

***Connecting Detectives***

Investigation of the Extent to Which Arthur Conan Doyle Was Influenced by  
Edgar Allan Poe's Detective Auguste Dupin When Creating Sherlock Holmes

Eline Van laethem

Student number: 01301339

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Gert Buelens

A dissertation submitted to Ghent University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of "Master in de Taal-en Letterkunde: Engels-Italiaans"

Academic year: 2016-2017



## **Acknowledgements**

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Gert Buelens. His continuous guidance and valuable feedback undoubtedly helped me in writing and completing this dissertation.

I am also very grateful to my parents for supporting me and proofreading my dissertation, and I appreciated the encouragement from my friends and fellow students.

Lastly, I am also indebted to Arthur Conan Doyle and Edgar Allan Poe, whose stories have fascinated me for many years and sparked a desire to explore some of them in more detail.

## **Table of Contents**

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Detective Fiction in the Nineteenth Century .....	5
2.1	Detective Fiction: a Definition.....	5
2.2	Origins of the Detective Genre .....	7
2.3	Evolution of Detective Fiction in the Nineteenth Century .....	9
2.3.1	Charles Dickens.....	10
2.3.2	Wilkie Collins .....	13
2.3.3	Émile Gaboriau.....	16
2.3.4	Innovative Women Writers .....	17
2.3.5	Arthur Conan Doyle.....	18
3	A Comparison between C. Auguste Dupin and Sherlock Holmes .....	20
3.1	The Character of the Detective .....	20
3.1.1	Personality and Lifestyle of Auguste Dupin.....	21
3.1.2	Personality and Lifestyle of Sherlock Holmes and the Link with Dupin.....	25
3.1.3	Profession: Consulting Detective .....	29
3.2	The Relationship between the Detective and Narrator .....	33
3.2.1	The Relationship between Sherlock Holmes and John Watson .....	33
3.2.2	Paralleling the Relationship between Auguste Dupin and Narrator with the One between Sherlock Holmes and John Watson.....	41
3.3	Methods of Investigation .....	49
3.3.1	Dupin and Holmes.....	49
3.3.2	Holmes and Science: Dr. Bell.....	59
3.4	Interaction of Dupin and Holmes (and Poe and Doyle) with Nineteenth-Century Print Media .....	63
4	Conclusion.....	73
	Works Cited .....	77

(24 849 words)

## 1 Introduction

“Poe’s masterful detective, M. Dupin, had from boyhood been one of my heroes” (Doyle *Memories and Adventures* 74).

Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes is without a doubt one of the most well-known fictional detectives ever created. Even though Doyle’s detective stories emerged in the nineteenth century, they remain significant today, with modern books and television series drawing inspiration from them. Just as Doyle inspired numerous writers to follow his example, it is known that Doyle himself was influenced by a few people to write his detective fiction. One of these people was Edgar Allan Poe, who wrote detective short stories featuring the character of C. Auguste Dupin. Dupin is even briefly introduced in Doyle’s novel *A Study in Scarlet*, when Dr. Watson declares that Holmes reminds him of Poe’s detective. However, Holmes responds he does not think highly of Dupin and he considers him to be “a very inferior fellow” (Doyle *A Study* 16). Since many readers believed that Holmes’s opinion was consequently also that of his creator, they regarded Doyle as self-conceited for not acknowledging the impact that Poe had on him (González-Moreno 64-65). Some even started to accuse Doyle of plagiarism, with a headline in *The New York Times* questioning: “Is Conan Doyle a plagiarist?” (qtd. in González-Moreno 63). Doyle himself, however, unlike his famous detective, paid tribute to Poe on several occasions. At a certain point, he responded to one of his critics as follows: “Have you not learned, my esteemed commentator, that the created is not the creator? As the creator I’ve praised to satiety Poe’s Monsieur Dupin, his skill and variety, and have admitted that in my detective work, I owe to my model a deal of selective work” (qtd. in González-Moreno 65). According to Doyle, Poe had created the ideal detective, and he even considered it a necessity to follow in the same track (González-Moreno

60). Especially Poe's first detective short story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", contains "almost a complete manual of detective theory and practice", of which many elements are present in Doyle's stories, such as the eccentric but brilliant detective with analytical talents, the admiring narrator, and the "locked-room" mystery (qtd. in González-Moreno 60). When an interviewer directly asked Doyle whether he was influenced by Poe, he wholeheartedly confirmed his admiration for Poe's detective:

"Now, weren't you influenced by Edgar Allan Poe when you wrote Sherlock Holmes?" Asked the reporter? ... 'Oh, immensely! His detective is the best detective in fiction.' 'Except Sherlock Holmes,' said somebody. 'I make no exception,' said Dr Doyle very earnestly. 'Dupin is unrivalled. It was Poe who taught the possibility of making a detective story a work of literature'" (qtd. in González-Moreno 59).

Having given an account of some of Doyle's numerous indications of respect towards Poe, this dissertation will mainly focus on a comparison between the two fictional characters Auguste Dupin and Sherlock Holmes. I will investigate to what extent Doyle was influenced by Poe's Auguste Dupin when creating Sherlock Holmes, by looking at certain aspects that characterise the detective stories. In my research, I will take into account the wider context in which the stories were written to arrive at the right conclusions about possible reproductions or adaptations. With my study, I hope to unravel various affinities between Poe's and Doyle's detectives. Furthermore, the comparison may also reveal that for certain aspects Doyle did not look to Poe for inspiration or that he adapted Poe's stories to his own *zeitgeist*.

The dissertation is structured as follows. Firstly, a historical framework of nineteenth-century detective fiction, in which I outline some definitions and important works of the genre, will be indispensable in order to understand the position of Poe's and Doyle's stories in

the wider context of the detective genre. Despite the focus on Poe as a source of inspiration for Doyle, the influence that other authors, such as Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins and Émile Gaboriau, had on Doyle's stories will not be discarded (Liebow 4). A selection of authors that inspired Doyle will therefore be presented in these historical chapters to create a broad perspective on the discussion of the two chosen detectives. Furthermore, some of the aspects that will be touched upon in these first chapters will be elaborated on, or referred back to, in succeeding chapters. Secondly, I will zoom in on a specific comparison between Dupin and Holmes by looking at various aspects that characterise the stories in which they appear. Firstly, the character of the detective will be looked at to see whether there are similarities in Dupin's and Holmes's personalities and in their ways of working. Various works that feature detectives, which will be outlined in the historical chapters, will briefly be examined in this chapter to see if the traits that characterise Dupin and Holmes can also be found in other detectives of the period. Furthermore, I will study the relationship between detective and narrator, which will be linked to the concept of "homosociality". Subsequently, Dupin's and Holmes's methods of investigation will be inspected by taking into account the development of science in the nineteenth century. Finally, the interaction of the detectives and their authors with contemporary media will be compared. Again, the wider context of the stories will be included, in particular the change that print media experienced in the nineteenth century.

In order to explore the aspects suggested, I plan to use evidence from specific excerpts from the Dupin and Holmes stories. With regard to Edgar Allan Poe, I will analyse the three short stories that feature detective Dupin, which are: "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt" (1843) and "The Purloined Letter" (1844). With respect to Arthur Conan Doyle, the first two Sherlock Holmes novels seem most relevant, because in these novels the reader gets a first insight into the character of Holmes, through descriptions by and impressions of other characters. A similar insight into the character of

Dupin is created in the three short stories of Poe, especially in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”. Doyle’s novels that I will examine more closely are *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) and *The Sign of the Four* (1890). Furthermore, also Doyle’s short stories “A Scandal in Bohemia” (1891) and “The Speckled Band” (1892) will be taken into account. Since Doyle’s short stories were highly popular with contemporary readers, and can be compared to the literary medium used by Poe, it seems relevant to look at some of Doyle’s earliest stories in my research.

With the results of my dissertation I hope to show to what extent Doyle was inspired by Poe’s detective Auguste Dupin when creating Sherlock Holmes. Even though various academics have acknowledged Poe’s influence on Doyle’s stories before, I think a specific comparison between the two detective characters that the authors created, leaves some room for exploration. Moreover, linking the stories to the context in which they were written, both the context of the detective genre and nineteenth-century developments in society might offer an interesting perspective on the discussion of the detectives. Despite the fact that there will probably be several similarities between Dupin and Holmes, I am convinced there are also some interesting differences, among other things because of the different context in which the authors wrote. Moreover, some chapters may also reveal that Doyle was not entirely inspired by Poe for some aspects of his detective. Since Sherlock Holmes remains one of the most popular characters in literature, it is interesting to trace back how he originated. Moreover, without Dupin as a predecessor, Holmes as we know him might never even have existed.



## 2 Detective Fiction in the Nineteenth Century

### 2.1 Detective Fiction: a Definition

In *Detective Fiction* (2005), Charles Rzepka rather loosely defines detective fiction as “any story that contains a major character undertaking the investigation of a mysterious crime or similar transgression” (12). Even though this definition comprises key aspects of detective fiction, it can be applied to many stories, ranging from *Oedipus* to *Hamlet*. Elaborating on his definition, Rzepka implies that most detective fiction, as we understand it today, starts with the outlay of a mystery (which is not always technically a crime) and then moves backwards, all the while prioritising the character of the detective who tries to solve the mystery with his investigation (10). Additionally, the stories may involve the reader’s participation in the investigation; “they may or may not have a ‘puzzle element’” (Rzepka 12). Certain stories, however, do not provide enough vital information for the reader to arrive at a solution before the author offers it (Rzepka 11). In that case, the reader’s pleasure mainly derives from his admiration for the detective’s rational powers and from his curiosity regarding the mystery (Grella 32).

Detective fiction has various different subgenres. An in-depth analysis of all these genres would lead us too far. However, I will briefly distinguish two relevant types. In this dissertation, I will focus on Poe’s and Doyle’s detective stories, which are examples of the traditional problem-solving detective story, also called the formal detective story (Grella 35-36). In “Murder and Manners: The Formal Detective Novel” (1970), George Grella notices a recurring pattern in the formal detective story, and he goes into more detail about some of its general characteristics. According to Grella, a formal detective novel mainly deals with a “virtually changeless combination of characters, setting, and events familiar to every reader in

the English speaking world” (30). Typically, a group of people who find themselves in an isolated place discover that someone in their circle has been murdered (Grella 30). Regular investigations by the police do not lead to any solutions because no one tells the truth and everyone seems to be a suspect (Grella 30). An intelligent, often unofficial, detective is then summoned to inspect the evidence and talk to the suspects (Grella 30). Eventually, the story builds up to a climax in which the unofficial investigator reveals the murderer (Grella 30). Grella states that this type of story development is able to describe “almost every formal detective novel, the best as well as the worst; whatever the variations, the form remains” (30-31). Furthermore, the typical villain of the detective novel is usually not a criminal but rather an ordinary citizen (Grella 33). Because of the centralised mystery, many have come to refer to the formal detective story as the so-called “pure puzzle” or “whodunit” (Grella 30).

