



A PROLIFIC MYSTERY WRITER AND CREATOR OF WORLD - FAMOUS DETECTIVE *SHERLOCK HOLMES* BY DR. ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

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Abstract

The Literary works of Arthur Conan Doyle were the lighthouse for the contemporary mystery writers. His world-famous Character Sherlock Holmes, the world's most recognizable fictional detective. Modern readers of detective stories, moviegoers and television viewers know Sir Doyle as the inventor of Sherlock Holmes. Sherlock Holmes character gives him the popularity and acknowledgement in the world of Mystery-Detective fiction. His Sherlock Holmes stories include historical fiction and conventional mystery writings, history, medical, drama, spirituality, essays and letters, political tracts expression of the great mystery writings. His publications made him a study material for contemporary writers. In his Autobiography Memories and Adventures which published in October 1923 to July 1924, in The Strand Magazine. It was later published in book form on 18 September 1924 by Hodder & Stoughton Ltd. The Sherlock Holmes stories are milestones in the field of crime fiction. Doyle's creation of the writings is logical and cold, this description made him, the "World's first and only consulting detective", the character of Sherlock Holmes first appeared in the full-length novel, A Study in Scarlet, which was published in Beeton's Christmas Annual of 1887. Dr. Conan Doyle's primary attraction in both the evidences which were scientifically tolerable and some paranormal miracles, in his entire life he struggled between these two opposite things.

Keywords

Sherlock Holmes, Detective, Medical Education, Mystery Writing, etc.

Full Article

Introduction:

Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was a British prominent writer in the mystery world. Sir Doyle had mastery in several fields, as British Mystery writer readers appreciated his style of writings and his crafted iconic character Sherlock Holmes. Doyle's life was filled with full of adventure, he was not only mystery writer but he was a Physician, An Athlete, Poet, A war correspondent, Spiritualist, An adventurer, Campaigner, A politician. Doyle was born at Edinburgh Scotland, on 22 May 1859. His father and mother Charles Doyle and Mary Doyle was Catholic. The children were scattered and temporarily housed across Edinburgh, due to his father's growing alcoholism. Sir Doyle expressed deep feelings about his mother in his autobiography the children and family came together live in one place. In the beginning at an age, Doyle wrote letters to his mother in during his life. Many letters were preserved, his mother's memoirs kept back a great impact on his life.

In his autobiography he expressed his true feelings towards his mother, "In my childhood, as far as I can remember anything at all, the vivid she had told me stand out so clearly that they obscure the



real facts of my life. She had a passion for books and was a master storyteller. She has a gift of sinking her voice to a horror-stricken whisper, whenever she reached the climax” (Doyle, 1923).

Her quality of storytelling was a gift to the Doyle, during his life journey in London he was frequently addressed to an assemblage of fascinated younger students always eager to listen his amazing stories. He was educated at the Jesuit school Stella Matutina in Feldkirch, Austria from 1875 to 1876. Then he broadened his academic prospects, he went on to study medicine at University of Edinburgh. There he met several future famous writers, such as Robert Loise Stevenson, James Barrie. In this journey he met one influenced personality the man who was left the sturdiest impression on Doyle, that was his teacher, Dr. Joseph Bell. His teacher was incredibly logical and good observer had a quality of particular skill in deducing and diagnosing patients. Dr. Joseph, a professor and forensic scientist became the foundation of his world’s best detective, Sherlock Holmes. Holmes was a man of science, and ultimately would prove to be an inventor of Forensic science. Some techniques which used by Holmes in his observation or conducting case were not adopted by real police force in Britain and America before the publication of these stories. He expressed his feelings about Dr. Bell in his autobiography *Memories and Adventures*. “But the most notable of the characters whom I met was one Joseph Bell, surgeon at the Edinburgh Infirmary. Bell was a very remarkable man in body and mind. He was thin, wiry, dark, with a high-nosed and acute face, penetrating grey eyes, angular shoulders, and a jerky way of walking. His voice was high and diseases, but of occupation and character. For some reason which I have never understood he singled me out from the drove of students who frequented his wards and made me his outpatient clerk, which meant that I had to array his outpatients, make simple notes of their cases, and then show them in, one by one, to the large room in which Bell sat in state surrounded by his dressers and students. Then I had ample chance of studying his methods and of noticing that he often learned more of the patient by a few quick glances than I had done by my questions” (Doyle, 1923).

