
References To The Law In Lewis Carroll's Novel 'Alice In Wonderland'

This paper is aimed to introduce the proposition that throughout Lewis Carroll's novel 'Alice In Wonderland' there are frequently occurring references to the law. In particular the narratives concentrations on concepts such as Thomas Aquinas theory of Natural Law and The Rule of Law. This piece of literature gives perspective to better comprehend the connotation of named theories. It is a ludicrous world roughly tethered to the common sense of the way things should be, nothing really makes sense in Wonderland, including the law. The antagonist of the story is the Queen of Hearts who provides the perfect example as to why the Rule of Law is such an important philosophy. Alice's adventures in wonderland have no logic, morals nor do they have any sense of order creating excessive puzzlement for Alice, as a result of no natural law. By recognising what is wrong with the law in Alice's adventures it helps one gain understanding of the concept of the Law of Nature and the importance of the Rule of Law.

The Rule of Law binds and protects members of society, being defined as 'nobody is above the law, and everyone is subject to it'. The constitution "commits government to democracy and to accountability, responsiveness and openness... No-one is above the law and everyone is subject to the Constitution and the law". It underpins the governing of Australian society and is upheld to guarantee laws are clear, predictable and accessible. This principle certifies that written laws which were adopted through an established procedure, restrict government power and that it may only be exercised in accordance. Its intentions being to act as a safeguard against arbitrary actions of the governments authorities. It brings an assured level of harmony, prosperity and safety to those under the rule of government. In an attempt to ensure this is effective a separation of powers was put into place, so the executive, legislature and judiciary are not the same people, nor do they perform the same functions.

The theory of Natural Law was first introduced by Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century . Essentially the concept is that laws should be coherent with nature and reason as this is believed to make 'good laws'. It creates a close alignment between morality and the law. The very base of this theory comes from laws such as Newtons law of gravity, it's simply natures law that what goes up must come down. If the rules that govern a whole nation of people behold no morality, alignment with nature or reflect the current views of society governing will be nonsensical and unsuccessful.

The rule of law seems to be non-existent in Wonderland. This is first shown in Chapter III of Alice in Wonderland. The white mouse begins to tell Alice of a sad and long tale of his history. It tells the story of Mouse's meeting with fury, who presents the idea that they both go to trial for something to do. Mouse has objections to this as a trial would be a waste of time without a judge or jury however fury states "I'll be the judge, I'll be the jury... I'll try the whole case and condemn you to death. " In Chapters VIII and IX Alice participates in the Queens game of croquet. It is very clearly a fictional game of croquet with hedgehogs serving as balls, live flamingos as mallets and very cruelly the soldiers are made to "double themselves up and stand on their hands and feet" posing as arches. As the queen is easily angered, anyone who offends or annoys her is condemned by her to be beheaded. This demand was made by the queen at least once every minute, making the game absolute chaos. As made evident in this

particular chapter the Queen of Hearts makes the law, enforces the law and decides the consequences for those who break it, acting as the legislature, executive and judiciary. This gives the Queen an endless amount of power very clearly putting her above the law, allowing to run things by her sanity and sense of justice which is always an execution regardless if the accused is deserving or not.

As with everything in Wonderland, nothing is quite right about the law. The fun in Alice's Adventures is the authors construction of a nonsensical realm that is very loosely based on reality. Alice rebels against the inhabitants of wonderland when she grows larger and is stuck in the white rabbit's house. Her capability to take a potion and turn into a giant already gives the perfect example as to how the rules of wonderland are not in alignment with nature. Given her new found size Alice decides to implicitly recreate the authority in Wonderland kicking a lizard up a chimney simply because she is the larger therefore stronger individual. She is merely reconstructing authority she has been subjected to in all her time in Wonderland, that the more powerful individual can implement illogical authority over a less powerful one, regardless of whether such treatment is deserved. There is no morality in the law therefore Alice knows no better. The detail that there is no alignment with the basic rules of nature in wonderland provides the fact that there is no morality, and everything doesn't make sense. This assist to better comprehend the philosophy Thomas Aquinas created and its significance in today's reality.

To encapsulate, it is made apparent that the Rule of Law grasps a significant importance and plays a sizeable function in guarding the rights of people as well as delivering those under the governing body with a sense of security. It also specifies a better understanding to Thomas Aquinas philosophy of Natural Law and the prominence of laws incorporating morality.