Another relevant subgenre of detective fiction is the police procedural. According to Scaggs, the “pure” police procedural, which foregrounds the policeman, only began to develop from the second half of the twentieth century onwards (85). However, Scaggs notes that “proto-procedurals” can already be found in the nineteenth century, with Émile Gaboriau among its earliest practitioners (87). Despite the police procedural’s similarities with the formal detective story, a clear distinction has to be made between both subgenres. George Dove distinguishes five important components in the police procedural’s formula (113). Firstly, unlike the genius of the classic problem-solving detective story, the police officers in the police procedural lack intellectual brilliance and are overall incapable of heroic action, despite the fact that they are competent detectives (Dove 113). Secondly, police work in the procedural is seen as hard and unrewarding work (Dove 113). Thirdly, the police detectives are “bound together for mutual protection against the hostile public, the criminal world, and the Police Establishment” (Dove 113). This component again underlines an important difference with the formal detective story, since a detective like Sherlock Holmes, despite

having Dr. Watson as his assistant, is essentially a “loner” (Dove 125). Fourthly, even if carefully practised, there is the assumption that police detection mainly depends upon chance (Dove 113). This is again different from the formal detective story, which does not allow the element of chance “to play a determinant role” (Dove 125). Lastly, detection in the police procedural is very much dependent upon time; there is the idea that “if a case is not solved quickly it will not be solved at all” (Dove 113). The formal detective story on the other hand runs a lot slower, focusing on thought processes instead of on action (Dove 129-130). Dove notes that within a given story, some of the general components of the procedural’s formula may be contradicted (114).

## 2.2 Origins of the Detective Genre

The origins of the detective genre can be traced back far in time. Rzepka even argues that detective fiction prototypes may be found in the form of the Jewish Apocrypha’s stories of Daniel (16). However, in this concise chapter I will mainly focus on the nineteenth century, as this is the period that saw the “official” start of the formal detective genre, the genre that I will focus on in this dissertation.

In “THE USUAL SUSPECT: Edgar Allan Poe, Consulting Detective” (2007), Arthur Krystal states that critics generally agree on the fact that Edgar Allan Poe was the initiator of the formal detective story (83). In Poe’s “tales of ratiocination”, which comprise five short stories about “the analytical and imaginative thinker”, all the conventions of detective fiction as we know it take shape (Krystal 87). Up until “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841), which features detective C. Auguste Dupin, the technique of holding back the identity of a murderer and letting a fictional detective decipher it had not come up in literature before (Krystal 83). Edgar Allan Poe was therefore the first author to talk about murder as an

intellectual exercise, from the perspective of a detective genius; “murder most foul could now become murder most ingenious” (Krystal 83). Whereas earlier crime fiction centred on the criminal or the victim of a crime, Poe focused on the character of the detective and his ingenious methods for solving certain mysteries (Krystal 83). Moreover, his creation of a genius fictional detective and his rather naïve “side-kick”, formed an example for many detective stories to follow (Krystal 83). Additionally, some of the murders in Poe’s stories take place in a seemingly locked room, an innocent man is accused based on false clues, the murderer turns out to be the most unlikely person and seemingly irrelevant details are able to solve the mystery (Krystal 83). Finally, it is in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” that two major principles of detective fiction, which continue to be introduced into modern stories, are mentioned: “(1) When all impossible scenarios have been eliminated, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the answer; and (2) The more bizarre the crime, the simpler its solution” (Krystal 83). Kennedy mentions it is problematic to determine the origin of Poe’s interest in ratiocination (185). However, the *Mémoires* of François-Eugène Vidocq, a former French criminal, probably helped stimulate Poe’s curiosity about crime and its investigation (Kennedy 185). According to Valentine Williams, Vidocq can even be considered Poe’s “fount of inspiration” for his detective short stories (qtd. in Kennedy 185-186). Moreover, in 1811, Vidocq installed the first detective bureau, the *Brigade de la Sûreté*, in Paris, which is probably the reason why Poe’s Dupin stories are set in France’s capital (Sims).

Even though Poe may have received the credit for writing the first proper detective stories, he did not invent stories about detectives (Bell 197). Detective characters occurred in literature before Poe created his Auguste Dupin, even though they often appeared as peripheral characters in stories that did not yet belong to a detective genre (Bell 197). According to Binyon, these detective characters were essential for the development of detective fiction since “the genre grew out of the character, rather than vice versa” (1). In

1719 for example, Louis de Mailly introduced three princes with deductive powers in a work that is now considered an “archetypal example of the deductive method”: *Les Trois Princes de Serendip*<sup>1</sup> (Binyon 2). The creation of the first true crime novel is often ascribed to William Godwin, who wrote *The Adventures of Caleb Williams* at the end of the eighteenth century (Binyon 3). Also at the end of the eighteenth century, Ann Radcliffe’s novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* appeared, which is said to be “a detective story prototype” (Rzepka 10). Even though the works cited here all contain some aspects that are present in detective stories, they do not yet belong to a detective genre. The works all introduce detectives and criminals, but Poe was the first author to focus on the thought processes of a detective protagonist who carries the entire narrative (Krystal 83).

### 2.3 Evolution of Detective Fiction in the Nineteenth Century

After Edgar Allan Poe’s introduction of C. Auguste Dupin, some writers started experimenting with Poe’s detective story structure (Nickerson 29). In earlier fiction, crime took a prominent role in the plot structure of stories, however, from the 1840s onwards, authors started to focus more on the investigation of a crime, rather than on the criminal (Ousby 81). Moreover, in the 1840s and 1850s, changes in Victorian society regarding law, crime, journalism, and especially the establishment of a Detective Department in London in 1842, led to the publication of various detective memoirs and to appearances of fictional police detectives (Rzepka 68). Many authors were intrigued by the newly created Detective Department, which is why real-life crimes investigated by the police were often adapted to fictional purposes (Ousby 80-81). Vast readerships followed these real-life urban crime stories through the metropolitan daily newspaper (Ranchman 19). In the same way, Poe’s

---

<sup>1</sup> This work of Louis de Mailly led to the word “serendipity”, which labels the type of discovery that the princes made: by chance rather than by strong deductive powers (“Serendipity”).

detective Auguste Dupin, just like “ordinary” nineteenth-century readers, becomes familiar with crimes through the city newspapers (Ranchman 20). By analysing newspaper reports on crime cases, the mysteries of the great city suddenly became legible to a large group of people (Ranchman 25). This link between detective fiction and newspapers will be further investigated in chapter 3.4 regarding the detective’s interaction with print media.

After Poe’s Dupin, many fictional detectives started to appear both in detective stories and in other stories where they emerged as minor characters (Bell 197). Apart from police recollections and memoirs, detective stories were usually included within other types of Victorian literary genres, such as the historical novel, the Gothic story and the Newgate novel (Rzepka 99). Detective stories frequently remained “hidden” within different types of dominant literary genres until the success of Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes tales in the later nineteenth century (Rzepka 99). One of the literary genres that lent itself easily to an insertion of detectives was the sensation novel (Ousby 80). This genre aimed at “thrilling” the reader by means of sensational effects, and a detective subplot was often inserted to achieve this aim (Ousby 80).

In what follows, I will look at some significant authors that succeeded Edgar Allan Poe and preceded Arthur Conan Doyle in making a contribution to the detective genre. Moreover, the authors I have selected are known to have inspired Conan Doyle when he created his detective stories.

### 2.3.1 Charles Dickens

With his interest in crime, mystery and detection, Charles Dickens contributed not only to the general development of dominant literary genres like sensation fiction, but also to the formation of the detective figure (Ousby 82). According to Lyn Pykett, Dickens’s attention to

social outsiders, and particularly to murderers and thieves, mainly served to “shock the middle-class readers into seeing aspects of city life which they would normally not encounter, or would pass by with averted gaze” (27). Puzzle solving for Dickens therefore became a way to critique certain aspects of Victorian society (Van Leer 66). Newgate literature, contemporary newspaper police reports, articles on crime, and Dickens’s own observations all influenced his criminal types and scenes (Pykett 27-28). I will zoom in on three works of Dickens’s that are relevant for a discussion of detective fiction.

In Dickens’s earliest works detectives are introduced only briefly (Ousby 82). According to Ian Ousby, the first portrayal of a serious detective character is linked to the novel *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-1844) (82). The detective in this story, Nadgett, is able to unravel the criminal acts of a character called Jonas Chuzzlewit (Ousby 82). However, Nadgett is anything but a sympathetic character; he is “a short, dried-up, withered, old man” and a rather mysterious, sinister figure (qtd. in Ousby 82-83). Dickens lets Nadgett embody the negative attitudes people had of detectives before the establishment of the Detective Department, an invention that led to a reevaluation of the figure of the detective (Ousby 83). Furthermore, Nadgett is part of the novel’s urban environment: “he belonged to a class; a race peculiar to the city” (Ousby 84).

In the years 1850-1853, Dickens wrote various articles regarding police work, often based on anecdotes he gathered from meetings with detectives of the Police Department (Ousby 85-86). These articles were bundled in a new magazine, *Household Words*, which included texts such as “A Detective Police Party”, “Three Detective Anecdotes”, and “On Duty with Inspector Field” (Ousby 85-86). The detective characters in the articles are shown to be familiar with criminal low life, and they enjoy “picaresque adventures” (Ousby 87). Moreover, “their methods are acting, disguise, and trickery” (Ousby 87). From Dickens’s articles it becomes clear that he respected the work of detectives and thought of the newly

established organised police and detective forces as a welcome change: "... so well chosen and trained, proceeds so systematically and quietly, does its business in such a workmanlike manner, and is always so calmly and steadily engaged in the service of the public, that the public really do not know enough of it, to know a tithe of its usefulness" (qtd. in Ousby 88). Apart from an admiration for the detective's efficiency, Dickens was also impressed with the adventurous side of a detective's life (Ousby 89).

