

“Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle” at OLLI

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Recommended (but not required) reading:

We will be focusing on the Sherlock Holmes stories, but Conan Doyle was a prolific writer in many fields. Most of his literary work is readily available on-line, at web-sites such as Project Gutenberg at www.gutenberg.org, and of course your local library always is a fine resource. Don't forget that if your local library doesn't have a copy of the book you're seeking, they can use Inter-Library Loan to borrow the book for you from another library.

Some of Conan Doyle's most popular non-Sherlockian work is his science fiction (*The Lost World* is the best known, and *The Poison Belt* also is about Professor Challenger) and his historical fiction (*The Adventures of Gerard* and *Exploits of Gerard* are delightful short stories). But he wrote much more in many other genres (*The Conan Doyle Stories* has many excellent stories). He was a fine teller of tales.

There are many good biographies of Conan Doyle, who also wrote a biography (*Memories and Adventures, 1924*). The best biographies are those who authors had access to his family papers: Hesketh Pearson (*Conan Doyle: His Life and Art, 1943*), John Dickson Carr (*The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1949*), Pierre Nordon (*Conan Doyle, 1966*), Daniel Stashower (*Teller of Tales, 1999*), Andrew Lycett (*Conan Doyle: The Man Who Created Sherlock Holmes, 2007*), and Russell Miller (*The Adventures of Arthur Conan Doyle, 2008*). More and more of the family papers became available to researchers over the years, so there's much more information in the later biographies. There's also an annotated collection of many of the letters that Conan Doyle wrote to his mother and other family and friends, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley (*Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters, 2007*).

There has been a great deal of interesting scholarship (and pseudo-scholarship) devoted to Sherlock Holmes, much of it summarized by William S. Baring-Gould (*The Annotated Sherlock Holmes, two volumes, 1967*), Owen Dudley Edwards and others (*The Oxford Sherlock Holmes, nine volumes, 1993*), and Leslie S. Klinger (*The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes, three volumes 2004-2005*). In addition, there are periodicals such as *The Baker Street Journal*, published quarterly by The Baker Street Irregulars (sample copies will be distributed at one of the lectures).

Finally, there have been many pastiches and parodies, and films (*Sherlock Holmes*, starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law, is scheduled for release on Christmas Day), radio series (from Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce to Clive Merrison and Michael Williams), and television series (such as Granada's series starring Jeremy Brett). “I hear of Sherlock everywhere,” as Mycroft Holmes once said to Dr. Watson).