

Before we get to the depiction of the detecting mind in Doyle

A lot of things we *could* talk about

Recurring plot #1: the marriage, prevented

Financial motives and the domestic
economy

The colonies

A prodigious source of oddity and
irregularity

Identity: when one character
turns out to be two, or vice versa

(This is one we definitely will come
back to)

The relationship between character (Holmes) and text (these stories)

Cultural emancipation



THE STRAND MAGAZINE

BURLEIGH STREET

359

EDITED
By
Geo.
Newnes
OFFICES

N^o. 7
VOL. 2

JULY
1891

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY





William Gillette: Holmes on stage



1899–1901, 1905, 1906, 1910, 1915, 1923, and 1929–1932

Basil Rathbone



Fourteen films between 1939 and 1946

Jeremy Brett



TV (1984-1994) "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes"

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

HOLMES

NOTHING ESCAPES HIM

CHRISTMAS DAY

www.sherlock-holmes-movie.com

JUDE LAW

WATSON

CRIME WILL PAY

CHRISTMAS DAY

www.sherlock-holmes-movie.com



THE **SEVEN-PER-CENT
SOLUTION**

BEING A REPRINT FROM THE
REMINISCENCES OF
JOHN H. WATSON, M.D.
AS EDITED BY NICHOLAS MEYER



THE ASTOUNDING JOINT ADVENTURE OF
SHERLOCK HOLMES AND SIGMUND FREUD
A TWO-MILLION-COPY BESTSELLER

MICHAEL
CHABON



THE FINAL SOLUTION

A STORY OF DETECTION
BY THE PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING AUTHOR OF
THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF KAVALIER AND CLAY

The structure

In Doyle

You know my methods

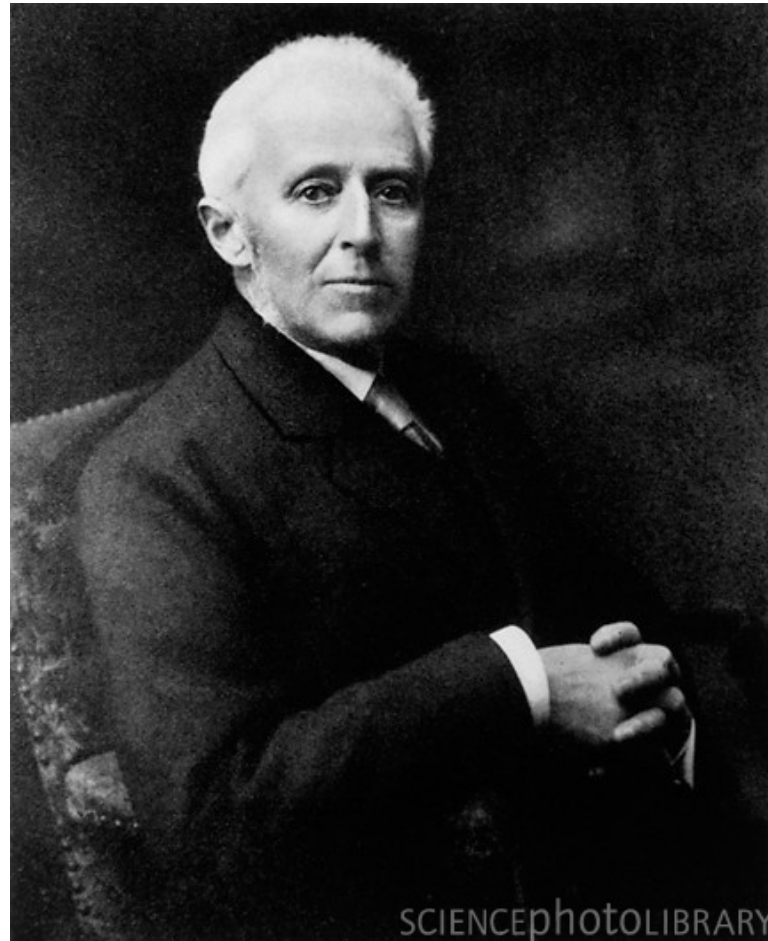
Regular methods that give
mastery over the *irregular*

And Holmes himself is very irregular

The man of science

What sorts of things can be fixed, and scientifically assured?





Joseph Bell

The trifling detail invested with
great significance

“You know my method. It is based
on the observation of trifles.”

(The Boscombe Valley Mystery)

“There is nothing so important as
trifles”

(The Man with the Twisted Lip)

“My suspicions depend on small points, which might seem trivial to another”

(The Adventure of the Speckled Band)

The police substitute generic,
inherited and inadequate
master narratives.

“Besides, we may chance to hit upon some other obvious facts which may have been by no means obvious to Mr. Lestrade. You know me too well to think that I am boasting when I say that I shall either confirm or destroy his theory by means which he is quite incapable of employing, or even of understanding.”

(The Boscombe Valley Mystery)

Lestrade laughed indulgently. “You have, no doubt, already formed your conclusions from the newspapers,” he said. “The case is as plain as a pikestaff, and the more one goes into it the plainer it becomes.”

(The Boscombe Valley Mystery)

On the one hand

A world of supreme *legibility*

On the other

A world where what once seemed
natural and unremarkable suddenly
comes in for *inspection* and demands
explanation

“The ideal reasoner,” he remarked, “would, when he had once been shown a single fact in all its bearings, deduce from it not only all the chain of events which led up to it but also all the results which would follow from it. As Cuvier could correctly describe a whole animal by the contemplation of a single bone, so the observer who has thoroughly understood one link in a series of incidents should be able to accurately state all the other ones, both before and after.”

(The Five Orange Pips)

Surveillance

Something like fear sprang up in the young lady's expressive black eyes. "Why, you are like a magician," said she. "How do you know that?" She smiled, but there was no answering smile in Holmes' thin, eager face.

Alarming

But ultimately soothing

(At least in a number of ways)

Localizing the investigation

- A confined aim: apprehending a single malefactor
- A confined agency: limited to a single eccentric detective
- Highlighting its interventionary nature: as opposed to everyday life

**Restricts its scope to a socially
approved enterprise**

Identifying the criminal, who is by
definition Other

Ends when the criminal is caught

But the depiction of Holmes
teases around the edges

Sorting the wheat from the chaff

As critic D.A. Miller observed

“The classical detective story disposes of an interestingly paradoxical economy, at once prodigal and parsimonious.... [T]he form is based on the hypotheses that *everything might count*.... Yet on the other hand, even though the criterion of total relevance is continually invoked by the text, it turns out to have highly restricted applicability in the end.”

Countervailing talents

Broad scope and narrow focus

The detecting mind

- ...as an device for organizing signifiers into an complete, knowable, orderly system of meaning
- ...as a device for guaranteeing areas of *irrelevance*

Group B

- Much like last week's assignment for Group A.
- 500 words: Find a passage or moment in which the nature of Holmes' capacity for insight is presented in some way that you think is worthy of note. Provide a close analytic reading of that moment, demonstrating, with as much specificity as possible, why and how it is surprising, intriguing, interesting. Use lecture and discussion as your guide and starting point—how does your passage cast new light on the topics we've been discussing and/or a larger reading of these texts?