Lastly, the creation of one of the first police detectives in English fiction is ascribed to Dickens, who introduced the character of Inspector Bucket in *Bleak House* (1852-1853) (Binyon 3). Inspector Bucket is a police detective who investigates various mysteries in the course of the novel, in particular the murder of Mr Tulkinghorn (Ousby 97). The character was probably based on Inspector Field, a real English inspector who was head of the Detective Department and one of the best-known detectives in the mid-nineteenth century (Ousby 86). However, unlike Poe's Auguste Dupin, Inspector Bucket is not the central character in the novel in which he appears, and *Bleak House* can therefore not be considered a detective story in the strict sense of the term (Binyon 5). A historian of the genre states that the innovation in Dickens's novel "was simply to have made 'an important part of [his] plot depend on the work of police detectives, sympathetically presented'" (qtd. in Walton 456). Inspector Bucket is described as follows when he first appears in the story: "with his attentive face, and his hat and stick in his hands, and his hands behind him, a composed and quiet listener ... Except that he looks at Mr. Snagsby as if he were going to take his portrait, there is nothing very remarkable about him at first sight but his ghostly manner of appearing" (qtd. in Ousby 97). According to Walton, Inspector Bucket can best be described as a (lower) middle-class "detective-hero in an urban setting" who is familiar with "low" life and is able to easily adapt to all levels of society (456). He has an insight in other people's characters and is able to adjust his own personality to the person he is talking to (Ousby 99-100). Moreover, Bucket



embodies English admiration for professional skill and efficiency (Walton 458). The “stoutly built, steady-looking, sharp-eyed” Bucket takes pride in his work, which can be seen in his introduction of himself: “I am Inspector Bucket of the Detective, I am” (qtd. in Walton 458).

### 2.3.2 Wilkie Collins

In 1948, T.S. Eliot observed that “as far as detective fiction is concerned, nearly everything can be traced to two authors: Poe and Wilkie Collins” (qtd. in MacDonald 64). Eliot even stated that Wilkie Collins’s novel *The Moonstone* (1868) was “the first and greatest of English detective novels” (qtd. in Binyon 4). In *The Moonstone*, Collins introduces a professional detective, Sgt. Cuff, to the literary field (Binyon 2-3). In many ways, Sgt. Cuff is similar to numerous modern detectives. In particular Cuff’s love for roses makes him a precursor to the “humanised detective” with odd and eccentric identity traits (Ashley 52). However, as was the case with Dickens’s inspector Bucket, Sgt. Cuff is only one of many characters in Collins’s novel, even though the character plays a more important role than Bucket does in *Bleak House* (Binyon 4). Apart from the fact that Cuff is not the central character in the novel, he also does not succeed in solving the crime in the end (Ashley 52). These aspects show that *The Moonstone* is not entirely a formal detective story as we intend it today (Ashley 52). Nevertheless, Wilkie Collins is an innovator in the field of detective fiction since his novel contains a lot of stock devices of the detective story (Ashley 53). Some of these conventions were not invented by Collins himself but were, among other things, derived from Edgar Allan Poe (Ashley 53). Moreover, Robert Ashley sees Collins as “the link between Poe and Conan Doyle” (Ashley 53). The “humanised detective” who is eccentric is one of the conventions that we find in modern examples of detective stories (Ashley 53). Furthermore, Collins surprised his readers by turning the narrator into the criminal of the story. By doing this, he

introduced the “least-likely person motif” which can be found in most detective stories succeeding *The Moonstone* (Ashley 52). In addition to these conventions, Ashley sums up other important aspects like “the altercation between the incompetent local police and the efficient city police, the solution by an amateur of a crime which a professional has failed to solve, the difficulties caused by a character’s withholding vital evidence, the scientific reconstruction of the crime, the detective’s summation of the case, and the skillful shifting of suspicion from person to person” (Ashley 53). Lastly, *The Moonstone* is innovative because even after the exposure of the criminal’s identity, the mystery is prolonged until it is explained how the crime was committed (Ashley 52). Apart from *The Moonstone*, Wilkie Collins wrote a number of other significant works, which introduce themes and motifs typical for detective fiction. I will here briefly include three of his most relevant works.

Collins’s short story “A Stolen Letter” (1854), features a skilful (amateur) detective Mr. Boxsious, who tries to recover a stolen letter, which a villain wants to use to blackmail the detective’s client (Ashley 48-49). The plot is reminiscent of Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Purloined Letter”, which suggests that Collins was inspired by Poe to write his story (Ashley 49). “A Stolen Letter” can be considered a pure detective story since the protagonist Mr Boxsious investigates a mystery and eventually retrieves the stolen letter (Ashley 49). In solving the mystery, he defies the villain’s plans of blackmail (Ashley 49).

Apart from experimenting with the detective story structure, Collins innovated the new-established genre by introducing the first female detective in “The Diary of Anne Rodway” (1859) (Ashley 50). In this murder mystery, Anne Rodway tries to find the murderer of her friend and wants to make him pay for what he has done (Ashley 50). She eventually identifies the murderer and brings him to justice, although more based on luck and perseverance than on any special detection skills (Ashley 50).

Lastly, in *My Lady's Money* (1878) we are introduced to a humanised detective called Old Sharon, who belongs in a line of eccentric detectives with unusual identity traits (Ashley 56-57). He smokes a pipe, a pug dog accompanies him, and he is carrying a French novel when he appears for the first time (Ashley 57). Furthermore, he does not like the police and helps them solve complex crimes that they do not understand (Ashley 57). Old Sharon, like Auguste Dupin, is able to decompose any mystery with his detection skills (Ashley 57). He is able to identify the criminal even without personally visiting the crime scene or questioning the suspects, but he refuses to reveal his observations until he can prove his solution (Ashley 57). More than relying on ordinary police methods, he focuses on character analysis (Ashley 57). Furthermore, he is an expert in disguising himself and, as in *The Moonstone*, the “least-likely person motif” is introduced when Old Sharon says: “suspect ... the very last person on whom suspicion could possibly fall” (qtd. in Ashley 57). As can be seen from this description, Old Sharon shares a lot of his character traits with many a sleuth succeeding him, including Sherlock Holmes.

The foregoing summary of Collins's works shows that despite his many innovations, most of the time he did not write pure detective fiction, as we understand it today (Ashley 60). According to Ashley, the reason for this needs to be sought in the fact that Collins was not aware there existed a genre like detective fiction (60). He was mainly inspired by Victorian sensation fiction, and in his attempts to write “thrilling” stories with mysterious plots he adopted many themes and motifs that would become standard elements of detective fiction (Ashley 60).

### 2.3.3 Émile Gaboriau

As Rzepka notes, the reputation of the official police and of Scotland Yard, which was established around the time of Poe's first detective story, starts to diminish from the 1860s onwards (111). The population's faith in the efficiency of the official police investigators was not reassured, especially when several corruption scandals and unsolved cases were widely publicised (Rzepka 111). Moreover, the unsolved murders of Jack the Ripper in 1888 was a definite sign for people that official police investigators had failed (Rzepka 111). Nevertheless, stories about detectives did not fade away in the 1870s (Rzepka 111). The rather hostile and cynical attitude towards police detectives led to the introduction of various "bumbling, bureaucratic police investigators" in fiction (Rzepka 111). Especially in America, detective figures remained popular (Rzepka 111). The characters featured in so-called "dime novels" which were mostly directed towards a lower-class audience (Rzepka 111-112). Furthermore, in 1874, Allan Pinkerton, head of his own Detective agency, initiated a series of real-life detective novels, which promoted the hired investigator (Rzepka 112).

In France, the development of detective fiction saw a height when Émile Gaboriau introduced his detective Monsieur Lecoq. Even though Inspector Bucket in *Bleak House* and Sergeant Cuff in *The Moonstone* are significant in the development of detective fiction, it is not until the appearance of Émile Gaboriau's Monsieur Lecoq that a detective becomes the central character in a novel that entirely belongs to the detective genre (Binyon 5). According to Binyon, it is Lecoq who can be considered "the first modern police detective": he uses science to examine the evidence he finds, he adopts a method of logical reasoning, and he works together with police forces to solve mysteries (Binyon 5). *Monsieur Lecoq* (1869; in English, 1888) is the first of Gaboriau's novels in which a professional detective appears as the central character (Binyon 6). In the work, Lecoq has to identify a man who is accused of

triple murder and an unreliable colleague helps him with his investigations (Binyon 6). However, Binyon notes that Gaboriau's depiction of Lecoq is very inconsistent, so that he often appears as different characters (6).

#### 2.3.4 Innovative Women Writers

This chapter will briefly deal with some innovative nineteenth-century women writers who experimented with the detective story structure and who created a style that can be referred to as "domestic detective fiction" (Nickerson 29). Into the old-established tradition of gothic fiction, sensation novels, and the domestic novel, some female authors inserted the detective figure and detective fiction's narrative structure (Nickerson 29-30).

Louisa May Alcott's short story "V.V., or Plots and Counterplots" (1865) is a thriller that introduces the private investigator Antoine Dupres, who was clearly created on the basis of Edgar Allan Poe's Auguste Dupin (Nickerson 31). Alcott is especially interested in creativity and in constructing various plots and subplots, which create entanglements (Nickerson 31).

The two detective novels *The Dead Letter* (1867) and *The Figure Eight* (1869), written by Metta Fuller Victor, can be considered the first full-length American detective novels, based on the detective short story structure as envisaged by Poe (Nickerson 31). Victor's novels introduce brutal crime into a seemingly quiet and wealthy environment, a plot that would become characteristic of other domestic detective stories (Nickerson 31).

Anna Katharine Green wrote various novels featuring male narrators and detectives, of which the most famous one is *The Leavenworth Case* (1878) (Nickerson 33-34). Furthermore, her first female detective, Amelia Butterworth, would become the prototype of the "spinster-

sleuth” (Nickerson 34). Green’s contribution to the field of detective fiction granted her the name of “The Mother of Detective Fiction” (Rzepka 112).

### 2.3.5 Arthur Conan Doyle

The foregoing chapters show that authors such as Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins clearly influenced the field of detective fiction. However, we have to wait until 1887 to be introduced to the first fully developed English fictional detective who carries the entire narrative (Bell 199). 1887 was the year in which the young doctor Arthur Conan Doyle wrote a short novel that contained all the different aspects of future formal detective stories: a consulting detective, who solves mysteries based on his brilliant contemplations, all the while aided by a friend who recounts the events and marvels at his friend’s rational powers (Bell 199). Holmes is the first in a series of great modern detectives, and undoubtedly one of the best known (Binyon 11). Popular ideas of what a detective should be, are influenced by the way Sherlock Holmes was portrayed: “a tall, thin, eagle-eyed figure in cloak and deerstalker, with magnifying glass in one hand and pipe in the other” (Binyon 11). The authors mentioned in the previous chapters are all known to have influenced Doyle when he created his detective stories. According to Liebow, Doyle “had spent his early years in vigorous exercise and vigorous reading. He had read not only Poe, Gaboriau, and Collins, but he digested them” (4). Gilbert mentions that characters like Dupin, Bucket, Lecoq and Cuff were all examples for Doyle when he decided to create Holmes (378).

