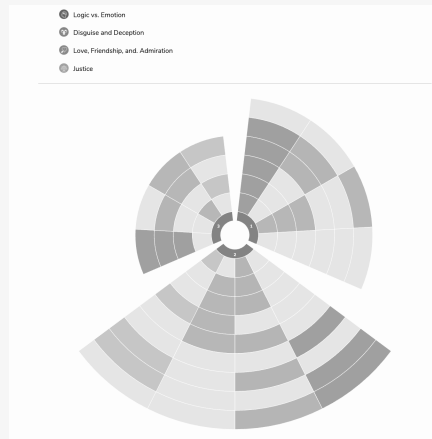


Theme Wheel



About the Author

Brief Biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Arthur Conan Doyle was born into poverty, to an alcoholic father with a history of psychiatric illness. With help from members of his extended family, however, Doyle was able to achieve an excellent education and eventually earn a doctorate in medicine. He would practice medicine in various forms for much of his early adult life. While in medical school, Doyle took up writing as a hobby. By 1886, he had created the character of Sherlock Holmes. The character was a great success with the public, and Doyle soon found himself a wealthy man. However, he felt that Holmes had backed him into a corner, making it impossible for him to write on other topics—such as his interests in spiritualism or the historical novel. By 1893, Doyle had decided to kill Holmes off. There was such a backlash against this, however, that he was forced to bring the character back to life in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, which would go on to become Holmes' best-known and best-loved novel. A man of diverse interests, Doyle participated heavily in politics and was knighted by King Edward VII for his writing on the Boer War, whereupon he became Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He had five children between two wives, but none of these children had children of their own. Thus, Doyle has no direct descendants today. He is often referred to today as Conan Doyle, as though his name were a compound. While this was the name he preferred to be called, Conan was simply his middle name and not a part of his full surname.

Key Facts

Key Facts about A Scandal in Bohemia

- **Full Title:** A Scandal in Bohemia
- **When Written:** 1891
- **Where Written:** England
- **When Published:** 1891 (in the *Strand* magazine) and again in 1892 as part of an anthology of Sherlock Holmes stories
- **Literary Period:** Victorian Period
- **Genre:** Detective Fiction
- **Setting:** London, Victorian Era
- **Climax:** Sherlock Holmes discovers where Irene Adler has hidden her precious photo
- **Antagonist:** Irene Adler
- **Point of View:** First person limited; perspective of John Watson, who chronicles Holmes's adventures

Other Books Related to "A Scandal in Bohemia"

Other Books Related to A Scandal in Bohemia

While Sherlock Holmes may be the world's most famous fictional detective, he was not the first to use remarkable observational skills and rational deduction to solve mysteries. In the 1840s, Edgar Allan Poe introduced his fictional detective C. Auguste Dupin to the world in a series of three short stories: "Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Mystery of Marie Roget," and "The Purloined Letter." Meanwhile, the rise of a professional police force ushered in a series of mysteries that were investigated by police detectives, such as Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* in 1853 and Wilkie Collins's 1868 *The Moonstone*. Nevertheless, England's infatuation with private detectives continued throughout the 20th century, most notably with the prolific Agatha Christie, whose two detective protagonists Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple solved over one hundred mysteries between them. In fact, the post-WWI period was known as the Golden Age of Detective Fiction, and the genre became immensely popular in England, France, and the United States.

Historical Context

Historical Context of A Scandal in Bohemia

The Victorian era in England was a time of immense progress and change, especially in terms of crime and punishment. Crime rates were consistently on the rise during the end of the 18th and throughout the 19th century, especially as more people moved into larger cities like London, and people of varying social classes lived closer together. The first police force in London was established in 1829, and many of the early "bobbies" were hardly qualified to investigate crimes, and there was little trust in the institution for decades. In the counties and boroughs, police forces were not set up until the second half of the 19th century, thanks to the Police Act of 1856. In the absence of a competent police force, many crimes were investigated by the victims themselves, while those who had the means to pay would contract a private investigator. There were also major advancements in science and technology, and many believe that Sherlock Holmes's deductive method is rooted in this burgeoning faith in science to cure social ills. Finally, this was also a time of rapid growth of the middle class in England, and many readers may have admired and related to the character of Dr. John Watson, a veteran of the Second Afghan War and a member of the new professional class.

