able to demonstrate their inventions; if inventions are deemed successful they are materialized in the 'real world'. Beddor also introduces the importance of imagination power, an ability the royal family possesses, which allows them to imagine ideas into being - be it weapons for combat, singing flowers, or water to spin out of a hula-hoop. However, a war breaks out in Wonderland and Alyss is forced to leave Wonderland and seek refuge in 1860s London. While the characters of Wonderland are left rallying an army to overthrow Queen Redd, Alyss, now Alice Liddell, ages to become a 20 year old adult whose life coincides with that of the original Alice Liddell. The changes Beddor makes conform more to what people expect in an adventure novel when compared to the nonsensical verse which Carroll initially wrote. However, the

characters of Carroll's novel are creatively infused in the re-imaged text. To illustrate, the White Rabbit becomes "Bibwit Harte, the royal tutor," (Beddor 9, 2004) the Cheshire Cat becomes "The Cat" a deadly assassin working for Queen Redd, the Mad Hatter becomes Hatter Madigan a guard for the Queen who is a guide for Alyss, and even Carroll's original name, Charles Dodgson, is incorporated into the narrative as "Dodge" a good friend to Alyss who becomes a key fighter in the rebellion. In renaming the characters, Beddor differentiates his characters from those of Carroll's novels, but reminds readers of the literary icons who inspired them (Williams 2010). In calling Alice, Alyss the reader is expecting that she should be the main character who will later have problems with identity. Beddor's novel strays from McFarlane's (5, 1996) belief that novels after the nineteenth century are more intent on showing the reader what is happening, instead of telling what has passed. Beddor's novel mainly recounts the details of the reinvented universe and incorporates biographical elements of Carroll and Alice Liddell in order to create a new world.

Similarly, film adapters create a version of *Alice* that resembles the outline of most popular adventure movies. These films feature a goal-oriented character, a good versus evil battle and archetypal characters that aid the heroine on her quest. The adapters have realized that attempting to follow the dream-like, nonsensical, character driven narrative of Carroll's has proven unsuccessful in past adaptations. However, as Desmond and Hawkes (16, 2006) contest, "literary texts, whether classics from the Western canon or popular literature likely never to enter the canon, are good candidates for [adaptation] because their stories have already proven to be enjoyable to many people."

Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*, released in 2010 under the Disney Corporation, follows the journey of an older Alice, who returns to Wonderland to save the creatures from the

regime of the tyrannical Red Queen. At the beginning of the film, Alice finds herself the recipient of a marriage proposal to a suitor who she does not like. In her attempt to escape, she follows a white rabbit and falls down a rabbit hole where she is greeted by the inhabitants of a desolate Wonderland. The characters debate her validity as “the Alice”, the prophesied champion who will challenge the Red Queen and slay the Jabberwocky on the Frabjous day. With the aid of the “Mad Hatter” and various other characters, including the now helpful Cheshire Cat, the March Hare, and the Dormouse, Alice is driven towards the White Queen who encourages Alice to fulfill the role for which she has returned. The characters remain visible throughout the narrative and regularly interact with each other in a friendly manner which suggests that they are companions rather than the rude, solitary creatures of Carroll’s novels. They also rally together in a style that fits the traditional good versus evil battle, a defining feature of the fantasy genre (Kurjian, Livingston, Young, A.V.I 492, 2006).

Because of the inherent violence in the final battle, and various scenes of nudity, Burton’s *Alice* is rated Parental Guidance (PG). A PG rating indicates that the “motion picture should be investigated by parents before they let their younger children attend....There may be some profanity and some depictions of violence or brief nudity” (“What Each Rating Means” 2011). Despite the fact that a number of elements, including the narrative and nature of characters, have been changed in this adaptation, the film achieved its goal of generating revenue and attracting viewers. Tim Burton’s rendition features the acting talent of: Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter, Stephen Fry, Alan Rickman, Anne Hathaway and Michael Sheen to add to its appeal (IMDB 2012). The film generated a domestic revenue of \$334,191,110 and a foreign revenue of \$690,108,794 in box office sales (BoxOfficeMojo 2011) demonstrating its ability to attract the modern audience and the appeal that *Alice* adaptations still elicit. These numbers do not include

the revenue generated from the related merchandise and memorabilia sold to commemorate the film.

Nick Willing takes a similar approach to Burton and, in his second attempt at producing an adaptation of *Alice*, uses elements of more popular entertainment to create his adaptation. Willing's previous attempt at filming *Wonderland*, a 1999 film, was a literal translation of the novel, but was not considered successful by viewers. A review of the film reads "for all the big names in the cast and lavish special effects and set design, the final product is shrill and obnoxious and on occasion downright tedious" (At-a-Glance Film Reviews 1999). Willing's second attempt does not rely as heavily on the dream-like structure of the text and instead follows a narrative pattern that is better received by the audience of SyFy, the network which aired it. In his new version, *Alice*, a 20 year old karate instructor, has been recently proposed to by Jack, the Jack of Hearts, who gives her a ring. The ring is actually a key that controls the doorway which will allow people to enter and exit through the Looking Glass into Wonderland. Jack is kidnapped by the White Rabbit, a servant to the Queen of Hearts, and returned to Wonderland. Wonderland is now an economic empire, run by the Queen, where humans, now called oysters, are kidnapped and taken to a casino where they are drained of their emotions. These emotions are then sold, in liquid form, to the inhabitants of Wonderland. When Alice enters, she is initially intent on finding Jack; however she changes her objectives after discovering who Jack is, and finds herself in a position to correct the wrongs inflicted upon Wonderland by the Queen. Alice is aided by the Mad Hatter who recognizes Alice as a person of legend who had previously come to Wonderland 150 years ago, and the White Knight, an unusual man who must overcome his own incompetence.

Similar to film adaptations, video game adapters appeal to strategies that have already worked in other games, regardless of the source material. The Alice of *American McGee's Alice* and *Alice: Madness Returns*¹ has been admitted to a mental asylum after her parents died in a fire. She believes that her adventures in Wonderland are a bad nightmare that she does not wish to revisit; however, in each game, she is forced to return to either defeat a new evil or to reclaim memories which are buried there. In the games, she is guided by the Cheshire Cat who gives her cryptic clues to continue through the game.

American McGee's Alice is a third person shooter (TPS), which means that the player can constantly see the character that he/she is controlling; comparatively, in *Alice: Madness Returns* the player is given the option to play in first person, meaning the player sees the game world through Alice's eyes, or third person. In addition, both *American McGee's Alice* and *Alice: Madness Returns* use an effective Heads-Up Display (HUD), an on screen guide which informs the player of Alice's health and sanity as she wanders through Wonderland and faces a variety of enemies (Brooker 229, 2004).

As Alice journeys through *American McGee's Alice* she collects various weapons including a vorpal sword – the legendary weapon used to slay the Jabberwocky, a deck of cards, a croquet mallet, ice wand, exploding jack-in-the-boxes which work as bombs, and many other weapons which help to defeat the characters who seem less favourable to Alice in the books such as the Duchess, the Queen of Hearts, the Caterpillar and various flower and ant soldiers. By having the player collect items, the game is both creating a goal for Alice to achieve and allowing the player to develop his/her own narrative as the player must decide how to uses

¹ *American McGee's Alice* was initially only available for PC and MAC OS, but since the release of *Alice: Madness Returns* it has been adapted for PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 (Game Preorders 2011). *Alice: Madness Returns* is also offered on PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 suggesting that it is not targeting a specific gamer audience.

his/her resources most effectively. Furthermore, both games are 3D platformers which have the player jumping from platform to platform, or over obstacles in order to complete a task; however, the action-adventure genre work to combine the challenges of manoeuvring through mazes with hack-n-slash game play as Alice faces bosses, characters at the end of a level which are particularly challenging to defeat (Brooker 229, 2004).

Despite the fact that the characters are from children's novels, American McGee explicitly reminds audiences that the game is not marketed to children. In an interview, McGee (2004) states, "this is going to be a game that parents will need to put some thought into before letting their kids play it. It is *not* a children's game in any respect, and I think we've done a good job of making that clear to everyone." The material is much darker than the source text and picks up on the traces of madness and the sense of foreboding found in the novels. American McGee's first adaptation received positive reviews rating 85 on Metacritic; however, these reviews mainly focus on the fact that McGee has brought to life a visually stunning, interactive Wonderland which allows the gamer to experience Wonderland for him/herself. Avid gamers state that although the graphics are well produced, the game play is too mundane - featuring too linear a narrative and too much jumping - and disappoints members of the gamer community (Metacritic 2012).

Alice: Madness Returns is a direct sequel and relies heavily on many gameplay strategies that were employed in the first game. The story begins with Alice already admitted in a mental asylum, she hopes to escape her memories as she believes herself guilty of starting the fire which murdered her parents and her sister. However, after encountering super natural creatures in the 'real world', she falls through a portal and is transported back to Wonderland to defeat a new evil. Alice is once again guided by the Cheshire Cat and is given more abilities that help with the

game play, such as the skill to shrink and grow in order to see more components of the game. She is also granted new weapons such as a pepper mill, teapot cannon and hobby horse. The diversity of consoles on which the game can be played suggests that the adapters are targeting people who enjoyed the *Alice* books, or the first game, and others who enjoy gaming in general. The game deviates further from the *Alice* books, and *American McGee's Alice*, but works to successfully raise awareness of the first game for those who have not played, and to market a newer game which uses the same characters.

Alice: Madness Returns received a 75 rating on Metacritic and was given generally positive reviews with many gamers asking for a third installation to the series (Metacritic 2012). Many reviews of *Alice: Madness Returns* stated that the visuals were more appealing than its predecessor, but that its game play was similar to the hack and slash model which defined the first game. Furthermore, those who were fans of the novel, praised the game for its effective re-imagination of a darker Wonderland which made entering the twisted world an entertaining experience (Metacritic 2012). Most “audience members come to the media with well-formed program preferences that cause them to choose specific content” (Webster and Phalen 27, 1994). James Webster and Patricia Phalen suggest that gamers who choose to engage in the *Alice* media either know what type of narrative they will engage with, or are familiar with the game styles of *Tomb Raider* or *Castle Wolfenstein*, and wish to engage with a game that employs similar gameplay (Brooker 229, 2004). The games are both rated Mature: “Titles rated M (Mature) have content that may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older. Titles in this category may contain intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content and/or strong language” (“ESRB Game Ratings” 2011). The rating reinforces the fact that these games are intended for an older audience.

The *Alice* adaptations demonstrate how the medium caters to its intended audience. In examining how novels, films and video games have progressed, the trend is that adaptations are now following a more main stream formula that has proven successful to captivate the attention of audiences. Although the story and the characters are different from how Carroll envisaged them, the world of Wonderland remains a mystical place which has and will continue to attract viewers eager to see the magical world realized.