Apart from creating an illustrious detective, Conan Doyle’s other contribution to the field of detective fiction was to have created a series of short stories featuring the same main characters, instead of writing the traditional novel in serial form (Binyon 12). Furthermore, he published his first Sherlock Holmes short stories in the newly established *The Strand*

*Magazine* in 1891 (Binyon 12). Part of the reason for short stories' popularity from the 1870s onwards was the "spread of the British urban commuter railway, which had begun to create a market for shorter entertainment in transit" (Rzepka 112). Reading short stories suitable to the duration of a ride, became the most appropriate pastime when travelling to and from the city (Rzepka 112).

### 3 A Comparison between C. Auguste Dupin and Sherlock Holmes

As has become clear from the historical overview of authors who made a significant contribution to detective fiction in the nineteenth century, Edgar Allan Poe's stories regarding C. Auguste Dupin can be seen as the "official" starting point of the detective genre. Arthur Conan Doyle's stories about Sherlock Holmes on the other hand can be considered a peak in the nineteenth-century development of the genre. The following chapters will investigate in what ways Arthur Conan Doyle was inspired by Poe's detective C. Auguste Dupin to create Sherlock Holmes. A number of aspects will be looked at; in particular the detective's character, the relationship between detective and narrator, the detective's methods of analysis and the detective's interaction with print media. By looking at these aspects, I want to see to what extent Doyle reproduced aspects of Poe's stories and if works of the authors mentioned in the previous historical framework also had something to do with the way the Sherlock Holmes stories were created. Moreover, each of the chosen aspects will be accompanied by a discussion of the context in which Poe's and Doyle's stories were written.

#### 3.1 The Character of the Detective

In order to understand in what ways Arthur Conan Doyle might have reproduced or adapted aspects of Edgar Allan Poe's detective, it is important to first develop a brief general impression of Dupin's and Holmes's affinities and differences. This chapter will look at the personality and lifestyle of both Dupin and Holmes, which is described by the narrators of the stories. Furthermore, the profession of detective will be examined to see the similarities and differences between Dupin's and Holmes's ways of working. Some works mentioned in the historical framework will briefly be examined to see if traits that characterise Dupin and



Holmes can also be found in other detectives of the period. Some aspects that will be touched upon in this chapter will be further elaborated on in the following chapters, such as the relationship between detective and narrator, and the detective's methods of investigation.

### 3.1.1 Personality and Lifestyle of Auguste Dupin

By creating a peculiar character with astonishing reasoning powers, Poe produced “the prototype of the great detective” (Binyon 5). Naturally, the focus in Dupin's character lies on his almost “godlike genius” with which he is able to solve the mysteries that he encounters (Joswick 240). Poe's detective possesses “the highest and most comprehensive order of mind, includes in himself all possible lesser minds, and can therefore fathom any man – indeed, any primate – by mere introspection” (qtd. in Joswick 240). At first sight, Poe's “tales of ratiocination” featuring Dupin seem to stand out from the rest of the author's work, which often centres on the supernatural and on terror. However, the world of Dupin, which is permeated with mystery and fear, comes quite close to the world created in Poe's tales of horror (Punter 2). The difference is linked to the fact that the tales of ratiocination introduce a detective who offers comfort because he is able to resolve certain fears rationally (Punter 2). According to Elliot Gilbert, “the extraordinary attraction of the detective story for Poe lay in the fact that it appealed both to his preoccupation with horror and death and his fascination with reason and logic” (375).

Joswick notes that Dupin's extraordinary reasoning powers also reveal a darker side to his character, which is developed mostly in “The Purloined Letter” (244). In this tale, Dupin displays an ability to identify and sympathise with a criminal's mind (Joswick 244). The plot of the story revolves around the search for a letter that was stolen and hidden by a well-known minister. Dupin receives the task of retrieving the letter, since the many searches of the police

have proven to be unsuccessful. The detective quickly figures out where to look because he is able to transport himself into the mind of his adversary. He understands that the minister has hidden the letter by not hiding it at all. With regard to the Prefect of the police, Dupin says: “He never once thought it probable, or possible, that the Minister had deposited the letter immediately beneath the nose of the whole world, by way of best preventing any portion of that world from perceiving it” (Poe “The Purloined” 254). Even though Dupin is an extraordinary detective who uses his rational powers to “do good”, his ability to understand and identify with a criminal’s thoughts shows he might just as well stand on the other side of the law and be an equally extraordinary criminal (Joswick 245). According to Joswick this makes Dupin somewhat disturbing, as he has to be seen as someone who is both “aloof and darkly implicated in the mystery his reason seeks to unravel” (245).

Furthermore, James Werner observes certain affinities between the character of Dupin and the popular, yet somewhat obscure, literary figure of the flaneur (5). Poe lived in numerous metropolitan centres throughout his life, which made him familiar with “the practice of flanerie” (Werner 8). According to Werner, the flaneur adheres to the “pseudo-science” of physiognomy; he shows a talent for reading the facial features and external characteristics of someone, which he then links to the person’s inner qualities (5). Moreover, the flaneur is known for his “apparently detached, aimless, and desultory (but in reality, highly present and focused) observation” (Werner 5-6). With regard to the flaneur’s place in society, he is associated with the aristocracy and can best be described as an “outsider within the metropolis” who frequently strolls through the streets on his own and seems to be free of social obligations (Werner 6). Based on this description of the flaneur one can indeed notice similarities with detective Dupin. Poe’s Dupin, like the flaneur, is someone who pays special attention to details, in particular the details of people’s facial features and body language (Werner 10). In the first short story, Dupin compares his method to that of a card player: “He

notes every variation of face as the play progresses, gathering a fund of thought from the differences in the expression of certainty, of surprise, of triumph or chagrin” (Poe “The Murders” 108). However, I will not elaborate on Dupin’s specific methods of investigation here, since chapter 3.3 will be dedicated to this aspect of the detective’s character. Furthermore, Dupin is also associated with the aristocracy, which the narrator notes in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”: “This young gentleman was of an excellent, indeed of an illustrious family, but, by a variety of untoward events, had been reduced to such poverty that the energy of his character succumbed beneath it ... there still remained in his possession a small remnant of his patrimony” (Poe 109). Dupin’s association with the aristocracy, even though his family’s wealth has declined considerably, allows him to observe the city and its people without having to worry about time and resources (Werner 10). Sharing the flaneur’s eccentric side, Dupin refuses to fully integrate into society and prefers an isolate existence in an abandoned, rather mysterious part of Paris (Werner 10). The only person that he accepts as company is the unnamed narrator who lives with him: “Our seclusion was perfect. We admitted no visitors ... We existed within ourselves alone” (Poe “The Murders” 109-110). Furthermore, Dupin and the narrator also exhibit the flaneur’s behaviour of roaming the city and observing all of its aspects (Werner 10). The narrator describes that they roam “far and wide until a late hour, seeking, amid the wild lights and shadows of the populous city, that infinity of mental excitement which quiet observation can afford” (Poe “The Murders” 110). It seems clear that Dupin is presented as an outsider figure, as someone who does not really (want to) belong to society (Bloom 18). But it is precisely this, which creates an interestingly different perspective on society than the perspective of characters who are fully integrated into that society (Bloom 18). Like the flaneur, Dupin must remain somewhat detached in order to interpret the city (Werner 6). On the one hand he “must be immersed in the crowd” but on the other hand he “must remain aloof from it” (Werner 6).

Certain academics have suggested that Dupin has to be seen as a voice of reason rather than a fully developed “humanised” character. Ranchman for example, states that Poe was not interested in the character of the detective but in the detective’s “ratiocinative process” (21). Furthermore, Binyon affirms that Dupin is a pure detective, “little more than animated reason” (10). It is certainly true that the focus in the Dupin stories essentially lies on the detective’s genius and his methods of analysis. However, the previous paragraph already showed that there is more to Dupin’s character than his reasoning powers; he is also an individual with eccentric character traits. Poe introduced certain details into his stories that make Dupin a somewhat more complicated character than just reason incarnate. Joswick confirms that Poe’s detective is “a hero of ‘the Bi-Part Soul’ – a complex portrait of human character not to be reduced to mere ingenuity” (245). The unnamed narrator of Poe’s stories frequently says that Dupin tends to display very diverse moods, often refusing to speak for several hours: “I have said that the whims of my friend were manifold ... It was his humour, now, to decline all conversation on the subject of the murder until about noon the next day” (Poe “The Murders” 122). Moreover, the narrator also declares he has to endure Dupin’s whims and peculiarities: “into his *bizarrerie*, as into all his others, I quietly fell; giving myself up to his wild whims with a perfect abandon” (Poe “The Murders” 110). Based on these examples, Dupin can be described as a rather capricious and restless person. When he has a mystery with which to occupy himself, the detective is excited. At other times, however, especially when a case has come to an end, he displays a more depressed side to his personality: “Upon the winding up of the tragedy involved in the deaths of Madame L’Espanaye and her daughter, the Chevalier dismissed the affair at once from his attention, and relapsed into his old habits of moody reverie” (Poe “The Mystery” 724). Moreover, Dupin tends to frequently come out of his house at night, which shows he is also an insomniac. By introducing glimpses of Dupin’s human side, Poe created a detective who is

more than reason incarnate. Nevertheless, these human character traits remain somewhat “hidden” in the background and are not fully developed in the course of the stories. This is why we could say that, ultimately, Dupin was meant to be more of an academic figure rather than a human hero (Knight 369). Ranchman notes that Poe left it to other authors to further explore the character of the detective (21).

Overall, the foregoing account of Dupin’s character makes clear that he is a rather contradictory individual. On the one hand he is the person in Poe’s world assigned with the task of removing the veil of mystery that continues to characterise society. With his rational powers he seems to be the only one who is able to provide a sense of safety and security in a world filled with crime and insecurity. On the other hand, however, Dupin himself is a somewhat mysterious individual who refuses to be framed. With his rather “dark” and eccentric personality and lifestyle he seems to add to the mystery that already characterises Poe’s world and that he is supposed to elucidate.