In the reality Dr. Joseph Bell involved in multiple police investigations, with the forensic experts in Scotland. In 1877 at the university first time Doyle met Dr. Bell at the University of Edinburgh Medical School. By the end of Conan Doyle’s second year, he was selected as an assistant of Dr. Bell, this was the great opportunity to Dr. Doyle to observe the Dr. Bell, his magnificent ability to deduce the patients. Alongside being a brilliant doctor, Bell was also an amateur poet, a sportsman and a bird-watcher. Dr. Conan Doyle, impressed by Dr. Bell’s observable and deductive technique which was he converted in his fictional detective Sherlock Holmes’s methods of solving crimes and characters acknowledgment in the dedication of the adventures in Sherlock Holmes career.

In Between Dr. Conan Doyle married in 1885 with Louisa Hawkins, they had two children, Mary and Kingsley. After demises his first wife he married with Jean Leckie and had three children, Denis, Adrian and Jean. During the Boer war period he worked in Bloemfontein, hospital in South Africa. In 1900, he was the part of Boer War, he was offered as a medical doctor in South Africa. His passion about writings was very high, and he turned towards the non-fiction. He serviced as a knighthood in 1902, his works included the experiences in the Boer War, as military writings, *The Great Boer War* (1900) and *The British Campaign in France and Flanders* (1916-20).

Spiritualism was the major part of his later life. His later life and his writings surprised the readers who interested on his ultra-logical Sherlock Holmes. This phase of his life was contradicted with his early writings, the detective Sherlock Holmes, who was believed on the logical evidences and forensic science. After the World War I, he became more spiritualists, he strongly believed on Spiritualism. Spiritualism cost to Dr. Conan Doyle both popularity and wealth.



Interest in Spiritualism:

Doyle's later life deeply influenced by the spiritualism and he wrote several of his writings on it. He has medical background; he trained as physician in the early life but later the calamities of his life forced him to think on spiritualism.

Post-War Encouragement:

The impact of war and the personal loss in his life make him spiritual. He wrote many novels, and articles. He lost his precious things like death of his son Kingsley, his brother, and other people during and after World War I, this great loss of his life, that time he believed in Spiritualism.

His works on Spiritualism:

1. *The New Revelation* (1918)
2. *The Vital Message* (1919)

He later chronicles his travels for spreading the spirituality in the world that time he wrote several writings,

3. *The Wanderings of a Spiritualist* (1921)
4. *Our American Adventure* (1923)
5. *Our Second American Adventure* (1924)
6. *Our African Winter* (1929)
7. *Case for Spirit Photography* (1922)
8. *Pheneas Speaks* (1927), and
9. *The History of Spiritualism* (1926) a two- volume

Public Encouragement:

Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle went on lecture tours around the world to spread and promote the spiritualism. After war people became grief-stricken, he observed that spiritualism is the best medicine for comforting and important truth.

Disagreement or Controversy

His transformation to physician to spiritualist was shocking to his readers. Many contemporary writers disagreed with his idea of paranormalism. He had a strong belief in communication with the dead people. He believed in life after death and spirit communication.

A Sarcastic with Sherlock Holmes

In his early age of life, he was physician and believed in science and forensic method, his most prolific detective character Sherlock Holmes, but later on the science and logical believe converted into spiritualism.