Alice's Narrative

Narrative is one of the key elements which has evolved in the adaptations. Defined by M.H. Abrams (2008, 2009) to be “a story, whether told in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say and do”, narrative in the *Alice* novels has evolved to appeal to the newer audience. In creating a traditional translation, the adapter uses elements of the source material, but adjusts the work to create a new text; these changes can be achieved by omitting key themes, adding new themes or expanding on ideas already inherent in the text which may not have been as heavily focused upon before.

In Carroll's novels, the narrative is created through Alice's curiosity, and the witty dialogue between herself and the various creatures. For Carroll, his novels represent a coming of age adventure where Alice experiences the challenges of growing up while she literally grows and shrinks, and is confronted by many of the characters who demand to know who she is. In Alice's first adventure she asks herself “Who am I” – “Let me think: was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not the same, the next question is ‘Who in the world am I’ Ah, that's the great puzzle” (Carroll 22 - 23, 2000). Although Carroll names this to be the great puzzle, he does not answer it in the confines of the novel. The narrative of the novels is also largely defined by nonsense adventures and parodies, which would have entertained the children for whom the work was intended.

In many of the adaptations, the stories are set in a world which is much darker than the original Wonderland or Looking Glass world of the novels. Willing even states in the film “Does this look like a kid's story to you?” (Willing 2009), which suggests that he is not targeting children. Willing in particular is preparing the audience for major changes to the narrative

immediately suggesting that his work will include more mature themes and that the main character is no longer a child experiencing a new world.

In modernising the work, adapters diverge from Carroll's nonsensical narrative in favour of creating an Alice who changes the fate of Wonderland. Adapters change the narrative structure, the structure of the story and the genre of the adaptation in order to maintain the interest of the audience. They create the story so that Alice may have adversaries to overcome, and so that in the end she returns to the real world more wise and experienced than when she entered.

Narrative Structure

The narrative structure of Carroll's novels is extremely difficult to classify. On writing about Victorian fantasy, Gillian Avery claims,

Most referred to [*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*] as a 'fairy-tale', which it is not. Indeed Carroll seems to have no literary antecedents. Once he had created the genre it seemed absurdly easy and scores of writers tried to imitate it, with stories of children being carried off to dreamlands, but though they might achieve a passable punning style the brilliant logical organization eluded them – one suspects they did not even perceive it and their tales remained only feeble shadows of the original. (Avery 299, 1993)

As a result, in adapting the works, adapters tend to incorporate a more pronounced major conflict so that Alice's adventure follows the conventions set out by the classical paradigm. The classical paradigm is a model where the protagonist takes on many smaller conflicts in the rising action of

the plot, so that he/she is prepared for the final battle where he/she overcomes the major conflict, antagonist, of the narrative (Giannetti and Leach 42, 2001). The Greek dramatic structure has three main phases: the introduction, where the protagonist becomes aware of a major challenge, the rising action, which consists of many scenes showing small achievements and failures which leads to the climax, where the main character faces his/her greatest opposition. From here, the story concludes when the conflict is resolved in a satisfying manner (Miller 37, 1980).

Similar to the narrative of the novels, the narrative of a film often changes from the source material so that it conforms to the classical paradigm. In a novel, the author is given license to transcend time and space, so long as he gives the reader notification, letting them know what he plans. Stephen Prince (240, 2010) suggests that in most film plots the events unfold in chronological order. The linear structure of these narratives makes the story easier to follow. “One part of a story’s attractiveness comes from our tendency to perceive patterns and wholes. We appreciate the sense of closure and completeness that rounds out a story. It gives us a unified experience” (Miller 27, 1980). William Miller believes that audiences gain pleasure from being able to predict narrative patterns; by knowing what to expect, the audience is able to gain satisfaction from the fact that they are able to predict the events and to see them realized. Prince (249, 2010) agrees that the audience draws pleasure from the experience as a whole and that a film must have a final conclusion which answers all elements of suspense in the work. He suggests that “the conclusion of the film sees the characters either achieving or falling to achieve their goals in a way that brings the narrative to a satisfying conclusion. It is this sense of completeness, resulting from the resolution of all lines of action that gives the classical narrative its satisfying quality.” By creating a satisfying conclusion, the audience is able to feel closure.

The narrative of Carroll's two novels is particularly difficult to adapt because there is no noticeable distinct overarching narrative. In fact, Walter de la Mare (60, 1971) contends that "Carroll's Nonsense in itself... may be such that it 'never can be understood,' there is no need to understand it. It is self-evident: and indeed may vanish away if we try to do so." As a result of the lack of clear narrative structure, many adapters stray from the dream-like narrative of the novels in favour of linear models for novels and films, or the non-linear narrative of videogames. Adapters also avoid the main question of 'who am I' in favour of a more readily accepted concept such as good versus evil where the heroine is on a quest to save Wonderland.

The initial *Alice in Wonderland* story loosely follows the model of the hero's journey as Alice falls down the rabbit hole to find the entrance to Wonderland. From here the pattern is altered because there does not seem to be any pressing need for Alice to accomplish anything, either than to discover "Who am I." She does not feel compelled to find her way out of Wonderland, or defeat the Queen of Hearts, as portrayed in many of the adaptations. In fact, Alice frequently refers to her own death and makes light of any situation where there could be any danger, such as her fall down the rabbit hole, or her consumption of mysterious substances. Moreover, when Alice returns to the Looking Glass, she displays no urgency to become Queen. She seems content to converse with the characters and to aid those she sees on her way, so long as she reaches her goal eventually.

In order to make the story entertaining for an audience who does not wish to be challenged, the narrative must make sense. By relying on the *Jabberwocky* poem, Burton overcomes the challenging aspect of adapting Carroll's narrative and creates a logical path for Alice to follow. Lovell and Sergi (5, 2009) argue that "the use of formulas in films is likened to a sleep of consciousness, where audiences are lulled by the familiar and the predictable." The

audience also draws satisfaction is predicting the plot that is to come. Audiences want to be taken away from the world the currently exhibit and to be immersed in another world.

In adapting the *Alice* novels, filmmakers have tried to stay with a formula that has proven successful in many other popular films. Stewart Ferris, a British author, has outlined a formula which divides the movie script, page by page, to illustrate the generic nature of films in the 21st century. He divides the typical two-hour movie into three acts, similar to the classical paradigm, which are further divided into sub-sections. Ferris (2004) describes Act one as a place that sets the scene, introduces the protagonist and the general direction of their adventure, and “builds up to the first turning point.” Act two is when the “Hero tries new way to achieve goal – plot moves forward through conflict.” Act two of Ferris’s formula coincides with Campbell’s initiation sequence where the hero begins on his road of trials. The third is the resolution of the conflict in the film. However, what is most striking about Ferris’s formula is that he lists the minute compositions for each stage so that the audience can see exactly what to expect for every minute of a 2 hour movie.

Video games feature two types of narrative: linear, and non-linear. The linear narrative is formed through the cut-scenes which tell a cohesive story of why Alice is in Wonderland and what she must achieve while she is there. Video games also follow a structured pattern which has proven to work; the narrative of these video games is similar to the classical paradigm in that each level works as a step in the rising action leading to the final climax where the main character faces his/her greatest challenge (Costikyan 29, 2002).

On the other hand, the non-linear narrative is developed through game play, where the play actively interacts with the narrative being created. Konzack (94, 2002) describes seven

layers of game play which affect the narrative of the game: “positions, resources, space and time, goal (sub-goals), obstacles, knowledge, rewards or penalties.”

By position, Konzack refers to the perspective of the player. As both games are only interactions between the computer game and the player, I will not look at other perspective beyond these. I will discuss the position of the player in the “Perspectives” section.

Resources “these are means by which the players able to influence the game” (Konzack 94, 2002). The resources of the *Alice* games are derived from the player’s ability to interact with the other characters on screen, and from the player’s choice of which weapons to use in battle. By actively choosing how the player battles, he/she is actively influencing the narrative of the scene.

As the game is based on *Alice in Wonderland* the *space* of both games is in Wonderland; however, in *Alice: Madness Returns* the player is often transported back to London to learn more about why she has been kept in the asylum. In terms of *time*, there are no time limits which influence Alice’s actions in the majority of the game play; however, in both games, Alice is limited to the amount of health or ‘sanity’ in battles with bosses. Once that sanity runs out she dies and the game resets to where the player last saved it.

Video games differ from film in that the audience members are able to partake in the adventure and to complete task which creates part of the narrative. A video game must have goals for the gamer to achieve (Costikyan 12, 2002); these goals may be to gather large quantities of game treasure, or to defeat a certain number of enemies, or to solve puzzles which will lead the gamer to the next level, as long as they provide an objective for the gamer to achieve (Crawford 59, 2012). Actions that inhibit the gamer from reaching his/her goal are obstacles which must be overcome. In *American McGee’s Alice* these achievements entail

progressing through levels by defeating the relevant bosses, more challenging enemies usually found at the end of a level, and solving puzzles which will allow the gamer to continue in the game. *Alice: Madness Returns* has similar goals, in that the gamer must defeat enemies as she progresses, but she is also tasked by the creatures of Wonderland to find objects. For example, Alice is asked to find Pig Snouts for the Duchess, and is unable to progress until she finds all of them. Furthermore, the game presents various challenges unto itself by having the play area like a maze. Many levels include solving riddles or jumping in certain patterns in order to cross the threshold. It is these challenges which may keep the interest of gamers.

Another influential factor on the gameplay is knowledge. Both *American McGee's Alice* and *Alice: Madness Returns* make use of a Heads-Up Display (HUD) which informs the player of their status in the game. Based on the information provided in the HUD or other game play knowledge the gamer can make informed decisions about how to proceed in battle or on other quests.

The last factor is rewards or penalties. Particularly in *American McGee's Alice* the reward for completing a task is to continue to the next level. There are no trophies or achievements to collect. However, in *Alice: Madness Returns* Alice is given the task of collecting memories, which leads her closer to final goal of understanding what happened the night of the fire.

The game also has a structure, game rules, which govern the player's actions. For example, in *American McGee's Alice* there are boundaries to the map in which Alice plays. When she is battling against the giant centipede, if she falls off the edge of the map she will die.

The narrative structures of the adaptations changes drastically from the dream-like structure of Carroll's novels. These changes make the structure of the adaptation more recognizable to the audience, and often the story becomes easier to follow.