### 3.1.2 Personality and Lifestyle of Sherlock Holmes and the Link with Dupin

According to Gilbert, in the first half of the nineteenth century, writers such as Vidocq and Dickens introduced detectives who were clever but whose virtues were limited (378-379). Furthermore, these detectives were not always superior to the criminals they pursued (Gilbert 379). With Dupin, Poe introduced the first detective embodying pure reason that always triumphs (Gilbert 379). However, Gilbert notes that many readers found the universe Poe created somewhat too abstract, since the everyday world is one in which ratiocination is not always infallible and chance plays an important role (379). The first English author who was able to reconcile Dupin’s pure, extraordinary reasoning with everyday reality was Arthur Conan Doyle (Gilbert 379). The dark and mysterious environment inhabited by Dupin

changes in the Holmes stories to “the cosy, cluttered, late Victorian domestic interior of 221b Baker Street” (Binyon 9). Moreover, Doyle properly “fleshed out” the detective character Poe created, turning Holmes into a more recognisable character (Binyon 9). It seems that Holmes possesses all of the primary traits that characterise Dupin, but Doyle amplified them and added certain quirks to create a more interesting human detective.

The main focus in Doyle’s stories still lies on the detective’s rational genius. Holmes, like Dupin, represents a great detective with astonishing reasoning powers that allow him to solve mysteries, which leave other people baffled: “He was still, as ever, deeply attracted by the study of crime, and occupied his immense faculties and extraordinary powers of observation in following out those clues and clearing up those mysteries which had been abandoned as hopeless by the official police” (Doyle “A Scandal” 3). Apart from the obvious focus on the detective’s reasoning powers, however, there is more to Holmes’s character. The detective’s lifestyle and personality is elaborated on in the following passage from “A Scandal in Bohemia”: “Holmes, who loathed every form of society with his whole bohemian soul, remained in our lodgings in Baker Street, buried among his old books, and alternating from week to week between cocaine and ambition, the drowsiness of the drug, and the fierce energy of his own keen nature” (Doyle 3). This extract shows that Holmes generally “loathes” society. He likes to isolate himself from the rest of the world by locking himself up in his apartment where he reads books and takes drugs. The only person that he permits into his life is Dr. Watson. Overall, this behaviour seems to be very similar to Dupin’s. Holmes, who lives in London, is like Dupin an “outsider within the metropolis” who lives a secluded life and does not really make contact with other people, unless he has to do so for a case. He does not wish to fully integrate into society because his distance allows him to interpret whatever happens in the city in a more profound way (Werner 6). Moreover, like Dupin, Holmes tends to walk the streets in order to observe all of its aspects. One could note that at a time when

Jack the Ripper showed that the city streets could be walked by a killer without anyone knowing, a character like Holmes, who walks around and takes things in like a flaneur, was able to offer a sense of safety to contemporary readers. As an outsider, the detective is able to see things, which other people do not always observe.

As I mentioned, Holmes seems to possess the character traits that also characterise Dupin, but they are developed further by Doyle to create a more interesting detective. Binyon argues that Holmes's unique quirks make him stand out in the extensive world of detective characters: "he keeps his cigars in the coal-scuttle, his tobacco in the toe end of a Persian slipper, and unanswered correspondence transfixed with a jack-knife in the centre of the mantelpiece" (10). Furthermore, the mood swings Dupin has, but which remain rather incidental, are clearly present in Holmes. Doyle properly developed the trait to turn Holmes into a "human hero" (Binyon 9). When the detective does not have a case with which to occupy himself, he feels bored and frustrated, and takes cocaine and morphine to relieve his boredom (Binyon 10). He also frequently takes out his frustrations on the wall in his living room by shooting bullets into it. This shows Holmes is essentially a fragile man living of extremes: he is either depressed or extremely stimulated, and he solves problems to escape the boringness of life. When he is occupied with an interesting case he is agitated; when his life lacks activity, he demonstrates destructive behaviour: "With his long, white, nervous fingers he adjusted the delicate needle and rolled back his left shirt-cuff" (Doyle *The Sign* 109). According to Gilbert, Holmes's quirks and his "dark side" can be traced back to Dupin's "fondness for the dark" (380). On the other hand, Holmes is also a learned and sophisticated man who plays the violin, attends concerts and quotes Flaubert and Goethe (Binyon 10). Based on this information, it is clear that Holmes is not a passive detective figure. Knight affirms that it is Holmes's ambiguity that makes him so interesting; "his exotic character humanises his scientific skills: a lofty hero, but crucially a human one" (369). Even though

Dupin gives the reader a glimpse into his mind and moody character, it is Holmes's fully developed human side that makes him a more individualised character.

As was mentioned before, Doyle was not just inspired by Poe's detective but he also read works by authors such as Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins and Émile Gaboriau, which were outlined in the historical chapters of this dissertation. This is why it seems natural that many of the traits that characterise these authors' detectives also found their way into Holmes. Liebow notes that Gaboriau's Lecoq, who is an ambitious policeman, probably had an influence on the rational side of Holmes's character (378). Like Doyle's detective, Lecoq is very skilful at disguising himself and, based on brief observations, he is able to draw astonishing conclusions about people (Gilbert 378). Furthermore, it can be noted that Holmes is only one in a line of many eccentric detective characters. Sims mentions that Dickens and Collins were inspired by actual police officers when they created their detectives, but they added various quirks and insights to make their characters more memorable (Sims). Especially detectives created by Wilkie Collins seem to possess traits that remind of Holmes and his eccentricities. Ashley even notes that Collins can be seen as "the link between Poe and Conan Doyle" with regard to the detective's "human" side (53). A few of Collins's eccentric detectives, mentioned in the historical chapters, include Sgt. Cuff, a police detective with a love for roses, and Old Sharon, a detective who loathes the police and is accompanied by a pug dog (Ashley).

In his work, *'Murder Will Out': The Detective in Fiction* (1989), Binyon introduces a theory of T.S. Eliot's, according to which the English detective story, featuring detectives with human characteristics, derives from Wilkie Collins, whereas the "pure" detective story, which focuses on "ratiocination", derives from Edgar Allan Poe (4). However, Binyon himself does not entirely agree with Eliot's theory, sustaining "the detective story has been improved upon only in a mechanical way since it was first invented ... and Poe's 'The



Murders in the Rue Morgue' have never been surpassed" (4). In these chapters, I have tried to show that despite the focus on Dupin's reasoning powers, Poe's stories do not dismiss the detective's human side. Based on the characterisation of Dupin we could say that Poe's detective is not purely a voice of reason; he possesses eccentric human traits that also characterise detectives like Sgt. Cuff and Holmes, even though they have not all been fully developed yet. It was Doyle who created a detective possessing Dupin's character traits, but displaying a fully developed human side.

### 3.1.3 Profession: Consulting Detective

With regard to the profession of detective, Binyon suggests that one can distinguish three categories of fictional detectives: the professional amateur, or private detective, the amateur amateur, and the professional or policeman (7). It can be noted that Dupin is someone who fills his leisure time by solving mysteries: "At such times I could not help remarking and admiring ... a peculiar analytic ability in Dupin. He seemed, too, to take an eager delight in its exercise – if not exactly in its display – and did not hesitate to confess the pleasure thus derived" (Poe "The Murders" 110). In "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", Dupin acts as a detective simply because he is intrigued by the murders he reads about in the newspapers. Because he is acquainted with the Prefect of the police, Dupin is able to visit the crime scene to investigate the evidence: "We will go and see the premises with our own eyes. I know G-, the prefect of Police, and shall have no difficulty in obtaining the necessary permission" (Poe "The Murders" 121). Binyon suggests that Dupin can best be described as an amateur detective, or "dilettante" (7). However, after Dupin's display of extraordinary reasoning powers in the first short story, the Prefect of the police asks the detective for help in the following two short stories. From the second short story onwards Dupin therefore works

together with the police, which means he becomes a “consulting” detective, or professional amateur: “he had called to consult us, or rather to ask the opinion of my friend” (Poe “The Purloined” 240). Ranchman notes that Poe, by creating a Prefect of the police who often annoys Dupin, connected his stories to contemporary beliefs that police forces were inadequate to solve the great mysteries of the city (19). Furthermore, in the first two short stories it is not entirely clear if Dupin is rewarded for his investigations, but he seems to detect out of love for reasoning, rather than to receive money. In “The Purloined Letter”, however, he refuses to co-operate with the police until it is mentioned he will receive a reward for his help: “‘I would really give fifty thousand francs to anyone who would aid me in the matter.’ ‘In that case,’ replied Dupin, opening a drawer, and producing a chequebook, ‘you may as well fill me up a cheque for the amount mentioned. When you have signed it, I will hand you the letter’” (Poe 247-248). Whereas in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”, Dupin goes out to inspect the crime scene, in the latter two short stories he becomes an “armchair” detective, not leaving his house anymore to construct his reasoning processes: “Dupin, sitting steadily in his accustomed arm-chair” (Poe “The Mystery” 728).

The following extract from “The Speckled Band” shows to which of Binyon’s detective categories Sherlock Holmes belongs: “For working as he did rather for the love of his art than for the acquirement of wealth, he refused to associate himself with any investigation which did not tend towards the unusual, and even the fantastic” (Doyle 154). Holmes can best be described as a professional amateur: he is neither an official investigator, nor an amateur amateur (Binyon 6). People come to Holmes with their problems and he takes on the cases that he finds most interesting and peculiar. Doyle’s armchair detective solves cases for his own pleasure; he is not interested in money or fame and accepts whatever rewards his clients offer him. Moreover, he usually occupies himself with mysteries that have been abandoned by the police for being too difficult: “Here in London we have lots of

government detectives and lots of private ones. When these fellows are at fault, they come to me, and I manage to put them on the right scent” (Doyle *A Study* 15). After having effectively solved a case, Holmes goes back to his isolate existence and the police are left to enjoy the success of Holmes’s investigations (Caprettini 334).

Even though Holmes mentions in *The Sign of the Four* that he is the one who invented his profession of unofficial consulting detective, it cannot be denied that Holmes’s way of working displays many affinities with Dupin’s. Moreover, both Holmes and Dupin seem to interact with contemporary conceptions about detectives and are able to offer an attractive alternative to the ordinary detective forces. As was mentioned in the historical chapters, real-life nineteenth-century detectives were often considered inadequate to solve complex mysteries, and they experienced a long struggle to achieve respectability (Rzepka 111). This is probably why fictional police officers ask Dupin and Holmes for help; they embody contemporary ideas about the police’s (lack of) efficiency. In the same way that Dupin has to deal with “annoying” police officers that are too incompetent to solve serious mysteries, Holmes needs to assist the police constantly. According to Paula Reiter, the popularity of detective fiction, in particular of the Holmes stories, had an “impact on the late nineteenth-century conceptualization of the professional” (72-73). Readers were presented with the fantasy of “complete competence”, performed by a professional amateur detective (Reiter 74). Moreover, each of Doyle’s tales “encapsulated both a model of expertise and an implicit critique of men *not* fulfilling this model” (Reiter 74). Reiter states that, “in this manner, Holmes simultaneously enacted and produced the 1890s professional man” (74).