In the article of Horace Leaf which was published in *Ghost Stories* in October 1930, titled as *Conan Doyle's Last Words on Spiritualism and an appraisal of his life, character and work*, "Spiritualism is the most important fact in life, and we must make this world accept it in the interests of both worlds!" [*Conan Doyle's Last Words on Spiritualism and an appraisal of his life, character and work*]

Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle is best creator of the iconic characters, fictional settings, spans the many genres. His works included novels of science fiction, historical novels, plays and poetry. Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle was found clutching his chest in the hall of Windlesham Manor, Crowborough, Sussex, England, in his home on 7 July 1930. The cause of death was a heart attack. In his last movements, his last words to his wife were said to be, "You are wonderful."

T. S. Eliot commented on the Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle. "Doyle's Holmes is part of the literature of escape, but it is also a very high order of escape. We return to it not because of suspense, but because of its style, structure, and character," (Eliot, 1928)



Eliot praised Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle's the structural brilliance and narrative economy of the Holmes stories, Eliot called his stories were the models for detective fiction. Dr. Doyle's observation of life.

Methodology: The method of the study is qualitative type. The research methodology comprises some important aspects such as method of research, data analysis technique. The research is analytical, descriptive and interpretative in nature.

Chronological Publication Order of Sherlock Holmes series.

The stories were publication in magazines and books:

Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle's works divided into many literary genres	
1. Books:	10
2. Novels:	22
3. Stories:	204
4. Collection:	16
5. Poems:	4
6. Plays:	14
7. Spiritualist and Paranormal books:	13
8. Spiritualist and Paranormal Pamphlets:	10

Some Famous Works Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle

Novels:

1. *A Study in Scarlet* (1887): The First novel which introducing Sherlock Holmes and his friend Dr. Watson
2. *The Sign of the Four* (1890): The second novel of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson.
3. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902): The novel was set before Sherlock Holmes death
4. *The Valley of Fear* (1915)

Short Story Collection:

1. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892): A collection of twelve short stories.
2. *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1893): Another collection of twelve short stories.
3. *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (1905): A collection of thirteen short stories.
4. *His Last Bow: Some Reminiscences of Sherlock Holmes* (1917): A short story collection.
5. *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes* (1927): A collection of short stories

Sherlock Holmes is the best creation of this author, besides that Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle authored over 200 other fictional works, which includes Historical novels, Science Fiction works, War Fiction, Crime and Justice and several other fictions.

Historical Novels:

1. *Micah Clarke* (1889)
2. *The White Comony* (1891)
3. *The Firm of Girdlestone* (1890)

Science Fiction:

1. *The Lost World* (1912): This is the science fiction novel, concerning the plateau in the Amazone basin of South America. The famous character of Professor Challenger was introduced in this novel.

Fantasy:



1. *The Captain of the "Polestar"* (1883): This is the best fantasy book by Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle, the collection of the short stories.

Poetry:

1. *Songs of Action* (1898)
2. *Songa of the Road* (1911)

Plays:

1. *The Speckled Band* (1910): This was based on his Sherlock Holmes stories.
2. *Waterloo* (1894)
3. *The Fires of Fate* (1909)

Autobiography:

1. *Memories and Adventures* (1924)
2. *Dangerous Work: Diary of an Arctic* (2012)

These works additional demonstrate his creative writings and inspires to the other writers of mystery fiction. He was a master in writings of essays, letters and lesser-known writings, his Sherlock Holmes short stories are best read in the order they were published in the Strand Magazine. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle made an enormous contribution to mystery fiction, particularly through his creation of Sherlock Holmes stories. Dr. Conan Doyle designed the classical detective mystery stories format and several contemporary writers follow his footsteps and made this genre popular mystery format,

1. A crime, basically murder.
2. A brilliant and strong observer detective.
3. Sequential clues, creating the red herring's atmosphere.
4. At the end of the story the mystery revealing with the logical solution.

Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle popularized the genre and give the respectable place to mystery and detective fiction in the literary world. He influenced several contemporary writers like Agatha Christie and Raymond Chandler have acknowledged his influence in their writings. Elements of Sherlock Holmes appeared in several modern detective stories. W. H. Auden an analysis the Sherlock Holmes stories, he wrote one essay titles as, '*The Guilty Vicarage*' which is found in his book named, '*The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays*' which was published in 1962. In this essay Auden discusses like, "The Holmes stories satisfy the craving for a world where everything is in its place and reason always prevails" (Auden, 1962).