Adapting Alice with the Hero's Journey

In adapting the novels, many adapters attempt to assimilate Carroll's two novels into one work most often renamed *Alice* or *Alice in Wonderland*. Adapting the works entails using story elements, parodies, and characters from both sources and infusing them into a new seamless plot. Although Carroll's stories follow the same whimsical pattern of having Alice in unusual situations, conversing with creatures who guide her along on her quest, adapters feel that combining the two stories will make a compelling narrative filled with more villains and more helpers than either of the stand-alone novels. In addition, there is no truly cohesive central story in *Alice in Wonderland* which ties together Alice's experiences with the characters, except for her desire to explore Wonderland and to meet the Queen of Hearts. Conversely, the Looking Glass has a more structured narrative process than its predecessor by having Alice play through the chessboard. Some of her guides follow the chess board theme, but many others are Carroll's attempts at an apology to Alice Liddell for their arguing. As a result, adapters find it easy to use elements of both stories in their adaptations.

Many adapters turn to the familiar pattern of the hero's journey, a manifestation of the classical paradigm, when interpreting Alice's adventures. The hero's journey formula, traditionally found in myths and legends, has been thoroughly examined by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Campbell (49, 1973) describes three key stages to the heroic narrative – the departure, initiation and return that make up every myth. Campbell highlights 18 different stages that can be arranged to make up the hero's journey; however, the hero does not

necessary need to experience all of them. Craig Batty uses Campbell's formula and identifies 12 distinct steps which are more commonly found in the filmic hero's journey.

The first step is the ordinary world, in which the hero has limited awareness of the problem (Batty 83, 2011). The hero has yet to exhibit many qualities which would differentiate himself from other people, and the world of the hero is in a peaceful state.

The second step is a "call to adventure", where the hero has an increased awareness of the problem.

The third step Batty (58, 2011) discusses is a refusal of the call where the hero is reluctant to change or does not accept the situation in which he finds himself.

The fourth step of this process is for the hero to acquire a mentor, someone to help her overcome her reluctance. "For those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-journey is with a protective figure...who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass" (Campbell 69, 1973).

The fifth step of the hero's journey is for "the hero to cross the first threshold" or commit to change. Campbell (77, 1973) describes the first threshold as the stage where "the hero goes forward in his adventure until he comes to the "threshold guardian" at the entrance to the zone of magnified power. ... Beyond them is darkness, the unknown, and danger."

The sixth step is when the hero proceeds to be tested or to find allies or enemies which will aid her later endeavours (Batty 63, 2011). At this stage, the hero is expected to experiment with the first change. Most often in *Alice* adaptations comes from her acceptance of her circumstances when she no longer doubts Wonderland or her place there.

The journey continues in step seven, when the hero “approaches the inmost cause” of why she is in the new world (Batty 63, 2011). The hero enters the second stage of Campbell’s journey, initiation.

Once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials... The hero is covertly aided by the advice, amulets, and secret agents of the supernatural helper whom he met before his entrance into this region. Or it may be that he here discovers for the first time that there is a benign power everywhere supporting him in his superhuman passage. (Campbell 97, 1973)

Approaching the inmost cause is seen as one of the building blocks for big change both in the narrative and the character herself.

The eighth step is the big change. Campbell refers to this as “The Meeting with the Goddess” which is when the hero confronts her major adversary.

The ninth step is the reward or consequence of the big change depending on the author’s / adapter’s preference. The reward or consequence step may also include setbacks or improvements to the character which progress the story. If there is a setback, the hero will find her way back or be resurrected in order to rededicate herself to the task.

Distinctly absent from Carroll’s novels is when Alice comes to understand an important aspect of herself or someone else she has met on her adventures (Ballon 34, 2000). She does not gain any insight about herself; instead she spends her time combating the nonsense of Wonderland and the Looking Glass, only to exit the worlds with the same knowledge she had

when she entered (Strong 43, 1971). For example, in the first novel, Carroll's Alice realizes that she does not need to take orders from the other characters because they are just a deck of cards. The second novel follows a similar formula for success in that the narrative is largely governed by her encounters with the creatures of the Looking Glass; however, in *Through the Looking Glass*, Alice has a goal and that is that she wants to become a White Queen. Despite the fact that Alice is given an end destination in this novel, the reader often loses site of this goal amidst the confusion of Alice's encounters with the other characters (Leach 90, 1971).

Analyzing an Adaptation with the Hero's Journey

Carroll's Alice does not rely on the hero's journey; in fact, as she journeys through Wonderland, Alice relies on her own wit to interact with the other characters. In Carroll's novel, Alice begins her journey when she decides to follow the White Rabbit down the rabbit hole. Although this stage is the beginning of Alice's adventures, there is no real need for her to follow the Rabbit, apart from the fact that she is a young, curious child who is bored. The start to her adventure already suggests that Carroll's Alice is not an archetypal hero. However, in many of the adaptations falling down the rabbit hole leads her into a world where Alice is needed to save something or to find something, thus leading her on a different quest than Carroll intended. I will demonstrate how Frank Beddor utilizes this pattern to differentiate his *Alice* from Carroll's.

Frank Beddor's adaptation *The Looking Glass Wars* is marketed as a re-imagination of Wonderland and features a narrative that follows the trend of most popular adventure novels. On the book cover he tells readers

You think you know the true story of Alice in Wonderland? Well think again.

Alyss is destined to become Queen of Wonderland... Until her parents are

murdered. She flees to safety in our world. Years pass. Now it is time to return. Step into a dazzling new world. Dare to enter the Looking Glass Maze. Because this is Wonderland as you have never seen it before. (Beddor 2006)

Beddor's adaptation completely avoids following a pattern similar to the one of Carroll's novels and instead follows a pattern which has proven successful where others strategies have failed. Carroll's novels have almost completely avoided the hero's journey model of narrative. Alice's adventures feel quite spontaneous and rely more on witty dialogue and Alice's sense of curiosity rather than a plan to create her as a hero on a quest. One must understand that Carroll's novels were geared towards three girls and as such there was no need to create her as a hero. The humour of infusing Alice, Lorina and Edith in a story where magical things can happen was enough to keep the children entertained. Furthermore, the novels main narrative feature was utilizing parodies of nursery rhymes that the girls enjoyed such as "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star". That fact that so many have been included suggests that it is these parts of the narrative that they enjoyed the most and that later became the most memorable for the three girls. Unfortunately such a strategy would most likely not entertain the modern audience who have never heard of many of the original poems. Thus, following a pattern that is frequently followed seems an appropriate plan to market a new adaptation.

Burton's adaptation also relies heavily on the hero's journey pattern. Instead of relying on the source material he focuses more on poem "The Jabberwocky" which appears in *Through the Looking Glass*. The poem deemed one of the greatest nonsense poems in English (Gardiner 149, 2000) tells the story of a young man who defeats the ferocious beast, the Jabberwocky, with the use of a vorpal sword on the Frabjous day. Burton uses the frame outlined by the hero's journey

and incorporates the Jabberwocky as the big change that Alice must overcome. In the process she is provided with mentors, such as the Mad Hatter and the Cheshire Cat who guide Alice through Wonderland. By focusing on the poem “The Jabberwocky” fans of the *Alice* novels are given a story which they recognize, retold in the same fashion as the hero’s journey.

Willing also makes several changes to the original narrative, which makes his plot more linear and Alice herself more goal oriented. Alice’s goal is to find Jack and return him to the real world. The hero’s journey pattern is upset because when she does find him, she no longer wants him and changes her focus to finding a way home. By giving Alice something to achieve, he attempts to follow the traditional hero’s journey; however, she changes her goal and the narrative transforms to a traditional good versus evil story where Alice’s major conflict is to defeat the Queen of Hearts.

The narrative in video games relies on problem solving to immerse the player in the world of the game and cut-scenes which are pre-recorded sequences which convey where the character is going and why they are needed there; however, it can also follow the hero’s journey. In *American McGee’s Alice* the cut-scenes transport Alice to different scenes through portals where she gains powers or defeats a boss. She also collects various new weapons as she enters new realms. The cut scenes of *Alice: Madness Returns* show what Alice remembers about the night of the fire, or they return Alice to London where she can interact with the various characters who have information about her past. They also provide more information as she journeys between the two worlds and what she must do there.

Trading Comedy for Suspense

Carroll’s *Alice* focuses heavily on entertaining the audience with humour. Comedy is the essence of the narrative of Carroll’s novels and is derived from situations where characters who

are particularly snobbish, arrogant, rude or have traits are humiliated or humbled (Zillman and Vorderer 40, 2000). The process of humbling creatures happens frequently. For instance, when Alice is having tea with the Hatter, the March Hare and the Dormouse she argues she should be allowed to sit at their table because there are many seats and that it would be rude for them to make her leave; the Hatter rebuttals by noting that it is equally rude of her to sit without being invited thus humbling her. Donald Rackin (393, 1971) argues that “the only difference between Alice and the reader...is that she soberly, tenaciously, childishly refuses to accept chaos completely for what it is, while the adult reader almost invariably responds with the only defense left open to him in the face of unquestionable chaos – he laughs.”

However, humour is also derived in Carroll’s novel through the use of nonsense verse and witty dialogue. Phyllis Greenacre (331, 1971) contends that “while the manifest plots of the *Alice* books are thus similar and simple in structure, it is not their plots which are generally remembered, but rather their various absurdly irrational incidents with the apparent triumph of sheer but rhythmical nonsense.” Greenacre suggests that the nonsense and absurdity is what keeps the reader’s attention instead of any drama inherent in the plot.

However, for adapters of *Alice*, adapting the text involves straying from the comedic aspects of the original and adding more drama and conflict to the narrative. Dramatic suspense emotionally invests the audience in the narrative, so that they are concerned about whether the main character will succeed in his/her endeavours (Miller 28, 1980). As drama and suspense are inherently lacking from the novels, adapters tend to add more suspense and obstacles that Alice must overcome in order to progress the story.

One of the changes that the adapters each make is that they explicitly state whether Alice is in a dream or not. Carroll’s novel does not let the audience know what is happening until the

end. In fact, in a letter to Tom Taylor he specifically states, “The heroine spends an hour underground, and meets various birds, beasts, etc. (*no* fairies), endowed with speech. The whole thing is a dream, but *that* I don’t want revealed till the end” (Carroll and Cohen 65, 1979). Informing the audience takes away from the suspense of the novel, and the sense of fantasticalness derived from believing that the world of the Looking Glass or Wonderland could be real. As a result, most adapters have taken liberties with the work and infused elements of suspense and drama elsewhere.

A film must keep the audience in constant expectation that something is going to happen, and when it does happen, it should be different, but not too different, from what we expected. Too much expectation and we become bored. Too much of the novel and we become frustrated trying it fit it in. When both interact effectively, we have an involving story. (Miller 29, 1980)

Miller argues that suspense is one way to maintain the audience’s attention. By not creating a literal adaptation, the audience of *Alice* is kept in suspense of what will happen to the characters. Furthermore, in following the hero’s journey pattern, the story inherently must have more suspense and conflicts because the hero must face trials before reaching the big change.