The historical framework showed that the detective’s professional counterpart, the police detective, appears in Dickens’s *Bleak House* and Collins’s *The Moonstone* (Binyon 5). Although Inspector Bucket and Sgt. Cuff are important characters, they are not the central characters in the novels in which they appear (Binyon 5). It is Émile Gaboriau who introduces

the first modern police detective Monsieur Lecoq, who “reasons, if less spectacularly, no less logically than Dupin; and he has at his disposal the machinery and organisation of the police force” (Binyon 5). The detectives outlined here are professional police officers. There are, however, also consulting detectives like Dupin and Holmes, one of which is Wilkie Collins’s Old Sharon, an amateur detective who does not like the police and helps them solve complex crimes that they do not understand (Ashley 57). Binyon notes, however, that the distinction between the amateur detective, who is not paid for his investigations, and the professional amateur, “who is employed to investigate”, is not always clear-cut (Binyon 7). Moreover, he states it is rather strange that no reason is ever given that explains why (professional) amateur detectives “should constantly stumble over corpses or be repeatedly summoned to cases of mysterious death, where they are not only welcomed, but deferentially invited to the scene of the crime by the police” (Binyon 7).

## 3.2 The Relationship between the Detective and Narrator

A second aspect that will be looked at regarding a link between Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and Poe's Auguste Dupin tales is the relationship between detective and narrator. For a discussion of this relationship, which seems to be very similar in both authors' works, I will make use of two articles. With regard to the Sherlock Holmes stories, Nicola Humble's "From Holmes to the Drones: Fantasies of Men without Women in the Masculine Middlebrow" (2011) seems relevant since it discusses the friendship between Sherlock Holmes and John Watson and a possible homosexual reading of their relationship. In my discussion of the Dupin stories, I will refer to J. A. Leo Lemay's "The Psychology of 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue'" (1982), which, among other things, investigates the relationship between Auguste Dupin and the narrator. The combination of insights from these two articles, evidence found in specific passages from various Holmes and Dupin stories, and the information provided in my preceding historical framework, will then reveal in what ways Doyle may have reproduced Poe's depiction of the relationship between detective and narrator in his detective fiction.

### 3.2.1 The Relationship between Sherlock Holmes and John Watson

Nicola Humble explores the figure of the bachelor, which has gained significance in fiction since the last decades of the nineteenth century (90). Especially in the period from the 1880s to the 1920s, literary genres belonging to the "masculine middlebrow", such as detective fiction and adventure stories, regularly featured bachelor characters (Humble 90). Humble suggests that these bachelor figures are linked to the society in which they emerge, because they seem to reflect desires and anxieties regarding concepts such as masculinity, sexuality

and domesticity (90). One of the central case-studies in the article are the Sherlock Holmes stories, which feature a detective and a narrator who live together in a bachelor apartment in London's Baker Street (Humble 90).

According to Humble, one of the main reasons why bachelors start to gain cultural importance in the later nineteenth century is the growing tendency of the middle classes to delay marriage (92). The Victorians' reluctance towards marriage was probably caused, among other things, by growing female independence and the high costs to manage a household (Humble 92). Moreover, Humble argues that some people started to view marriage as "hard, unpleasant, expensive work undertaken only out of a sense of duty" (92). During the nineteenth century, anyone who decided not to marry or marry later was seen as somewhat of a threat to stable, conventional ideas regarding the bourgeois family (Humble 92). For many late Victorian readers, the bachelor became an appealing "escapist figure", which is why it is no coincidence that the Sherlock Holmes stories originated in this period (Humble 92).

A view that will be essential in the following discussion of the relationship between detective and narrator is Victorian society's shifting attitude from the perception of romantic friendship between men to "an identity-based conception of homosexuality" in the late nineteenth century (Humble 93). Introducing a theory of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's, Humble states that "late-Victorian masculinity was constructed of two closely related and intensely contrary strands: a necessary homosociality and a prohibited homosexuality" (93). The result of this contradiction was what Sedgwick calls a "homosexual panic" (Humble 93). This is why the figure of the bachelor tended to attract cultural unease in contemporary society (Humble 93).

In Arthur Conan Doyle's detective fiction, John Watson is, first and foremost, Holmes's biographer, as is made explicit in the following passage from "A Scandal in Bohemia": "I think that I had better go, Holmes." "Not a bit, Doctor. Stay where you are. I

am lost without my Boswell” (Doyle 7). James Boswell was a devoted and well-known Scottish biographer, who wrote a biography of Samuel Johnson in the eighteenth century (“James Boswell”). By paralleling Boswell’s name with John Watson’s, Holmes underlines the doctor’s function as narrator of the cases that the detective is assigned. By narrating Holmes’s life, Watson is able to give his voice to the mind of the otherwise withdrawn detective. Nevertheless, the reader does not step inside Holmes’s own head so that the mystery surrounding his character remains. If the reader knew exactly what Holmes was thinking, without mediation of another character, the mystery that characterises the detective and his ways of working would be gone. Consequently, this would take away most of the appeal of Doyle’s character. Furthermore, the fact that Watson’s function is to narrate Holmes’s life also implies that he is a rather passive figure in comparison to Holmes (“The Duo” 5). Watson is able to assist the detective in certain investigations, but most of the time he listens and observes things carefully, without being actively involved in the happenings (“The Duo” 5). Moreover, because Watson narrates the detective’s life, his own lifestyle remains somewhat vague. The reader sometimes receives glimpses of Watson’s character - we know for example that he works as a doctor - but the stories do not elaborate on his life outside Baker Street, since that would take away the attention from Holmes and his investigations.

The relationship between Holmes and Watson is not just one between a famous detective and his biographer. Besides the obvious focus on the detective and his methods for solving mysteries, the way the friendship between Holmes and Watson is portrayed by Doyle also seems to be a big part of the massive appeal of the tales (Humble 96). Nicola Humble notes that most illustrations of Doyle’s stories do not picture adventures, but rather the idyllic domestic life of the detective and narrator (96). It is true that book covers often depict Holmes sitting in his chair, smoking a pipe, while his friend Watson is standing next to him. In the

course of Doyle's stories it becomes clear that the eccentric and solitary Sherlock Holmes does not easily accept people into his life. Moreover, he treats everyone he meets with his typical coldness. John Watson, however, is the only person for whom Holmes genuinely seems to care, and he implicitly shows this in *The Sign of the Four*: "'Look here, Watson; you look regularly done. Lie down there on the sofa, and see if I can put you to sleep.' He took up his violin from the corner, and as I stretched myself out he began to play some low, dreamy, melodious air" (Doyle 163). In a similar way, John Watson appears to be the right friend for Holmes because he does not talk too much, tolerates Holmes's eccentricities, and frequently compliments and marvels at the detective's work (Humble 96). The two characters complement each other; Holmes is the eccentric genius, whereas Watson is the calm, average person ("The Duo" 5). Moreover, there seems to be absolute trust and friendly intimacy between the two characters, which is clear from the way Holmes introduces himself and Watson to a client in "The Speckled Band": "My name is Sherlock Holmes. This is my intimate friend and associate, Dr. Watson, before whom you can speak as freely as before myself" (Doyle 155).

Already from their first meeting it becomes clear that Holmes and Watson are very compatible, which is why they immediately decide to live together. The following extract is taken from the beginning of *A Study in Scarlet*:

"'I get in the dumps at times, and don't open my mouth for days on end ... Just let me alone, and I'll soon be right ... It's just as well for two fellows to know the worst of one another before they begin to live together.' ... I said, 'and I object to row, because my nerves are shaken, and I get up at all sorts of ungodly hours, and I am extremely lazy'" (Doyle 8).



Holmes and Watson lead a rather secluded life in their bachelor apartment in Baker Street, and tend to only come out in the evening or when they need to solve a mystery. Moreover, they do not really socialise with other people unless this is necessary for a case. Humble argues that the friendship between the two men can be seen as something pure and private, “something *hidden*, not known to women, a secret that binds men together” (97). It looks like Holmes and Watson portray the ideal male friendship, or homosocial bond, which was looked-for in the nineteenth century (Humble 95).

Whereas the former representation of the relationship between Holmes and Watson is quite positive because it focuses on their friendship, Gian Paolo Caprettini argues that their relationship is essentially one between a master and his student (332). This would then imply a hierarchical relationship, in which Watson finds himself subordinate to Holmes (Caprettini 332). Extracts supporting this theory are undeniably copious in Doyle’s stories. The following passage from “A Scandal in Bohemia” shows that Watson considers himself to be a student, who examines the methods of a master detective: “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” (Doyle 12). Holmes on the other hand, frequently looks upon the narrator as someone who is inferior to him:

““When I hear you give your reasons,’ I remarked, ‘the thing always appears to me to be so ridiculously simple that I could easily do it myself, though at each successive instance of you reasoning I am baffled, until you explain your process. And yet I believe that my eyes are as good as yours.’ ... He answered ... ‘You see, but you do not observe’” (Doyle “A Scandal” 5).

John Watson always looks very closely at how Sherlock Holmes solves mysteries, and even though the method seems simple, he is never able to arrive at the same conclusions as the detective. Holmes needs to assist his student constantly, and Watson always takes on a submissive attitude (Caprettini 332). It seems that Watson's mistakes and his incapability of attaining the same approaches as the detective, mainly serve to highlight the detective's greatness and to explain his methods of investigation (Caprettini 332).

This relationship between master and student probably owes much to Doyle's own relationship with Dr. Bell. As a surgeon in the Royal Infirmary, Bell greatly influenced the transformation of Edinburgh to a respectable medical centre (Liebow 12). Moreover, according to Liebow, Bell "was the first doctor in Edinburgh, *perhaps the world*, to restrict his practice solely to surgery" (13). Bell was also a lecturer in surgery, with Doyle being one of his students (Krystal 87-88). It is known that Doyle greatly admired the professor's peculiar diagnostic methods and that he looked to Bell as his mentor (Krystal 87-88). This is why we could say that for the relationship between master and student, Doyle himself probably inspired the character of Watson, whereas Dr. Bell probably inspired Holmes. The link between Holmes and Dr. Bell will be further elaborated on in the chapter concerned with the detective's methods of investigation.

