

On Saturday, my old friend Martha Kearney made an excellent and possibly revelatory documentary about Lewis Carroll. I wish she hadn't. All was well for the first half of **The Secret World of Lewis Carroll**, as his anarchic, child-centred masterpiece, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, was placed in the context of the obsessive young maths don's secret craving for disorder and Victorian literature's discovery of the child protagonist. Then Kearney, who herself played Alice as a child but by now, in this film, was no longer accompanied by a little animated rabbit in a frock coat, dived down the hole of Carroll's sexual imagination.

Happily, there was no evidence of anything beyond his platonic love for the book's child dedicatee, Alice Liddell. The bad news was that the programme's researchers found a clearly labelled picture quite possibly taken by Carroll of, almost certainly in a forensic expert's eyes, her older sister Lorina. It is nude, full frontal and shows the breasts of a young adolescent.

Lorina would have been 14 the year the Liddells banned Carroll, the keen photographer, from visiting them. "Who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle," Alice asked of herself. I truly hope Martha has not answered the corresponding question for Carroll.

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