American McGee achieves more suspense in his video games, particularly in his sequel *Alice: Madness Returns*, which features a more intricate narrative than its predecessor. Alice begins her adventure in an asylum where she is being treated by Dr. Bumby. She has lost her memories and those that she does have of Wonderland are tainted with terror. Throughout the game she attempts to recollect the memories of the night of the fire to vindicate herself of the

guilt of believing herself guilty of causing the fire. Within the main narrative there are sub-plot texts which occur as hallucinations or dreams when she enters Wonderland. By constantly interrupting the original plot with subplot, McGee is able to generate suspense wondering how Alice will regain her memories, and who actually started the fire.

However, much of the suspense of novels, films, and video games is derived by the perspective from which it is told.

Perspectives

Lewis Carroll's narrative employs a third person, subjective point of view which features an omniscient narrator who is able to voice Alice's thoughts. Carroll also regularly interjects the reading of his novels with a narrator who is outside of the story. The narrator acts as a stabilizing voice for young readers who are concerned about what will happen to Alice. In addition, he builds the other characters through her reactions to their rudeness and dismay at the lack of logic which many characters display.

Conversely, Frank Beddor's novel is narrated through a third-person perspective where the reader knows exactly what is happening to each of the characters. However, because they are in two separate worlds, the focus of the novels switches between the two much in the same way that a change of scenes in a film would work.

Adapters also are able to use their medium to great effect by changing the perspective of the camera angle to characterize the sequence of events in place. Ken Dancyger (90 – 91, 2000) describes three camera angles which the cinematic director may use for effect: a low, high or eye line height camera. A low height features the character looking up at the scene. For instance, when the Cheshire Cat appears in Burton's sequence, the camera points up at him giving the impression that Alice is intimidated by the Cat. The second camera angle is the high height,

which provides an omniscient view of the action and provides the viewer with the impression that we are looking down at something. The high camera angle occurs when Burton's turns the camera from Alice's perspective, to the Cat's perspective and has him looking down upon her suggesting that he has greater knowledge, wisdom and skill than she possesses. The third camera angle is at eye line level which is the most natural for the audience because they are on par with whatever is being shown at the time. By using different camera angles, the adapter is able to characterize positions of power amongst the characters.

The varying camera shots may also provides different perspectives for the audience to discover. Instead of seeing the text from the view of an omniscient third person narrative, as in the novels, the use of camera shots can allow viewers to temporarily assume the roles of characters by showing what they are seeing. Varying the camera angles can work to characterize the hero in the story. In Burton's adaptation, when Alice is fighting the Jabberwocky, the audience is given scenes of what Alice is actually engaging with and the bravery she must be exhibiting when she is caught underneath the monster. Willing's approach differs in that he places the audience in the same place as those watching Alice as she overcomes her fear, and convinces fellow oysters to wake from their stupor in the casino. The audience is able to see and respect her courage and to thus view her as a hero.

In *American McGee's Alice*, she is displayed solely from a third-person shooter perspective; however in *Alice: Madness Returns* the gamer can choose whether to play from a third-person or a first-person perspective. Depending on the player's preferences, the view can affect the amount of immersion that a gamer experiences: the third person perspective keeps the player as an observer who can control the actions of the avatar Alice, while the first person

perspective places the player as the character exploring the world of the insane and twisted Wonderland and defeating the various bosses and villains.

Immersion has been proposed to be as the most important aspect of the playing experience... immersion in character-based games has been linked to the first person point of view. Danksy (2007) claims ‘Immersion is arguably the ultimate goal of video games. Immersion is making players forget that they’re sitting on their couch twiddling joysticks.’ (Lankoski 292, 2011)

Petri Lankoski suggests that the player’s goal is to immerse his/herself in the world of the character which he/she is controlling, and in doing so they are able to experience the narrative from a first person point of view.

In both games, the gamer is also able to control the camera angles. By moving the camera, the gamer is able to change his/her perspective of the world so that they have a better view of the game environment (Järvinen 116, 2000). The movement of the camera is similar to the way a director would choose to portray various perspectives of characters in a film; the difference being that the gamer is able to control this perspective, thus further immersing the gamer in the world of the game.

Furthermore, the player is able to assume the role of the main character as he/she progress towards a goal. These goals can come intermittently throughout the level or can be at the end of each level. The essence of game narrative is that there is a problem to solve (Ryan 349, 2004). The video game is able to present both linear and non-linear narratives because the narrative created in cut-scenes, non interactive sequences which provides information that is

relevant to the player and the narrative being developed, and gameplay. Particularly in action games, where the player is constantly engaged with solving a problem or working towards a goal, the plot which governs the player's actions can sometimes be overlooked (Ryan 350, 2004).

The narrative of Carroll's *Alice* is a unique character driven adventure in which Alice journeys through the worlds of Wonderland and the Looking Glass interacting with the various characters. The adaptations deviate from Carroll's model in favour of something which the audiences can identify and enjoy.

***Alice's* Characters**

The characters of Carroll's novels prove memorable blue prints for their adapted counterparts. Carroll's novels rely heavily on his characters to carry the narrative, and their success is derived from the audience's understanding of what Alice, and the other characters, feel and think (Madden 101, 2006). In the adaptations of *Alice*, the characters are redefined so that they fit the narrative structure and the limitations of the medium in which they are adapted.

Adapting Alice

Most notably for the *Alice* adaptations, is that Alice is changed from the curious seven year old girl, intent on exploring Wonderland, to a young adult who has reservations about being in this strange land. Carroll has designed Alice so that her propriety and her stubbornness govern her actions; her attitude in combination with the nonsensical nature of the other characters often leads to comical, memorable interactions. To illustrate, for Alice, her constant growing and shrinking should be terrifying; however, her reactions of confusion and surprise at being able to adjust her size are what make the scenes memorable. Audiences found "the character of Alice herself is a bit puzzling...because it does not fit a stereotype" (Leach 90, 1971). Carroll's Alice is not a hero, nor is she any of the archetypes that are commonly seen in fantasy novels, or fairy tales. In addition, Alice does not partake in much of the chaos observed or discussed in the novels because they are conveyed to her in parodies.

Ken Dancyger (101, 2006) argues that "the audience experiences the narrative through a main character. That means the director must decide how he wants us to feel about that character." By changing the main character to someone who has grown up, and leads a relatable life, the audience is able to identify with Alice in a different way than they may have identified

with Carroll's Alice. George Bluestone (32, 1966) notices that there are common archetypal characters which merit approval from the audience which suggests that audiences influence the type of characters who appear most frequently in stories. He suggests that it is not only the director's prerogative which influences the changes in character archetypes displayed in film, but equally the audience who decides whether to support the film.

The main character of any work is particularly important because he/she guides the audience through an emotional journey (Dancyger 26, 2006). The audience is invited to identify with the character's strengths and weaknesses and to grow with them through the process. Although Carroll's Alice is indeed memorable, her character is difficult to identify with because she embodies many norms of the Victorian era, for instance she bows, curtsies and recites nursery rhymes that are no longer known. As the novel was created for Alice Liddell during the 1860s, it would have been particularly entertaining to mock Victorian culture. To illustrate, Alice is concerned manners and upholding general propriety regardless of the situation. As a result, the audience which these adaptations are being catered to may not relate to a young girl being taught these lessons. If Alice remained an emotionally detached, curious child who spouts nonsense, and seems to have no attachment to either the world of Wonderland or her own world, the audience may find it difficult to relate to her. However, by adapting the work so that she is now older and a part of society that audiences will recognize, adapters have created a main character who has the potential to attract and maintain the interest of their audience.

Furthermore, many of the characters in the novels are older than Alice. Walter de la Mare (59, 1971) observes that although Carroll's novels were written for the entertainment of children, Alice is the only child present. "The Mad Hatter is perennial forty, the Carpenter is of the age of all carpenters, the Red King is, say, the age of Henry VIII was born, while the Queens and the

Duchess – well, they know best about that.” De la Mare’s perceptions may explain why Alice is aged so that she is now approximately 20 years old in the newer adaptations. Carroll’s intent with the novels was that they should entertain the young girls who inspired them; however, in translating the narrative and changing Alice so that she is now the target of intimate attractions from characters, such as the Hatter, the direction of the story has changed and many audience members may feel uncomfortable watching a seven year old girl fall in love with someone who is purportedly forty.

The aging of Alice is particularly important for Willing’s adaptation because he adapts all of the animals of Wonderland in human versions of their counterparts. Kamilla Elliot (193, 2003) explains that:

Any live-action production that does not use special effect turns the animal-child ratio of Tenniel’s illustrations into a more sinister adult-child ratio that renders Alice more vulnerable physically to the animals. These adaptations simultaneously mitigate and sexualize the physical threat of the adult animals by casting buxom young teenagers in the role of Alice, rather than the seven-year-old of the books.

Elliot’s contention is that if Alice remained a seven year old girl surrounded by adults, the audience may misconstrue the wonder of Wonderland would be deterred from watching the film. Although Willing does employ some special effects to create his version of Wonderland, by aging Alice, he ensures that the audience cannot misconstrue the other characters as predatory. In

addition, Elliot's belief is further enforced by the fact that her mentor and many of the characters who aim to help her are older men such as the Hatter or the White Knight.

Another significant change for Alice's status in Wonderland is that the other characters both acknowledge and are civil to her. Their civility is almost unheard of in Carroll's novels because the humour of *Alice* is that many of the characters treat Alice rudely and see her as an inconvenience that is interrupting their world. Will Brooker (218, 2004) agrees that "the creatures' rudeness and challenging demeanour are a significant part of Alice's developmental journey in Carroll – by taking insults, retorting with quick objections, and standing her ground, she shows an ability to deal with adult manners at their most absurd and extreme." However in all of the adaptations, the denizens of Wonderland are either helping Alice or are her enemy in the style of a good versus evil battle. By reinventing the characters so that they recognize her, the adapter is able to progress the hero's journey relatively quickly without needing to develop relationships in as much detail.

In Burton's adaptation, despite the elaborate costumes and settings, Alice does not exhibit many of the customs of Victorian society. For example, she does not bow or curtsy when greeting others and she speaks her mind quite freely. However, it is important to remember that Burton's Alice is the same Alice who fell down the rabbit hole as a seven year old girl.

Nick Willing also creates a more modernized Alice who has no problem establishing relations with the characters of Wonderland. Willing's re-imagined Alice does not feature any of the wit or cynicism which popularized her literary counterpart. Instead, this Alice is focused on her goal of finding Jack and is not as curious about the world or as interested in befriending or berating the other character. As a result of her goal oriented nature, Willing's Alice fits the role of the archetypal hero and follows the traditional narrative pattern of the hero's journey.

