



Sherlock Holmes: The Major Stories with Contemporary Critical Essays (Bedford Series in History & Culture)

By Arthur Conan Doyle

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The fifteen Sherlock Holmes stories reprinted in this volume are generally held to be the most significant, innovative and influential tales featuring Arthur Conan Doyle's archetypal detective. Drawn principally from the first three Holmes collections, these selections are each followed by a concise commentary on its relation to Doyle, other Holmes tales, and the genre of detective fiction. The nine accompanying essays, which reflect the recent critical interest in Holmes, examine the stories from a variety of contemporary critical perspectives. The first five essays (by Martin Priestamn, Peter Brooks, Gian Paolo Caprettini, John A. Hodgson, and Alastair Fowler) focus in questions of narrative, deduction, and plot; the next four (by Stephen Knight, Catherine Belsey, Rosemary Hennessy and Rajeswari Mohan, and Audry Jaffe) social, historical, ideological, and gender issues. Each critical essay is preceded by a headnote that discusses the essay's critical approach. An introduction by the editor discusses the relation of Sherlock Holmes to Doyle's own life, reviews the history of the stories' publication and reception, and provides a brief overview of the contemporary critical essays. Additional sources of enrichment and direction for further study are provided by the four appendices: a chronology of Doyle's life; a note on Doyle's favorite Holmes stories; an annotated bibliography of Holmes collections and critical studies; and a list of film and video versions of the stories in the book.

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