

# Waking Up in Dunderland

Recently I stumbled across Alberto Manguel's [A Reader on Reading](#) in my public library and brought the book home. As I skimmed the pages, I became aware that Manguel had used quotations from [Alice in Wonderland](#) and [Through the Looking Glass](#) to introduce each of his chapters.

Over the last several years, many commentators have pointed to George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* as novels that help explain the totalitarian nature of today's big governments and our diminishing liberties. To that list I'd like to add the two Alice classics, written by Lewis Carroll.

We live in an age when many of our politicians and social-justice tinpot dictators demand that we use certain nouns and pronouns in regard to sex and gender. Here's a take on this idea from Alice:

'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.'

Cancel culture, critical race theory, and other forms of repression have created fear and silence among many in our country. Say the wrong thing, and you can be mobbed on social media, lose your job, or be canceled as a speaker. That's what happened to one Montessori schoolteacher after she wrote and published an [essay](#) decrying the adoption of critical race theory by some major Montessori organizations.

'I've a right to think,' said Alice sharply, for she was beginning to feel a little worried.

'Just about as much right,' said the Duchess, 'as pigs have to fly...'

We live in an age when the powers-that-be ask us to believe all sorts of things that contradict reality. We're told the Ivy League guy who's breaking record after record in female swimming is actually a woman. We're supposed to believe that the inflated costs of food and gasoline are the results of a war in Ukraine. We're told that if we all drive electric cars, we'll save the planet even while China and other countries are pumping out pollutants like nobody's business.

'I can't believe *that!*' said Alice.

'Can't you?' the Queen said in a pitying tone. 'Try again: draw a long breath, and shut your eyes.'

Alice laughed. 'There's no use trying,' she said: 'one can't believe impossible things.'

'I daresay you haven't had much practice,' said the Queen. 'When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.'

Many of us have felt in the last few years as though we were living in a looney bin. Each day the headlines bring dark news and nonsensical stories in which up seems down and day seems night. In some places, local and state governments have instituted policies favoring the rights of criminals over those of ordinary citizens. In Washington, D.C., Congress and the Biden administration continue spending money as if there were no consequences and no tomorrow. The leaders of our armed forces seem more intent on preaching political correctness than on preparing our troops for war, with the latest [training](#) focused on gender-pronoun workshops and slide shows.

'In THAT direction,' the Cat said, waving its right paw round, 'lives a Hatter: and in THAT direction,' waving the other paw, 'lives a March Hare. Visit either you like: they're both mad.'

'But I don't want to go among mad people,' Alice remarked.

'Oh, you can't help that,' said the Cat: 'we're all mad here.'

With inflation now savaging the economy and with rocketing gas prices wrecking businesses and keeping Americans at home, many of us are scrambling just to make ends meet. Here is a fitting comment from Carroll's Red Queen:

'Now, *here*, you see, it takes all the running *you* can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!'

*Alice in Wonderland* ends with Alice waking up and realizing that all the weird characters and bizarre situations she's encountered were only a dream.

Unlike Alice, Americans are not living in a dream. Dunderland is all too real.

But here's the good news: more and more Americans, like Alice, are waking up. Black and Hispanic [voters](#) are turning their backs on the radicals of the left and walking away. Parents are protesting the transgender and critical-race agenda being pushed in schools. From the horribly botched withdrawal from Afghanistan to our amateur-hour diplomacy in Ukraine, from our government-induced inflation to our disastrous COVID policies, the massive failures of this administration and Congress are becoming obvious to more and more people.

I'm keeping my fingers crossed that maybe, just maybe, the nightmare of Dunderland will come to an end.

—

Flickr-cea + (cropped), CC BY 2.0