As both *American McGee's Alice* and *Alice: Madness Returns* are both character based games, the development and portrayal of Alice is critical to the success of the game. Petri Lankoski (12,2011) suggests that the characters of a video game are created through fixed features set by the game, and augmentations selected by the gamers such as skills and armour. In both of McGee's games, Alice's fixed traits are largely inferred by Carroll's character. She is curious and speaks, and is spoken to, rudely in the same manner as Carroll's characters. Unlike in other video games, Alice's physical features cannot be augmented through the game, and the player is relegated to immersing themselves into the familiar Alice of historic adaptations who dons a light-blue dress with a white frock. However, in *Alice: Madness Returns* Alice's outfits change from level to level depending on who Alice will battle in the end. If she is in the Hatter's domain, she may be dressed as a Hatter, and so on.

Alice is continuously transformed from the seven year old child envisioned by Carroll and remade as a decidedly mad teenager whose goal is to hack and slash her way through the enemies found in Wonderland. McGee's Alice is presented as a loner hero who journeys through the game by herself to defeat the characters of the land.

Archetypal Characters

As Alice is a particularly difficult character to adapt, many adapters re-imagine the characters of *Alice* using archetypes which have proven successful in other narratives.

Archetypes“(a) are story characters, (b) are represented psychologically as mental models like self-and other schemas and prototypes...(c) often elicit intense emotional responses when encountered...(d) operate at an automatic or unconscious level, and (e) are culturally enduring so as to be easily learned and widely recognizable” (Faber and Mayer 308, 2009).

Originally, Carl Jung devised heavily psychology based archetypes that are used to understand the unconscious self and its varying states. Jung's system consists of thirteen classifications to identify characters based on their characteristics; these are the distinction of archetypal characters. The archetypes were later developed by Joseph Campbell to apply to literary characters. Michael A. Faber and John D. Mayer have since developed a system of neo-archetypal theory which focuses on the core of Jung's study while negating elements which were not as well supported.

Explorer

The *explorer* is "often a lone, free spirited wanderer who seeks to discover and explore new environments (Ibid. 309, 2009). Although Alice cannot be classified easily, the closest archetype to her character is the explorer. Her curiosity leads her to the world of Wonderland, where she explores quite. She does not have as the same ambition that many heroes exhibit, and is content with drifting through the world of Wonderland. Even when Alice is in the Looking Glass chessboard she is still exploring the usual and bizarre world. In the adaptations, Alice is much less curious and more concerned with waking up or leaving Wonderland. As a result, many adapters have casted her in the role of the hero.

Hero

Perhaps the most popular archetype, the *hero*, is "represented frequently by the courageous, impetuous warrior" (Ibid. 309, 2009). The hero archetype often embarks on perilous adventures to prove his/ her worth and returns as a symbol of inspiration. The hero is noticeably absent from the main characters of Carroll's Wonderland or the Looking Glass, and only appears in a minor role as the slayer of the Jabberwocky in the *Jabberwocky* poem. The fact that there is no hero in these novels makes adapting these novels difficult because they do not follow the

pattern set out by the hero's journey or any other popular formula. As a result, many adapters choose to do a traditional or radical translation of the work and create a new story which designates Alice as a hero.

To illustrate, Beddor transforms Carroll's characters into suitable archetypes for the hero's journey. These changes are needed because the characters of Carroll's novels tend not to stay around to help Alice, nor do they follow any coherent pattern which can be easily adapted. In Beddor's adaptation, Alyss assumes the role of the hero who must grow up and accept her role. She begins her life as a spoiled seven year old princess who lives a life of luxury, but is brought of the world for her protection. She grows in London and is eventually called to action. Beddor cleverly designs her character so that readers know of her past and potential to be a hero, but she returns as a character that must be called to adventure now that she has forgotten. By taking her out of Wonderland, Beddor is able to develop the other characters in their respective roles making Alyss's return as a hero relatively simple, because she enters into a world with many mentors and helpers.

Beddor's Alyss further fulfills the requirements set out by Campbell to be the hero figure because she is born with the gifts that differentiate her from the other characters. At the beginning of the novel, Alyss's mother remarks that she has extremely strong imagination power which she demonstrates by teleporting her friend and herself and by making objects appear and disappear.

Makers of legend have seldom rested content to regard the world's greatest heroes as mere human beings who broke past the horizons that limited their fellows and returned with such boons as any man with equal faith and courage might have

found. On the contrary, the tendency has always been to endow the hero with extraordinary powers from the moment of birth, or even the moment of conception. The whole hero-life is shown to have been a pageant of marvels with the great central adventure at its culmination. (Campbell 319, 1973)

Tim Burton's and Nick Willing's adaptations also characterize Alice as a hero. Burton's adaptation features Alice as a hero who has returned to save Wonderland from the Red Queen, while Willing portrays Alice as a hero who is positioned against the Queen of Hearts in a good versus evil battle.

By casting Alice as hero instead of a wanderer, Alice loses the sense of curiosity and wonder which define her character in the novels. The adapted version of Alice is more skeptical when meeting new characters, and must be guided through her journey. She is not the type of character who would seat herself at a table uninvited and then argue with the host for not inviting her.

Ruler

The *ruler* archetype is often a character who has authority, or is highly influential. They are often characterized as stubborn and have "a strong sense of power and control" (Ibid. 309, 2009). The best example of the ruler archetype in Carroll's novel is the Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland*, and the White Queen and Red Queen in *Through the Looking Glass*. Her character is a tyrannical ruler of Wonderland and should she not receive her way she demands that the responsible party be beheaded. As a result, in adaptations the Queen, or some mix of the Queen of Hearts and the Red Queen, is most often cast as the main force against the hero who commands an army against Alice.

Beddor includes very definite enemies for Alyss to create the good versus evil scenario which is familiar in many adventure quests. Queen Redd is a mix of the Queen of Hearts and the Red Queen of Carroll's novels, but does not exhibit many of the same characteristics as her literary predecessors.

Burton and Willing also add villains to their films to counteract the newly created hero figure of Alice. As audiences are rooting for Alice, we must be against a main evil force. In Burton's adaptation the villain takes the form of the Red Queen: a pretentious character with an overly large head who rules over Wonderland. She is an amalgamation of the Queen of Hearts and the Red Queen and is intent on oppressing the other characters of Wonderland, which is why Alice must defeat her on the "Frabjous day". The ruler archetype is one often used in other works and works quite well as the evil force in Burton's adaptation. However, Alice's means of overthrowing the ruler also changes because of the realistic element she presents. As the Red Queen is no longer a card in a deck, or a chess piece, the means of defeating her no longer follow Carroll's pattern of realizing that Alice is dreaming and that she is interacting with dream characters. Rather Alice must have a physical confrontation with the Queen in order to overthrow her. The archetype of the ruler allows for the epic battle found in most good and evil narratives.

Willing creates a similar character with his Queen of Hearts, portrayed by Cathy Bates. Her character is specifically based off of the Queen of Hearts in the world of Wonderland and features a weak, easily swayed King of Hearts and a Jack of Hearts to reinforce the position that she represents. Like Burton's ruler, Willing's ruler keeps her people oppressed by operating a drug-market where she collects emotions and sells them to the highest bidder. The nature of the Queen can be seen by many monarchs who have abused their powers for their own gain; the

similarity between his Queen of Hearts and many other important figures in the business world, may help audiences identify with Willing's version of Alice more so than Carroll's Victorian seven year old.

In video games, the narrative is defined by the main character's ability to overcome obstacles, which may include final battles against villains. *American McGee's Alice* and *Alice: Madness Returns* feature characters from Carroll's novel, such as the Queen of Hearts and later the Mad Hatter as rulers to be defeated in each domain. By creating a ruler character, the adaptations are able to create a physical manifestation of the challenges that Alice must overcome. The epic battle between two forces who have kept the audiences' attention for the duration of the narrative, is much more interesting to watch than Alice's revelation that she is a girl, and that the creatures that are oppressing her are just a deck of cards.

Lover

The *lover* is an "intimate, romantic, sensual, and especially passionate" individual. He/she can be either playful and warm or seductive and tempestuous (Ibid. 309, 2009). The lover archetype is non-existent in Carroll's universe because he focuses on preserving Alice as a young child rather than attempting to age her with a romantic relation. However, the archetype of the lover is one that appeals to audiences, which is why many adapters attempt to include some sort of romantic relationship in their works. Both Beddor's *The Looking Glass Wars* and Willing's *Alice* include a romantic relationship.

Beddor develops the role of the lover in the form of Dodge Anderson. Dodge is the childhood friend of Alyss who becomes a warrior after the death of his father. Although this relationship is not fully realized because they grow up apart from each other, Beddor clearly intends their relationship to be of significance to Alyss. Comparatively, Willing includes a Hatter

who guides Alice through her journey and returns to the real world with her after he realizes that he loves her.

Adapters are able to include the archetype of the lover because their Alice is older than the seven year old of the novels. As many of the original characters are older than Alice, they may insight a more sinister Wonderland if they begin to fall in love with her.

Caregiver

The *caregiver* archetype is a parent like figure who is devoted to the protection and nurturing of a character (Faber and Mayer 309, 2009). The caregiver, while influential in many stories, is only briefly present in the first *Alice* novel when Alice is sitting with her sister at the beginning, and when Alice returns to her at the end. Most likely the caregiver is not present in the *Alice* novels because they are designed so that children may find the courage to progress for themselves. The presence of a guide may hinder Alice's curiosity, or would make her reliant on this second figure instead of upon herself.

However, the caregiver is present in Beddor's novel as Alyss begins as a young child who is taught by tutors and is protected by her mother's guard. By being taken away from the security of these characters Alyss is able to embark on the hero's journey.

Furthermore, some may consider the Cheshire Cat of *American McGee's Alice* and *Alice: Madness Returns*, who acts as the guide and mentor to Alice, to be a caregiver of sorts. The cat appears periodically and cannot be controlled by the player. The Cat is merely an avatar to provide additional information and goals for the player, such as finding new weapons, instructing the player on how to use new weapons once they are found and occasionally making suggestions about how best to proceed. However, the mysterious nature of the Cheshire Cat helps to reinforce the idea of madness inherent in McGee's adaptations.

Creator

The *creator* is characterized as an innovative, artistic and inventive individual who is often anti-social (Ibid. 309, 2009). He/she looks for beauty and quality in an object and is usually driven by his/her own motives. The creator's qualities are best seen in Carroll's White Knight who constantly reminds readers that the strange contraptions on him are "my own invention".

The creator archetype manifests itself in the form of American McGee's Mad Hatter, in both games. He is intent on build mechanical devices and transforms many of the characters, including the March Hare, the Dormouse and himself into automatons. By changing the nature of the Hatter, McGee has made him more insane, and dangerous; these changes make him a good adversary for Alice to overcome.