Many have speculated that the relationship between Holmes and Watson is not just friendly but could point to homoeroticism. Speculations seem to have been furthered by Arthur Conan Doyle, since he decided to set most of his short stories in the time before John Watson's marriage with Mary Morstan, a client appearing in the second Holmes novel *The Sign of the Four* (Humble 95-96). This way most stories would focus only on Holmes and Watson living together and solving mysteries, which was what the public seemed to enjoy reading about most (Humble 95-96).

Nevertheless, Mary Morstan occupies an important role in Watson's life and from the moment he meets her in *The Sign of the Four*, he frequently expresses his romantic feelings for her in a lengthy manner: "She little guessed the struggle within my breast, or the effort of self-restraint which held me back. My sympathies and my love went out to her, even as my hand had in the garden" (Doyle 146). From the many passages in which John declares his love for Mary, it becomes clear that his sexuality is quite straightforward. Overall, there is not sufficient evidence to assume that John Watson has feelings for Sherlock Holmes that go further than the attraction between men in a homosocial bond.

Whereas Watson's sexuality may be rather straightforward, Humble notes that many critics have suggested there are clues that point to Holmes's homoerotic feelings, both towards John Watson and other men (99). When Watson announces his marriage plans in *The Sign of the Four*, Holmes responds as follows: he "gave a most dismal groan. 'I feared as much,' said he. 'I really cannot congratulate you'" (Doyle 204). Watson links Holmes's answer to the fact that the detective is someone who only cares for pure rational thinking; he is almost like "an inhuman calculating machine", unwilling to feel and understand human emotions (Humble 99). This is supported by Holmes's own explanation: "love is an emotional thing, and whatever is emotional is opposed to that true, cold reason which I place above all things" (Doyle *The Sign* 204). However, if we follow the speculations of critics that Holmes has homoerotic feelings for Watson, then the detective's response, expressing dismay for Watson's marriage, might just as well be evidence that he is able to feel human emotions. In fact, in that case, Holmes's reaction could point to his jealousy of Watson's marriage. Another extract, also taken from *The Sign of the Four*, could in my opinion lead to similar speculations: "'What a very attractive woman!' I exclaimed, turning to my companion. He had lit his pipe again, and was leaning back with drooping eyelids. 'Is she?' he said, languidly; 'I did not observe'" (Doyle 119). Here again, John Watson is referring to Mary

Morstan, whom he feels attracted to the moment he meets her. Sherlock Holmes on the other hand, does not seem to care about her, implying he is not interested in human emotions because they are something he cannot observe rationally. However, his drooping eyelids and his languid voice, besides expressing his annoyance with Watson for displaying feelings, could also point to the fact that he is jealous. Moreover, it may show that he is not interested because he cannot feel the same way for a woman as he does for a man. The two extracts cited above introduce Holmes as someone who appears to be indifferent towards human feelings and the happiness of others. The reason given for his behaviour is the coldness that comes with being a detective who is only interested in rational thinking, not in emotions like love. However, this explanation may conceal the real reason why Holmes disapproves of Watson's feelings towards Mary; it might point to his homoerotic feelings for the narrator.

Caprettini also notices Holmes's refusal to let his purely logical reasoning mind be disturbed by sentiment (330). However, according to him this should not lead to a homosexual reading of the stories. Given that a woman has the power to evoke passionate feelings in a man, which could disturb his rational mind, she has to be excluded from the mind of the detective (Caprettini 330). An extract from "A Scandal in Bohemia" could confirm this theory: "But for the trained reasoner to admit such intrusions into his own delicate and finely adjusted temperament was to introduce a distracting factor which might throw a doubt upon all his mental results" (Doyle 3). Furthermore, Holmes's statement that "women are never to be entirely trusted – not the best of them", apart from being an example of his misogynist attitude, could indeed point to a certain fear that a woman might disturb the detective's perfectly balanced mind (Doyle *The Sign* 164). Caprettini's theory joins with Holmes's own explanations of why he does not have sympathy for women; namely that he disregards emotions because they are opposed to, and could potentially threaten, pure reason.

An aspect that is often brought up in discussions of Sherlock Holmes and his sexuality is his relationship with Irene Adler, described as the only woman Holmes ever loved and respected: “And when he speaks of Irene Adler, or when he refers to her photograph, it is always under the honourable title of *the woman*” (Doyle “A Scandal” 25). Looking back at Caprettini’s theory, Adler might be an example of a woman not trusted by Holmes because she might disturb his balanced mind. Humble on the other hand notes that Adler frequently “dresses as a boy” and behaves like a man for much of the story “A Scandal in Bohemia” (Humble 99). This would then confirm the earlier hypothesis regarding Holmes’s homosexual feelings. One could wonder, however, whether Holmes is attracted to Irene Adler or to her intelligence, with which she succeeded in outwitting him.

Even though one could search for clues that point to homosexual feelings on Holmes’s part, the detective and his relationship with the narrator nevertheless remains ambiguous (Humble 99). The paradox introduced by Sedgwick regarding the late Victorian need for homosocial bonds, which was at the same time accompanied by an anxiety for homosexual relationships, is clearly applicable to the bond between Sherlock Holmes and John Watson (Humble 102). Doyle’s texts reflect the Victorian fantasy of a bachelor lifestyle in which friends create a homosocial bond (Humble 102). However, the ambiguities that arise with regard to the relationship between the detective and narrator render the characters both fascinating and disturbing to late Victorian society (Humble 99).

### 3.2.2 Paralleling the Relationship between Auguste Dupin and Narrator with the One between Sherlock Holmes and John Watson

With regard to Edgar Allan Poe’s tales of ratiocination, detective Auguste Dupin and the narrator, who is unnamed, display a similar relationship as the one between Sherlock Holmes

and John Watson. The article I will refer to in this chapter is J. A. Leo Lemay's "The Psychology of 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue'" (1982), which talks about the psychology in Poe's first detective short story, and in doing so also zooms in on a possible homosexual reading of the relationship between detective and narrator.

First of all, it is interesting to note that Lemay sometimes refers to Dupin and the narrator as one self, as a unity, even claiming that Dupin can be read as the narrator's Doppelgänger; "Dupin, of course, is the analyst; and the narrator, who tells the tale, is the creator ... the analyst is simply the reverse of the creator" (169). Therefore, Lemay implies that the detective and narrator actually depict different aspects of one person (169).

Just like John Watson, the unnamed narrator in the Dupin short stories is the detective's biographer; he writes down exactly how Dupin works out various mysteries and he describes the detective's character. Even though in both Poe's and Doyle's works, the narrator sometimes appears to be rather naïve, he is nevertheless essential as he is often able to help the detective in one way or another (Wentworth 49). Moreover, Wentworth notes that especially the unnamed narrator in the Dupin tales seems to possess a capacity for reasoning that comes close to that of the detective (49). Unlike Watson, the narrator in the Dupin stories often explains the detective's method in his own words instead of reproducing those of Dupin (Wentworth 49).

Apart from displaying a relationship between detective and biographer, Dupin and the narrator are also close friends who live together, like Sherlock Holmes and John Watson. At the start of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", the reader is offered a detailed insight into the lives of Dupin and the narrator, including a look at the way the two met:

"Residing in Paris during the spring and part of the summer of 18-, I there became acquainted with a Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin ... Our first meeting was at an obscure

library in the Rue Montmartre, where the accident of our both being in search of the same very rare and very remarkable volume brought us into closer communion. We saw each other again and again” (Poe 109).

Like Holmes and Watson, Dupin and the narrator are immediately drawn to each other. The extract shows they already have common interests from the start, since they are both looking for the same rare book in the library. Furthermore, Auguste Dupin, like Holmes, is quite eccentric and did not accept people into his life before he met the narrator. It is said that “it had been many years since Dupin had ceased to know or be known in Paris” (Poe “The Murders” 109-110). The narrator, on the other hand, like John Watson, cares for the detective and he is willing to endure all of Dupin’s bursts of absurdity: “into this *bizarrerie*, as into all his other, I quietly fell; giving myself up to his wild whims with a perfect *abandon*” (Poe “The Murders” 110). Moreover, he frequently expresses his fascination for the detective’s brilliant mind. The two men realise straightaway that they are very compatible, which is why they decide to live together.

Based on descriptions of the domestic life of Dupin and the narrator, one can draw parallels with the domestic situation of Holmes and Watson. The narrator in Poe’s tales takes on him the task of renting and furnishing a time-eaten mansion in an abandoned part of the Faubourg Saint-Germain in Paris (Poe “The Murders” 109). He and Dupin live a secluded life and they do not accept visitors into their home, as becomes clear from the narrator’s description of their life in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”: “had the routine of our life at this place been known to the world, we should have been regarded as madmen ... Our seclusion was perfect. We admitted no visitors ... We existed within ourselves alone” (Poe 109-110). Moreover, both being “enamored of the Night”, they tend to only leave their apartment when it is dark, and when they do so they stroll through the streets “arm in arm”

(Poe “The Murders” 110). During the day, they lock themselves up in their mansion, close the shutters, and are perfectly content reading, dreaming, writing and conversing until it gets dark again. Between Dupin and the narrator there is absolute trust and intimacy, and it is clear from the description of their domestic life that they keep their relationship very private. One could therefore argue that the interest in homosocial bonds formed between bachelors, which Nicola Humble observes in the “masculine middlebrow” from the 1880s onwards, is already present in Poe’s detective stories, which were published in the 1840s.

Furthermore, as was the case in the Sherlock Holmes stories, Poe’s tales introduce a relationship between master and student. Auguste Dupin considers himself superior to others, and he frequently explains his methods of analysis in the hope that the narrator will learn something from him. The narrator, like John Watson, is always amazed at the facility with which Dupin arrives at certain conclusions; conclusions that he himself is never able to arrive at: “‘In fact, the facility with which I shall arrive, or have arrived, at the solution of this mystery, is in the direct ratio of its apparent insolubility in the eyes of the police.’ I stared at the speaker in mute astonishment” (Poe “The Murders” 122). The narrator is subordinate to the detective; he acts like a student, and is not very competent in the eyes of Dupin: “‘That was the evidence itself,’ said Dupin, ‘but it was not the peculiarity of the evidence. You have observed nothing distinctive. Yet there *was* something to be observed’” (Poe “The Murders” 123). Dupin’s comment can be seen as the equivalent of Holmes’s illustrious and pithier comment in “A Scandal in Bohemia”: “You see but you do not observe” (Doyle 34).

