

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Influence on Detective Fiction

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Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was one of the most notorious authors in the genre of detective fiction in the second part of the 19th century. He was responsible for the creation of such popular narratives as the story of Sherlock Holmes, which inspired new generations of writers to compose refined detective novels. The influence that Doyle delivered to the genre of detective fiction can be analyzed in a variety of ways, but it is clear that the outcome was one of the most substantial occurrences ever to happen to this branch of literature.

One of the most noticeable innovations Doyle asserted as the standard to follow in the genre was the introduction of the assistant character to support the protagonist. In the Sherlock Holmes series, it was Watson who always followed Holmes to appraise his deductive genius and help unroll the most bizarre detective cases (Gaines, 2017). The contrast between two distinct characters is immanent to recognize. While the approach exercised by Holmes is grounded on the rationale of consequence-sequential factors, Watson resorts to a plain and simplistic vision. The juxtaposition of the approaches of the characters is attributable to Doyle, creating micro-conflict that entertains readers even more through the course of the story. The approach was adopted by the majority of 20th-century writers like Agatha Christie.

Another achievement of Doyle's narrative resulted in the more distinct popularization of the reduplicated detective plots. In such stories, redundancy and repetition of the same characters, events, and plot twists persisted in popular literature in the first part of the twentieth century. Apparently, the phenomenon is connected to Philip Guedalla's theory of "normal recreation of noble minds" which asserts that the majority of readers would gladly enter a

detective game created by authors like Doyle to compare one's own intelligence to the detective's (Drozg, 2016). The myth of Sherlock Holmes as the protagonist in Doyle's short detective fiction was manifested in the post-Holmesian period. As a result of the character's significance in such stories like *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Holmes was metaphorically liberated from Doyle's attachment. Such scholars like Monsignor Ronald Knox even concluded that most essential correspondences of writing detective fiction could be met in the works by Doyle (Drozg, 2016). For example, the concept of a fake character not linked to the reality of the time when the detective story is published appeared in the literature in the 1930s and the 1940s. In such stories, the new generation of writers went even further, not indicating the age of the protagonist as well as not considering social calamities that haunted the reality of the time.

After the planned demise of Sherlock Holmes in 1893, Doyle created the grounds for the substitution of the character who set the refined standard of the notoriously intelligent and personally attractive protagonist of each following detective story. However, the further portrayal of the "perfect" detective resulted in pale copies of Doyle's hero. Various appearing post-Holmes stories followed and developed plot structures created by the author, while the majority of male and female detectives had a certain extent of Holmes' personality in them (Humpherys, 2017). The transformations of the genre inspired by Doyle began being prominent after WWI when the Golden Age of Detective Fiction thrived with a myriad narrative variations and unexpected transformations. The detective novel by Agatha Christie called *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* is an example of the post-Holmes approach to writing detective fiction. Such American authors like Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler contributed to the development of the new subgenre

of detective fiction called the “hard-boil school,” while French author George Simenon was writing in the “police procedural” style (Humpherys, 2017). The authors of the Strand wanted to find a substitution after the end of Holmes’ series. Arthur Morrison was the author who created detective Martin Hewitt, somehow opposite to Holmes' character, though still having many traits in common with how Doyle’s hero investigated the case with logic and reasoning.

The recent iterations of Sherlock Holmes in literature include postmodern intertextual works like James Lovegrove’s *The Cthulhu Casebooks* in which the author linked Conan Doyle’s universe to Lovecraft’s horror series. The uniqueness of the narrative regarding postmodern detective interpretation is based on the mix of traditions of Doyle, Umberto Eco, and Jorge Luis Borges (Genc, 2017). The story unravels in the Shadwell district where mysterious murders are investigated because of the Dark Web drug network. It offers new insight into how the image of Sherlock Holmes has been used in modern literature.

To sum up, the influence Doyle has had a significant impact on the genre of detective fiction from the perspective of its inheritance by either famous authors from the Golden Age of Detective Fiction or modern literature. Nonetheless, it is clear that the impact was one of the most substantial occurrences ever to happen to this branch of literature regarding adoption of Doyle’s tradition. The introduction of the partner to the detective, typical plot structures, and variations in new detective characters are the factors of impact on the genre of detective fiction by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

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