Everyman / Everywoman

The *everyman / everywoman* archetype is a common person who helps to preserve order/

The everyman/everywoman archetype is usually more cautious and pessimistic than other characters (Ibid. 309, 2009). These characters are most often not as memorable as the other archetypal characters. In Carroll's novels some of these characters include: Bill the Lizard, the characters of the Caucus race, the Fish Footmen and the cook who is adding pepper to the Duchess's pot of soup. In fact, in adaptations the adapter tends to add her/his own everywoman/everyman characters which help to progress the story.

Innocent

The *innocent* archetype is an optimistic character who is a "pure, faithful, naive, childlike character (Ibid.309, 2009). The character offers a sense of calmness and a "longing for happiness and simplicity" (Ibid. 309, 2009). Although classifying Alice as an innocent character

is tempting, she is not naive or humble. Instead, she is intent on instructing the other characters in manners and frequently argues with them. They were designed to make a mockery of the Victorian adult and do so by painting them as unlikable characters. Some of the few innocent creatures of the *Alice* novels include the Oysters, in the parody of “The Walrus and the Carpenter” where the Carpenter and the Walrus con a bed of oysters out of the water to become their next meal, and the Duchess’s baby, who later turns into a pig. The innocent archetype is also not found in any of the adaptations.

Jester

The *jester* lives for fun and amusement, which occasionally comes at the expense of others. He / she is “a playful and mischievous... ironic and mirthful, sometimes irresponsible...prankster” (Ibid. 309, 2009). The jester is perhaps the most popular archetype employed in Carroll’s novel and is employed in iconic roles such as that of the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, the Cheshire Cat and later with the Talking Flowers, Tweedledee and Tweedledum, and Humpty Dumpty. Alice’s interactions with these amusing characters define her adventures and make her journey of discovering Wonderland or the Looking Glass enjoyable.

In Burton’s and Willing’s adaptations, the Mad Hatter, and the other members of the Tea party maintain their role as jesters and add comic relief to the plot. By keeping at least one jester character in their adaptations, Burton and Willing are able to maintain some of the same humour present in Carroll’s *Alice*.

Magician

The *magician* is similar to the creator, but he seeks to understand how things work in order to transform or change them, instead of focusing on creating objects (Ibid. 309, 2009).

Carroll's Alice also features some of the characteristics of a magician in that she frequently changes sizes; however, she is not a visionary or a scientist, nor does she seek to understand why she is changing or growing. She is merely a little girl who wishes to explore Wonderland. Carroll has specifically designed the worlds of Wonderland and the Looking Glass to be adult free so that Alice may discover who she is and how to become her own person without the guidance of any individual character. However, Willing's adaptation designs the character of the Carpenter in the image of a magician as he manufactures the March Hare and develops a system to collect emotions. Burton's creates the White Queen into an alchemist of sorts who is able to create potions which will shrink Alice. Although these magicians work for the adaptations, Carroll intentionally did not include any other characters which would be reminiscent of adults or magical beings (Leach 89, 1971).

Outlaw

The *outlaw* is "often [a] vengeful, ... disruptive rule-breaker" who does not fit in society. He/she "can be wild, destructive and provoking from a long time spent struggling or injured" (Ibid.309, 2009). The outlaw is a survivor. These characteristics can be seen in almost all of the characters as none of the characters follow the conventions of Victorian age characters. While Alice attempts to teach them manners, she is but an uninformed child who has no obligation to these characters. To illustrate, the Mad Hatter and the March Hare may be considered outlaws, in addition to jesters, because they do not follow the conventions of the normative British tea time. In fact, they are quite egotistical, rude and self-centered.

Conversely, the outlaw archetype is portrayed frequently in Beddor's, Burton's and Willinig's works. As Alice is often placed in opposition of the ruler of the land, the characters

which aid her tend to be outlaws who do not agree with politics of the world. The outlaw characters help Alice in her fight against evil.

Sage

The *sage* is a wise, often mystical, being who councils those who seek his knowledge. The sage is represented as valuing a higher state of self, knowledge, truth and understanding (Ibid. 309, 2009). Although the sage character is often pictured as a positive influence in the protagonist's life, the sage of Carroll's novel takes the form of a hookah smoking caterpillar. The caterpillar forces Alice to question who she is; however, the Caterpillar does not council her any further in her quest to understand her identity. By answering the Caterpillar's questions, Alice is able to gain the knowledge which allows her to wake up from the dream world.

The Caterpillar often is assigned the same role in all the adaptations, except *American McGee's Alice*. He provides Alice with insight which allows her overcome her greatest challenge in each of the adaptations.

Shadow

The final archetype is the *shadow* which is seen as a "violent, haunted, and the primitive [spirit who represents] the darker aspects of humanity" (Ibid. 309, 2009). He/she is "often seen in a tragic figure, rejected; awkward, [and] desperately emotional" (Ibid. 309, 2009). Elements of the shadow archetype can be seen in all of the characters of Wonderland and the Looking Glass, as they each represent the uncivilized aspect of society. However, there is no one defined character who exhibits these qualities.

The best representation of the shadow archetype in the adaptations is the Mad Hatter, or Doctor, of *Alice: Madness Returns*. The doctor is responsible for setting the fire in which Alice's

parents died. He then attempts to blame Alice for his misdeeds, casting her as a mad character that loses the trust of the town's people. The other adaptations do not have as prominent a shadow character.

Understanding the archetypes Carroll uses in his novels allows audiences to see how Carroll intended the book to be read and understood and how they have been changed and adapted in modern works. Although defining types of characters is important, Todorov discusses ways that these characters can be used to influence the narrative. "Todorov identifies two means of creating plots through characters. There are plays which are plot centered, or psychological, and those which are character driven, which presents a psychological narrative" (Chatman 113, 1978). Carroll's novels are heavily character driven and guide the reader through as Alice questions her identity. In fact the humour of the novel comes from Alice's development as she encounters the decidedly rude characters of the novel. Her quest to discover "who am I" in the first book and to become queen, thus gaining control of her actions, in the second book are largely inflective for Alice. It is not the adventure which governs the narrative of the novels, but Alice herself and her growth.

Designating Flat and Round Characters

E.M. Forster (103, 1954) argues that characters can be classified as either flat or round. Flat characters are one which can be summed up in one line and do no change throughout the narrative. A good example of Forster's flat character is Carroll's Cheshire Cat who can be easily classified as "mad". He even declares this himself when he gives directions to Alice: when she remarks "I don't want go among mad people," he replies "Oh, you ca'n't help that...we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad" (Carroll 66, 2000). The use of flat characters can help to

progress the story, but in Carroll's case they work as suitable creatures to challenge Alice's intellect.

On the other hand, round characters are more complex and are developed throughout the novel, or the medium in which they are adapted. To illustrate, Alice is a complex character who constantly grows and develops by asking questions and seeking advice from the inhabitants of Wonderland or the Looking Glass. Alice is constantly physically, and mentally, growing and changing to develop throughout the first novel. In the sequel, Alice maintains the same level of wit and intellect throughout the novel, but is promoted to Queen from her position as pawn. As the seven and a half year old child, she seems no longer intent on finding herself or growing; rather she becomes a self-righteous, arrogant child whose sole purpose is to be crowned Queen. In Carroll's work, there are many complex characters which guide Alice along in her journey, including the White Knight who is characterized by his quest for adventure and Humpty Dumpty who believes himself to be a word master.

Forester's distinctions are important for the study of adaptations because some of the characters who were once flat characters in the source text are now round characters, and others who are presented as flat characters are reintroduced with different character traits than they initially were meant to be in the source text. These changes affect the way the audience reacts to the medium because if one is strongly attached to a particular charactering, seeing that character change may make the experience of engaging with an adaptation less enjoyable.

One character who exhibits the change from a flat character to a different flat character, or a complex character is the Mad Hatter.

Transforming the Mad Hatter

The Mad Hatter is one of the characters whose distinction as a flat character is transformed in many of the adaptations. Carroll's Hatter is a rude creature who tells Alice nonsensical poems and often finds himself in trouble with the law. He is created memorable at the Tea party between the March Hare, the Dormouse and himself, where he consistently argues with and humiliates Alice.

Comparatively, Frank Beddor's Hatter Maddigan is the Queen's bodyguard who is tasked to look after Alyss until she is able to return as Queen. He remains a flat character, but he no longer exhibits the qualities which make him the "Mad" Hatter, instead he becomes a guard for Alyss. The Hatter of Beddor's novel is a mentor to Alice and works to protect her, rather than humble her.

Burton's Mad Hatter is also granted a larger role which transforms him from a flat character to a round character. In the narrative the Mad Hatter is one of Alice's key supporters; he guides her through the world of Wonderland and leads her to the White Queen. The Mad Hatter is overtly quirky and instantly recognizes the older Alice as the same girl who came to Wonderland years ago. In Burton's attempt to stay true to the text, he often repeats the famous phrase "Do you know why a raven is like a writing desk?"; one of the many unanswered nonsense riddles of the book. By involving the character more, Burton develops Carroll's Mad Hatter into a complex character.

Similarly, Willing's Mad Hatter is also transformed from a flat character to a round character. The Hatter, portrayed by Andrew Lee-Potts, serves as a mentor for Alice as she journeys through Wonderland to find Jack Heart. The Hatter is also able to provide insight about Wonderland and how it came to be under the control of the Queen of Hearts. In this particular adaptation, the Hatter is also a romantic character, who constantly comes to the aid of Alice with

whom he has fallen in love. At the end of the adaptation, in a rather clichéd ending, the Hatter returns to the real world to pursue Alice; here they finally share a passionate kiss. By adding in the character of the Hatter, not only is the director able to add in an element of romance, but he is also adding a support character for Alice.

McGee's Mad Hatter changes between the first adaptation and its sequel. In the first game, the Hatter is defined as an insane inventor. However, in *Alice: Madness Returns* the Mad Hatter manifests in the form of the Doctor who is treating Alice. He periodically is found in Wonderland with Alice and betrays her confidence in the final battle before she is delivered to the Queen. Eventually Alice realizes this and is able to defeat the Hatter in a final battle.

By distinguishing how the characters have changed, we can see that adapters can and will change iconic characters so that they are better suited for the narrative of the hero's journey.

Casting

Perhaps more important than the characters created is the casting of the respective characters. Specifically in Burton's adaptation, many of the iconic characters are portrayed by popular actors and actresses. Notably, the Mad Hatter is played by Johnny Depp, an actor known for his out of the ordinary, quirky character portrayals; the Red Queen is played by Helena Bonham Carter, a seasoned actresses whose roles include Bellatrix Lestrange in the Harry Potter franchise and recently Queen Elizabeth in *The King's Speech*; the Caterpillar is played by Alan Rickman who most recently is famous for portraying Severus Snape in the Harry Potter films.