Auden saw the stories of Arthur Conan Doyle as form of moral order, Conan's literary merit and his writing style is not only the example of literature but it is for encouragement to the other mystery writers. According to Auden Sherlock Holmes is one of the best detectives in literary fiction; he is perfect detective in his article he given the formula of the mystery fiction in the diagrammed form as follows,

1. Peaceful state before murder – False innocence
2. Murder – Revelation of presence of guilt
3. False clues, secondary murder, etc.- False location of guilt
4. Solution- Location of real guilt
5. Arrest of murder – Catharsis
6. Peaceful state after arrest- True innocence
(Auden, 1962).



According to the several critics and other writers, Arthur Conan Doyle's ability to craft the fascinating stories always appreciated, his complex plot structure, well- developed characters, fetching dialogue hangs the mystery readers, his impact encompasses for beyond his era. His status is as a master of storyteller. Doyle's grandiosity is essential to the plot development within his mystery writings. His stories are as excessive or overly detailed, each intricate description has play major role to serves a purpose in unraveling complex mysteries. Every minute detail subsidizes to build a complex web of mystery that finally leads to a satisfying and logical resolution. His elaborate approach, several deceives clues might be overloaded in his story but readers alike it.

The writings adaption of the Arthur Conan Doyle's works, have been in numerous film and media especially focusing on the Sherlock Holmes stories. In film adoptions the *Sherlock Holmes Baffled* (1900), is known as Early Silent Films which featuring Holmes. *Eille Norwood series* (1921-1923) it was converted into a prolific over 40 short films. In the Classical Hollywood Era on the settings of World War II, *Basil Rathbone series* (1939-1946) adapted into films. In Modern Cinematic Holmes there are several film adoptions and many characters plays the role of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, this action – oriented and stylized reimagining films make Dr. Conan Doyle world famous, *Sherlock Holmes* (2009) *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* (2011), *Mr. Holmes* (2015), *Enola Holmes* (2020,2022). Several television adaptations like *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1984-1994), *Sherlock* (2010-2017), and *Elementary* (2012-2019). Various audio dramas, video games, radio plays and graphic novels have also adapted Conan Doyle's mystery stories.

Sherlock Holmes remains a cultural icon adapted into countless films, TV shows and books, several animated works, his legacy and lasting influence on literary world is remarkable. Dr. Doyle is credited with helping shape the modern detective genre. In conclusion, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's contributions have left an inefaceable mark on the detective genre. His masterpiece of Sherlock Holmes not only set new standards for fictional detectives also find the motivational path for wide variety of subjects in the popular literature. In his novels he touched the themes of logic, observation and the value of details. His famous quotation about the life is very popular among the mystery readers, "Life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent. We would not dare to conceive the things which are really mere commonplaces of existence. If we could fly out of that window hand in hand, hover over this great city, gently remove the roofs, and peep in at the queer things which are going on, the strange coincidences, the plannings, the cross-purposes, the wonderful chains and events, working through generations, and leading to the most outer results, it would make all fiction with its conventionalities and foreseen conclusions most stale and unprofitable" (Doyle).

Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle is prolific mystery writer not only for his mystery writings but also for his sense of understanding the human mind, the psychological and spiritual development of life. In this chapter researcher focused on the semiotic analysis of majorly two delightful novels *A Study of Scarlet* and *The Sign of Four*.

Conclusion:

To conclude, Doyle's writing style is different from the other contemporary writers of his age. The key difference occurred in the used of languages and descriptions. The use of language, writing style, and description style may feel to the modern language readers too. It creates an atmosphere to suit any to any age. The use of language elements such as vocabulary, dialogue, tone, narration and adventures description made him distinct from the others. The dialogue between Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson is blitzing the readers with details and adjectives.



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