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Jo Elwyn Jones and J. Francis Gladstone. *The Red King's Dream, or Lewis Carroll in Wonderland*. London: Pimlico, 1996.

———. *The Alice Companion: A Guide to Lewis Carroll's Alice Books*. London: Macmillan, 1998.

Stephanie Lovett Stoffel. *Lewis Carroll and Alice: New Horizons*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1997.

Am I a deep philosopher or a great genius? I think neither. What talents I have I desire to devote to His Service and may he purify me and take away my pride and selfishness. Oh that I might hear. "Well done, good and faithful servant."

--Lewis Carroll's private journal, 7 January 1856

One day, while teaching *Alice in Wonderland* out of the Griffith and Frey anthology, I felt like I was spinning and spinning through that rabbit hole so often identified as the *vagina dentata*. No, I wasn't caught, but then my being female must have had something to do with it. I just felt that I had come out on the other side of the world. I found myself telling my students that Alice's version of "I am old Father William" was a subversion of the classic British educational system, that Alice was going through not just an adolescent questioning but a questioning of the politics of the Victorian educational system, that her journey along the river, all on a summer's day, was a period of questioning of her lessons, of being on time, of wearing white gloves, of enduring prim and proper tea parties and endless croquet games, and a questioning of where she belonged in this hierarchy of Englishness and Englishism and whether she belonged there at all. But we know that little prim but coquettish Miss Alice Liddell knew she wanted to be not only English, but from reading Carroll's diaries, that her mother harbored a secret desire to see her married to Leopold, the fourth son of Queen Victoria, that paragon of empire herself. So who was revolting against being colonized? Miss Alice, or the creator of the fictional Alice, Lewis Carroll?

Here is where the wonderful new book by Jo Elwyn Jones and J. Francis Gladstone, *The Red King's Dream*, comes in. It gives us an in-depth insight into Lewis Carroll's politics. I happened on the book by chance. In pursuit of my notion that Carroll may have harbored fairly liberal points of view toward empire and colonialism, I tried to trace my steps through the Christ Church College wonderland on the Lewis Carroll Centenary tours in Oxford. I had been in the British Library during the last

envision her "evolution." Of all the books available in the wake of the centenary of Carroll's death, I believe this one is the most beautiful and the best for understanding and picturing the context. If we think Carroll was a pedophile, why do we go see Mary Cassatt's *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* (41), which is just as provocative a painting? To Carroll, the photographing days or the days of meeting Alice when her mother had forbidden it, were just *white stone* days. Stoffel ascribes this practice to the Roman poet Catullus; however, when Christian prisoners were freed, they were given a white stone. This comes into Revelation as "to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna and will give him a *white stone* and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Rev. 2.17). When one reads the detailed facts and history in Stoffel's book, one is willing to free Carroll from his own fears of sinning—fears that he repented every day in his diaries. We must send him on with his own white stone. It is only fitting that a white stone was dedicated at Poets Corner in Westminster Abbey on the sesquicentennial of Dodgson's birth (127).

Having read these three books as companions to my journey through wonderland, the British Library's old reading room, and the porter's centenary tour of Christ Church, my teaching of *Alice* will never be the same again. I highly recommend all three books, though Stoffel's, along with the *photo poche* *Lewis Carroll*, are my particular favorites.

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