The popularity of these actors and actresses may attract audiences regardless of the roles they play. In addition, Burton has worked with some of these actors / actresses in the past on films such as Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *The Corpse Bride*, and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. The interactions of Burton with these actors/ actresses

in past works foreshadow what is to come with this newer adaptation. Audiences can expect Burton's *Alice* to be placed in a darker world and for Johnny Depp to be quirky and nonsensical. Willing's adaptation also hosts a stellar cast to give the film credibility, but relies more heavily on the narrative and the uniqueness of the Wonderland to maintain the audience's attention.

The characters are an integral part of Carroll's novels. In adapting them, adapters have altered the beloved characters from their iconic states in favour of characters which fit the mould of popular narrative. When adapted, the newer characters change to fit the pattern of the hero's journey and Alice is now guided by mentors and friends who help her along the way. By following these popular conventions, adapters assure the audience that the beloved character of Alice will escape whatever troubles she is about to engage with and that she will triumph in the same way she does when she remembers that she is only dealing with a pack of cards. McGee's adaptations follow this trend of re-characterizing Alice so that she follows the conventions that many other game avatars so that players are able to temporarily assume the role of Alice and to experience the dark and twisted Wonderland as she would.

Alice's Dialogue

Adapters of the *Alice* texts stray from the nature of Carroll's novels by changing the dialogue; dialogue being the conversations between characters in literary works (M.H. Abrahams 2012) that serves the purpose of providing information to the audience. However, the dialogue for novels is quite different from the dialogue for stage or screen plays (Brunel 97, 1948). Literary dialogue is often more intricate and detailed because the author relies on his words to create the characters and the surrounding details of the narrative. The dialogue in a novel relies completely on the reader's interpretation of the text and can be transmitted differently for each person. Conversely, the dialogue of a screen play or video game also differs in that the adapter is able to use visual and auditory cues, in tandem with dialogue, to convey information and emotions. James Griffith (27, 1997) suggests that in creating an adaptation in a primarily visual medium that adapters must focus on the style, tone and dialogue to recreate the levels of mental complexity which may exist in the source text.

Joseph M. Boggs and Dennis W. Petrie (50 – 52, 2000) argue that in a film or video game the characters "true thoughts, attitudes, and emotions can be revealed in subtle ways through word choice and through the stress, pitch and pause patterns of their speech. Actors' use of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and particular dialects (if any) reveals a great deal about their characters' social and economic level, educational background, and mental processes." Dialogue is particularly important to films and video games because they are not able to show the internal workings of the characters. By having the characters converse, the adapters are able to replicate some of the thoughts that the original characters had in the text. Desmond and Peter Hawkes state that:

speech is dialogue, or character discourse, spoken by the actors onscreen or spoken by the actors offscreen, as in voiceover narration. Sometimes a character is seen alone on screen but is not speaking, while the voice of the character is heard on the sound track thinking about something... Dialogue conveys background information; expresses the thoughts and feelings of the characters about actions, the behaviour of other characters, or features of the setting; and distinguishes each character by language idiom. (Desmond and Hawkes 31, 2006)

They describe how the acting and delivery of dialogue can affect the audience's perception of a character.

When adapting for video games, placing the dialogue in cut-scenes allows the game maker to control the narrative and to guide the gamers understanding of what is to come. In *American McGee's Alice* and *Alice: Madness Returns* the dialogue mainly occurs in cut-scenes in which the other characters of Wonderland give Alice instructions on how to proceed, or provide information between characters which the gamer cannot control. However, in games where the gamer must choose whether or not to interact with creatures or must choose the order in which to interact with characters, he/she has more control over the narrative that is being created (Douglas 52, 2000). The structure of both games is such that Alice will always speak to characters who she must speak to when she enters a new space. There are only a few characters who Alice may approach to communicate with, but they do not provide information which is pertinent to the narrative and the gamer cannot control their dialogue.

The dialogue between characters in *American McGee's Alice* consists of pre-recorded audio clips which are screen captioned for the audience. Similarly, in *Alice: Madness Returns* the

dialogue is made with pre-recorded clips with optional captions. There are also various instances in *Alice: Madness Returns* when the gamer can control the narrative based on a set list of responses; however, these instances are more for the amusement of the gamer and do not work to change the course of the narrative. For example, the Cheshire Cat asks Alice “What is yours but others use more than you do?” The options to answer are: your shovel, your pen, your underwear and your name (*Alice: Madness Returns* 2011). Any answer the gamer chooses does not affect the outcome of the overall narrative, but the interaction gives the impression that the gamer is conversing with the Cat.

Dialogue is the center of Lewis Carroll’s novel because much of the humour of the novel is derived from the treatment of Alice at the hands of the characters of Wonderland and the Looking Glass. In Carroll’s novel, the dialogue does not progress the story, it is the story (Levin 180, 1971). If Alice’s curiosity and the nonsensical ramblings of the other characters were taken away, the story would simply be about a little girl who falls down a rabbit hole, meets strange creatures and returns home and would not have become the memorable story that it is today.

Carroll’s Parodies

Carroll’s novels contain many parodies which are either recited to Alice by the creatures for her entertainment or are recited by Alice while she tries to remember her lessons. Many children of the Victorian era could identify with the practice of reciting nursery rhymes and other poems and would have known many of the original poems. Elsie Leach argues that “Dodgson’s parodies of the instructive verse which children were made to memorize and recite ridicule its solemnity and the practice of inflicting it upon the young” (Leach 91, 1971). For example, when Alice is trying to remember who she is the Caterpillar asks her to recite “You are old father William” which parodies “The Old Man’s Comforts and How He Gained Them” (Gardiner 49,

2000). The Caterpillar's demand would resound with the fact that adults would often ask children to recite verse.

Florence Milner, writing in 1903, noted that "the children of today do not know the verses at all, and... a parody ceases to be a parody without the original poem as a background" (Milner 246, 1971). If the children of 1903 did not know the parodies, then the children of today most certainly will not recognize many of the original poems and the humour that is being conveyed when they are being parodied. As a result, modern adaptations either ignore the parodies completely or attempt to incorporate the characters of the parodies into the main narrative.

Characters of the parodies manifest themselves in Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*, Willing's *Alice*, and *Alice: Madness Returns*.

The most popular adapted parody is the *Jabberwocky* which first appeared in *Through the Looking Glass*. The poem is a parody of Anglo-Saxon poetry which first emerged in an 1855 issue of *Mischmasch*, a magazine which Carroll published for his family (Gardiner 148, 2000). In Burton's adaptation, the entire poem is recited by the Hatter who explains to Alice that the characters of Wonderland are looking for the character who slew the Jabberwocky, and that they believe this champion to be her. In Willing's adaptation and McGee's adaptations the Jabberwocky appears as an evil creature who challenges Alice, but is otherwise not described in much detail.

Another poem which is incorporated into the adaptations is *The Carpenter and the Walrus*. The poem does not parody any other existing works but follows a common metre used in Victorian poetry (Gardiner 183, 2000). In Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*, the poem is recited to Alice by Tweedledee because she says she likes 'some poetry'. The poem tells of a

Walrus and Carpenter who convince a bed of oysters to follow them on an adventure; once they have led them away from the sea they eat them all. The characters of the Walrus and the Carpenter appear in Willing's adaptation as the main operators behind the Queen's enterprise of extracting emotions from 'oysters'; however, there is no direct mention of the dialogue of the poem in the film. In *Alice: Madness Returns* the Walrus and the Carpenter kindly greet Alice and ask her to help them with the production they are trying to put on. Their dialogue has little to do with the film, but works to assign Alice a task.

In adapting *Alice* adapters have strayed from including the parodies in the same way they were told. In much the same way, they have altered the way that dialogue has been purposed in Carroll's novels.

The Purpose of Dialogue in Carroll's *Alice*

Although dialogue generally serves the purpose of providing information to the audience, which in turn progresses the story, Carroll uses dialogue for three very different purposes: to convey wit or logic in a nonsensical world, to play with words and to mock Victorian culture.

Wit and Logic

Throughout both novels, there are many instances where Carroll uses logic to create humour. For instance, when Alice is lost in the woods, after leaving the house of the Duchess, she asks the Cheshire Cat,

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”

“That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat.

“I don't care where—“ said Alice.

“Then it doesn’t matter which way you go, said the Cat.

“ – so long as I get *somewhere*,” Alice added as an explanation.

“Oh, you’re sure to do that,” said the Cat, “if you only walk long enough.”

(Carroll 65, 2000)

The transgression between the Cat and Alice demonstrate a nonsensical, but logical, answer that may be elicited from a common question. Alice is then forced to ask more specific questions in order to figure out which path will be the best to take. Although Alice eventually decides which direction to travel based on the Cat’s instructions, their conversation does not develop the plot, or convey information that is relevant to the narrative, as it does in many other novels. The wit and logic of Carroll’s novels is often replaced with dialogue which adds to the plot.

Wordplay

Carroll also uses dialogue to play with words. He claims about his novels ““I didn’t mean anything but nonsense.... But since words mean more than we mean to express when we use them... whatever good meanings are in the book I am very glad to accept as the meaning of the book”” (de la Mare 58, 1971). Carroll reiterates his point with Humpty Dumpty who says,

“When *I* use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean –neither more nor less.”

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you *can* make words mean so many different things.”

“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be master – that’s all.”

(Carroll 213, 2000)

Carroll’s assertions suggests that words, and by extension dialogue and narrative, can construct different meanings for each reader.

Tim Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland* is the adaptation which remains truest to the source text and includes some of Carroll’s nonsensical phrases such as “curiouser and curiouser”, “I’ve believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast” and “why is a raven like a writing desk?” so that there is some reminiscence of the humour of Carroll’s *Alice*. However because they are provided in a context and framing that does not always remain in the same nature of Carroll’s dialogue they have a tendency to sound out of place.

Mocking Societal Customs

In addition, Carroll’s dialogue is a mockery of the Victorian customs which the Liddells would have grown up learning. For instance, when Alice is falling down she ponders to herself what she will say to the inhabitants she acts out gestures “she tried to curtsy as she spoke – fancy, *curtseying* as you’re falling through the air! Do you think you could manage it?” (Carroll 14, 2000). Carroll suggests that manners are so well integrated into the training of the young girls that they would think of trying to curtsy in the air. By constantly engaging with newer and stranger characters, there is no shortage of wit and stories which would have kept the children entertained without frightening them. Carroll’s focus on Victorian customs does not appear in any of the modern adaptations, most likely because today’s audience do not know or remember

many of the customs which are being mocked. If the adapter were to include these bits of Victorian humour, the audience may be more confused than entertained.

The Purpose of Dialogue in the Adaptations of *Alice*

Developing the Plot

The dialogue of the adaptations is used quite differently from the dialogue of Carroll's novels. In most adaptations, the dialogue is used to convey information which is relevant to the plot. The characters interact and give Alice directions to govern her journey through Wonderland. Comparatively, the Alice of the books interacts with the characters only because she is lost. She frequently is seen talking to herself or being confused by the animals as they attempt to direct her around. In Beddor's, Burton's and Willing's adaptation, conversing with the other characters provides more information about Wonderland.

