

Introduction to Crime Fiction

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 12–1 p.m. or by appointment

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review: Poe

- ▶ reading from the end
 - ▶ “analytical” puzzle solved
 - ▶ moral puzzle unresolved
- ▶ “ratiocination”
 - ▶ more like manipulation
 - ▶ character emptied out
- ▶ weirding narrative, weirding the human
 - ▶ you are the orangutan

in conclusion, ...

- ▶ Does the resolution of “A Scandal in Bohemia” satisfy?

1859	b. Edinburgh
1885	MD Edinburgh
1887	<i>A Study in Scarlet</i> (first Holmes novel)
1891	“Scandal in Bohemia” initiates Holmes stories in <i>The Strand</i>
1893	kills off Holmes. Writes in other genres (historical novel)
1900	Boer War propaganda (knighthood)
1901	back to Holmes (<i>Hound of the Baskervilles</i>): £££
1904	“Golden Pince-Nez” in <i>Strand</i>
1910s–20s	spiritualism, fairies
1930	d.

plot analysis

- text* the narrative discourse, a structured sequence of (linguistic or other) signs
- sjuzet* (Ru. сюжет) a particular organization or arrangement of fictional events
- fabula* (Ru. фабула) a series of logically related events caused or experienced by actors, proceeding forward in time

anachrony

anachrony differences between the arrangement in the *sjužet* and the chronology of the *fabula*

focus	direction	term
external	forward	objective anticipation
	back	objective retroversion
internal	forward	subjective anticipation
	back	subjective retroversion

- ▶ Find an example of anachrony in “Scandal in Bohemia.” Say how you know it is a retroversion or anticipation. Then reflect: what does it do?

preposterous

“It was the most preposterous position in which I ever found myself in my life, and it was the thought of it that started me laughing just now.”
(18)

< classical Latin *praeposterus* placed in the wrong order, inverted, unseasonable, wrong-headed, perverse (< *prae-* pre- prefix + *posterus* later, next)

OED, 3rd ed. (2020), s.v. “preposterous.”

New Jersey pride

- ▶ Who's in charge in "Scandal?"
- ▶ And how do you know?

There was something in his masterly grasp of a situation, and his keen, incisive reasoning, which made it a pleasure to me to study his system of work. (14)

“When a woman thinks that her house is on fire, her instinct is at once to rush to the thing which she values most. It is a perfectly overpowering impulse, and I have more than once taken advantage of it.” (24)

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“My Dear Mr. Sherlock Holmes,—You really did it very well.” (27)

gender trouble

“My dear Holmes, you would certainly have been burned, had you lived two centuries ago.” (2)

“She has the face of the most beautiful of women, and the mind of the most resolute of men.” (8)

Male costume is nothing new to me. I often take advantage of the freedom which it gives. (27)

the final retroversion

“Good-night, Mister Sherlock Holmes.” (25)

next

- ▶ Pirkis, “The Redhill Sisterhood” (Canvas)
 - ▶ please print
- ▶ “Sgt. Ryan,” “The Mysterious Highwayman”
- ▶ Smith, “The Snitch”
 - ▶ download whole *Detective Story* issue (Canvas)
 - ▶ no need to print it all, but come ready to discuss