The humour and wit of Carroll's dialogue is also lost in video games in favour of speeches which are more functional than comical. The dialogue of video games is generally used for three purposes: to tell the story, to convey information to the player, and to give the player goals to achieve.

The narrative of *American McGee's Alice* and *Alice: Madness Returns* is largely defined by the cut-scenes in between each level that the gamer completes. In *American McGee's Alice* watching cut scenes means interacting with the characters of Wonderland who are encouraging her to continue forward and providing her with people to meet and tasks to complete along the way. Conversely, in *Alice: Madness Returns* much of the dialogue of the game is seen in these scenes where gamers are able to learn more about Alice based on conversations that Alice cannot

hear. They show scenes of the doctors conversing, or interior monologues that the characters may tell of how Alice came to be in a psychiatric hospital.

Dialogue is also used effectively when something changes in the game. For example, when Alice acquires a new weapon, the Cat interjects and explains what the weapon is and how to use it most effectively. The weapon descriptions inform the player about which weapon would be best used in different scenario, and allow the gamer to decide which to use when necessary. Alice is also able to interact with characters in the game who tell her about how the world has come to be in its present state, or who laugh maniacally, reminding gamers that the world of Wonderland has turned mad. However, in *Alice: Madness Returns* if Alice is in London, the characters work to berate her, recalling the details of how she came to the asylum or talking to the Nurse which usually reminds the gamer that Alice is mad.

The characters are also able to give Alice hints about how to proceed. For instance, in *American McGee's Alice*, if air jets that will help Alice float are introduced in the game, the Cat may tell the gamer that the floating feature will be useful to get to higher levels. The same thing happens when new features or abilities are given to Alice. At times Alice even asks for advice from the Cheshire Cat, for instance, in *Alice: Madness Returns*, when Alice is opposing Tweedledee and Tweedledum she asks "Do you have any useful advice?" to which the cat replies "Use their size against them" (*Alice: Madness Returns* 2011). In this particular case, the cat advises Alice to use the edges of the maze in order to out maneuver the two characters.

Perhaps most importantly, the video game adaptations also employ dialogue to task Alice within the various levels. To illustrate in the first game, Alice is given the task of finding characters such as the Caterpillar or the Mock Turtle who will provide her with advice so that she may proceed in the game. These tasks occur quite frequently within the game so that the

gamer can feel a sense of achievement as they continue to play defeating the evils of the various levels. In addition, in *Alice: Madness Returns*, the dialogue serves as a means to give Alice tasks to complete. Specifically in this game, there are two concurrent story arcs which Alice is living in: the major one involves Alice's quest to find her memories in order to understand how her house burned down and to vindicate herself from the crime she did not commit. Some of her overarching goals in this case are to regain her memories, which can be found through the varying levels; at the same time when Alice is in Wonderland, she is often tasked by characters to perform a specific task. For example, the Carpenter and the Walrus request that Alice aid them in accumulating the props needed for a theatre production of dancing oysters – who are later eaten by the Walrus. Despite the seemingly odd nature of these requests the game cannot progress if Alice does not complete the tasks within the various stages.

The dialogue works to progress the narrative, so that Alice may arrive at her final destination and restore Wonderland to its former state of grandeur.

Tone and Characterization

An integral part of Carroll's dialogue is that the characters are generally rude to Alice. Carroll meant the creatures of Wonderland to represent adults, and to demonstrate how Alice can interact with them quite easily (Gordon 84, 1971). In Alice's first meeting with the Caterpillar their conversation is as follows:

“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 time 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.”
“I don’t see,” said the Caterpillar.
“I’m afraid I ca’n’t put it more clearly,” Alice replied very politely, “for I ca’n’t understand it myself to being with; and being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing.” (Carroll 47-48, 2000)

The Caterpillar replies sternly when Alice expresses confusion over her identity. Teresa de Lauretis (1, 1984) suggests that Alice “feels obliged to be polite, as she has been taught, and tries to make conversation”; however, Carroll has many characters scoffing, sneering or speaking sternly to Alice. The behaviour of the characters can be justified by the fact that they are supposed to represent adults, and as such, they speak to Alice in the same way that an adult would speak to a child (Leach 92, 1971). Although Alice attempts to remain courteous, she often loses her temper in the face of the nonsense and rudeness with which she is greeted.

In comparison, the characters of the adaptations do not typically exhibit the same rude behaviour of the novels, and adapters use the dialogue to re-characterize the creatures of Wonderland – some reflect the similarities between the old and the new, while some diverge entirely from their literary counterparts.

In particular, the dialogue of Beddor’s novel is modernized to reflect the development of the new characters and to demonstrate the civility in their relationships that is lacking in Carroll’s novels. To illustrate, when Carroll’s Alice meets the Caterpillar she is met with hostility; however, the Caterpillar of Beddor’s work is civil to Alyss and offers to help her.

Alyss's conversations with the various characters show her development throughout the novel. When she meets the caterpillar counsel, the governing body of

‘Even in [London],’ the caterpillar said, ‘where no one knew you were a Princess, you were to marry royalty. It seems that destiny will not deny who you are.’

‘I don’t mean to deny it, Mr. Caterpillar.’

The caterpillar frowned, puffing at his hookah. ‘Call me Blue.’

‘Oh. All right. I don’t want to deny it, Blue, it’s just that my time away from Wonderland has confused me. I’ve been through so much and all I do is run from those more powerful than myself, which doesn’t strike me as being... well, as very *queenly*.’ (Beddor 287, 2006)

Alyss's conversation with the Caterpillar illustrates that the characters of Wonderland are more civilized toward Alice. They either know her from when she was a child, or they take the time to introduce themselves properly to her and seek to help her along in her journey. They treat her with respect and attempt to help her return to her rightful position as Queen.

Similarly, Burton's use of dialogue helps to distinguish his characters as different from those originally imagined in Carroll's work. Burton's Alice becomes more logical and strong willed when she enters Wonderland and is noticeably more confident and self-defined when she re-enters the real world after her adventures. To illustrate, in creating the character of Alice Burton has tried to keep the same sarcastic tone in her dialogue and the same traits of stubbornness which Carroll's Alice exhibits. In fact, Burton's Alice declares

I have had quite enough! Since 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 how it goes from here. (Burton 2010)

When questioned about her choices she says "I make the path!" (Burton 2010). Her righteous attitude differs quite substantially from the little girl who was merely curious about the world. However, Burton's film focuses more heavily on the other characters of the work rather than on Alice herself. As the story is made much more logical, Burton needs to develop the other characters as much as he develops Alice.

Most importantly for Burton's and Willing's adaptations, the dialogue displays that the characters know of her or are expecting her to return. The dialogue is also used to re-characterize the creatures of Wonderland and to convey that they are looking for an "Alice" who is prophesized to be the champion who defeats the Jabberwocky. They seem to acknowledge her in a friendly and inviting way, quite contrary to the hostile greeting that Alice receives in Carroll's Wonderland.

Willing on the other hand creates an Alice who is thrown into the world of Wonderland and uses dialogue to characterize Alice as lost and confused. The portrayal of Alice as a regular human being makes the audience sympathetic to her case and sets her up to be the hero of this adventure. The other characters of Wonderland acknowledge her, and on occasion try to help her.

American McGee's Alice and *Alice: Madness Returns* also use tone and dialogue to re-characterize creatures of Wonderland. For example, the Cheshire Cat is created as an ally for Alice, and greets her as a comrade.

In the first game, she greets him saying, “You’ve gone quite mangy, Cat, but your grin’s a comfort.” To which he replies “And you’ve picked up a bit of an attitude. Still curious, and willing to learn, I hope.” (*American McGee's Alice* 2000). The Cat’s introduction suggests that he and other characters will help Alice along the way; it also demonstrates that Alice has been to Wonderland before and that this is her return after many years.

In the second game, when Alice enters the world their conversation is as follow:

Alice: “At least the place I’ve landed is somewhat familiar”

Cat: “About time too, Alice”

Alice: “Blasted Cat. Don’t try to bully me. I’m very on edge”

Cat: “Purrfect, if you aren’t on edge you’re taking up too much space.”

Alice: “You’re no help at all”

Cat: “But you know I can be”

(*Alice: Madness Returns* 2011)

Similar to its predecessor the dialogue of the game establishes the familiar nature of the Cat and Alice’s relationship. Their dialogue also attempts to show that Alice is somewhat mad from her confusion after her parent’s death.

The driving force of Carroll’s novels, witty, nonsensical dialogue is often supplemented for dialogue which works to provide the audience with information that is pertinent to the

narrative. The parodies and mockery which made Carroll's novels famous no longer work to entertain an audience that has forgotten the historical significance of much of Carroll's humour. As a result, adapters have rewritten the dialogue so that they are able to fashion the characters in the nature of their archetype which further progresses the hero's journey.

Conclusion

Entertaining the audience is the main priority for many of the adapters of the *Alice* works. Adapters of the *Alice* novels conform to traditional narrative and characterization patterns and accepted norms, which is more effective for entertaining the audience than staying true to the source text. Although infidelity to the source text is expected in adaptations, the difficulty of translating *Alice* is that it is a unique set of adventures in that they rely most heavily on entertaining a child through nonsense. Be it nonsensical characters or adventures not much in the world of Wonderland truly makes sense. For the audience, trying to understand his work is like Alice trying to understand “The Jabberwocky”: “‘It seems very pretty,’ she said when she had finished it, ‘but it’s *rather* hard to understand!’ (You see she didn’t like to confess, even to herself, that she couldn’t make it out at all.)” (Carroll 150, 2000). We, as the audience, do not want to admit that we are confused by Carroll’s work, though it is “very pretty” as shown by its ability to continually attract adapters and audiences alike; instead we’d prefer to be entertained by something that makes sense. By changing Carroll’s stories so that the narrative follows the hero’s journey and that the main protagonist is now made a hero, audiences are provided with a variation of *Alice* that is built on a formula which audiences have proven to enjoy.

Adapters believe that even a work as famous as Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* must be taken away from its origins and reimaged into an action-fantasy story before it is accepted as entertaining to today’s audience. Although it is easy to distinguish *Alice* adaptations, because they are marketed as such, I am left to wonder what other works have been changed when being adapted. In examining *Alice*, the narrative has been changed to that of the hero’s journey, the characters have been adapted from their unique forms and made to conform to archetypal modes, and the once witty dialogue is now the same as dialogue found in many

generic films. These changes have remolded *Alice* so that the *Alice* that audiences fell in love with many years ago, is inherently very different from the one which appears in many of the adaptations. Noting these changes, leaves me to wonder, in regards to other sources that have been adapted, what bits of entertainment are we missing out on in favour of the main stream “adaptation”?

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