Based on certain details in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”, Lemay suggests a possible homosexual reading of the relationship between Dupin and the narrator. Overall, we could suggest that Poe’s stories display a reverse relationship between detective and narrator compared to Doyle’s stories. In the Holmes stories there are indications that Holmes might have homosexual feelings for Watson, while Watson is in love with a woman. In the Dupin



stories it is the narrator who expresses his feelings towards the detective, while Dupin remains quite distant towards the narrator. The narrator bluntly describes his attraction to Dupin at a certain point in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”: “I felt my soul enkindled within me by the wild fervor, and the vivid freshness of his imagination” (Poe 109). According to Lemay, this description of the narrator’s feelings is not just an expression of his admiration for the detective’s methods of investigation anymore; it specifically reflects the narrator’s most intimate feelings when he thinks about Dupin (171). Furthermore, Lemay notes that the unnamed narrator takes on “the traditional male economic role in a marriage” since he is the one responsible for renting and furnishing the home (171). Moreover, the reason why the narrator, who, like John Watson, remains mysterious throughout the tales, lives with Dupin is rather vague. Lemay assumes he is not a Frenchman since “he refers to Dupin as ‘The Frenchman’ and explains in English the meaning of some French phrases” (171). It is also said that the narrator is only in Paris for a visit, which leads to Lemay’s speculations that the narrator is in Paris for an affair, which he pursues with Dupin: “seeking in Paris the objects I then sought, I felt that the society of such a man would be to me a treasure beyond price, and this feeling I frankly confided to him” (qtd. in Lemay 171). Moreover, Lemay notes that Edgar Allan Poe himself seems to have addressed certain assumptions (172). According to Lemay, Poe inserts a rather ironic comment in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” when, after the domestic situation of the detective and narrator has just been described, he lets the narrator say: “Let it not be supposed, from what I have just said, that I am detailing any mystery, or penning any romance” (qtd. in Lemay 172).

Some of the assumptions that Lemay makes, are, however, a bit far-fetched. Moreover, we have to take into account the context in which the Dupin stories were written. As Sedgwick’s theory suggests, homosexuality as a “visible category of identity” came into being in the late nineteenth century, particularly around 1880 (Humble 93). Whereas the bond

between the bachelors Holmes and Watson became subject to a panicked rejection because it emerged at a time when the notion of homosexuality suddenly appeared in the culture, we could say that the homosocial bond portrayed in the Dupin stories was not yet perceived with as much unease by contemporary readers.

A last remark I would like to make with regard to the relationship between Dupin and the narrator is linked to the presence of women in Poe's detective stories. Whereas Irene Adler and Mary Morstan play an important role in the Holmes stories (and further certain speculations about the men's sexualities), women do not seem to play a central role in the Dupin stories. In fact, when they emerge, they are the victims of the crimes Dupin tries to solve. Neither one of the two men ever expresses feelings of love or even respect for women; women are to them mere objects that they are only interested in to gain information for their investigations. The reason for this absence of active female characters can be seen to derive from Poe's tendency to suppress or annul women in his work, "who because of overpowering beauty, intellect, or wealth depart from the conventional and threaten man's superior position" (Church 407). Sometimes Poe idealises women, but ultimately they have to lose their lives "to serve an interest of man" (Church 408). Church notes that the two women in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" seem to be violently murdered because they live on their own, are wealthy, and aspire to be men, "when they should be sexually subservient" (413). On the other hand, however, the two women are not entirely portrayed as strong characters that could potentially threaten man's superior position. Apart from the fact that they are wealthy and live alone, they are also depicted as rather weak characters (Church 411). They do not speak throughout the story, but only express themselves through "shrieks" (Church 411). Dupin and the narrator on the other hand, are presented as rational characters that utter intellectual discourse (Church 411). According to David Schmid, Poe's choice for a male detective figure, symbolising rationality, reflected contemporary society, where men tended to walk the streets of the new

urban environments more frequently than women, which made them come into contact with all the aspects of urbanisation (98). Moreover, Poe's choice for female victims and a male detective "established a gender dynamic in crime fiction that the vast majority of subsequent writers would observe" (98). Ultimately, the absence of (active) women in Poe's detective stories can be seen to reinforce the homosocial bond created between Dupin and the narrator. Moreover, it is a sign that Dupin's world is essentially male-dominated.

Based on the foregoing exposition, it is clear that the relationship between Sherlock Holmes and John Watson displays many similarities with the one between Auguste Dupin and the unnamed narrator. Both pairs form homosocial bonds, which are founded on an intimate friendship between men who live together. Doyle did not, however, necessarily reproduce this homosocial bond from Poe; both authors could simply be reacting to the same phenomenon in society. Furthermore, both Holmes and Dupin are detectives accompanied by a biographer who documents their life and marvels at their work. When we look back at the historical chapters of this dissertation, we can notice that a lot of detective stories in the nineteenth century were either integrated within other literary genres or did not really belong to a fully developed detective genre yet (Rzepka 99). If a detective of some sort was present in a work, the story mainly focused on that detective and his investigation (Ousby 81). Typical for the Dupin and Holmes stories, however, is that they feature two main characters: the detective and a narrator who is also a character in the narrative. In Gaboriau's work featuring Lecoq, the detective also receives help; however, this person does not live with Lecoq and is not the narrator of the story. This is why we could suggest that, with regard to the detective works mentioned in the historical chapters, Doyle's narrative perspective reverberates Poe's. Ousby confirms that the form the Holmes stories take, "a narrative by an admiring satellite of the hero, echoes the device which Poe adopted in the Dupin tales" (146-147). As was mentioned,

for the relationship between master and student, Doyle might have drawn inspiration from his own relationship with his mentor Dr. Bell, whom he admired greatly.

There also seems to be a fundamental difference between the two relationships described. Overall, the relationship between Holmes and Watson takes on a more humanised character. The fact that the narrator in the Dupin stories is unnamed and remains rather mysterious in the course of the stories shows that Poe was not really interested in creating a fully developed character. To him, the narrator's main function is that of a biographer who records the detective's genius. The narrator therefore mainly functions as the "reader-like" perspective on events and on the character of the detective. John Watson can then be seen as a more human "incarnation" of the unnamed, and rather distant narrator in Poe's stories. In the same way, Auguste Dupin, even though he is a more individualised character than the narrator, is in the first place created to offer an insight into the mind of a detective. As the previous chapter already showed, Holmes is a more fully developed character whom Doyle made more interesting from a human perspective. This difference between Poe's and Doyle's work of course mainly has to do with the number of stories written; Dupin only features in three short stories whereas Holmes appears in an extensive series of tales. Because Holmes features in all these tales, we get a better view on his personality and his relationship with the narrator.

### 3.3 Methods of Investigation

#### 3.3.1 Dupin and Holmes

Detective Auguste Dupin appeared in the mid-nineteenth century, whereas Sherlock Holmes was created in the 1880s. Both detectives, however, emerged in a period that saw significant changes regarding the importance and development of science (Van Dover 2-3). In *You Know My Method: The Science of the Detective* (1994), Kenneth Van Dover asserts that one can distinguish three noteworthy phases in the popular debate about science and the scientific method during the nineteenth century (23). The first phase, which extended from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the 1840s, is what Van Dover labels the “Baconian period” (Van Dover 23). During this time, the scientific method was considered to be a “simple, purely empirical technique accessible to anyone” (Van Dover 23). In the second phase, from the 1840s to the 1870s, creating hypotheses and theorising became more important and great scientists were seen to possess a special genius (Van Dover 23). In the third phase, which began in the 1870s, scientists started to admit that their conclusions always contained some level of uncertainty; “statistics and probabilities became an accepted basis for scientific thinking” (Van Dover 24). According to Van Dover, science and detective fiction are related, since the detective can be seen as a special scientific thinker; he decides “to apply the new method to concrete human problems rather than to abstract mechanical problems” (1). The following discussion of the methods of investigation of Dupin and Holmes will reveal in what ways the detectives interact with these contemporary debates about the scientific method. Furthermore, the comparison between their methods may reveal certain affinities between Dupin’s and Holmes’s “method”. Van Dover notes that “‘method’, for

Dupin and Holmes and all detectives, means a process for detecting crime that is rational and efficient” (15).

Poe’s “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” opens with an elaborate theoretical discourse on “method”, which already signals the essence of the detective story (Van Dover 36). The “method” described in this prologue is called “analysis”: “that moral activity which *disentangles*” (qtd. in Van Dover 36). This implies that the detective is a person going back in time to disentangle the various possible causes of a present crime scene (Van Dover 36). Successful analysis, according to the story’s prologue, requires close observation and calculation, which has to be accompanied by a high degree of imagination (Van Dover 36-37). According to Krystal, Poe considered genius to be more than superior reasoning; “it required an imaginative component that enabled one person to see the figure in the carpet where others saw only colored fibers” (84). The detective is an analyst who differs from the calculator in his “quality of observation”; he has knowledge of “*what to observe*” (Van Dover 37). The combination of calculation and imagination “produces the methodical genius which may discover the truth” (Van Dover 37). In Poe’s last detective story, “The Purloined Letter”, “Dupin argues that mathematics is mere sterile reasoning” (Van Dover 39). However, when the logical observation of mathematics is combined with imagination, the method that follows will be very powerful (Van Dover 39).

The theory set out in the prologue to “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” can be applied to both Auguste Dupin’s and Sherlock Holmes’s ways of investigation. They stand out as detectives, first and foremost because they pay attention to details that go unnoticed by others. In “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt”, Dupin says: “I would here observe that very much of what is rejected as evidence by a court, is the best of evidence to the intellect. For the court, guiding itself by the general principles of evidence - the recognized and *booked* principles - is averse from swerving at particular instances” (Poe 747). A lot of the evidence rejected by

official investigators is considered relevant by Dupin. He has a talent for observing the “peculiarity” of certain details, which in the end prove to be of major importance (Wentworth 16). In “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” for example, only Dupin notices there is something odd about the fact that the witnesses, representing various nationalities, fail to agree on the nationality of a voice that was heard at the crime scene (Wentworth 16). Moreover, the exact sound of the voice could not be described properly by any of the witnesses either (Wentworth 18). These data, which the police did not pay much attention to, lead Dupin to suggest that the voice heard at the crime scene probably did not belong to a human being but to an orangutang (Wentworth 18). It is this gift of being able to realise which details are relevant, even before constructing possible conclusions, which allows Dupin to eventually solve the crime where others fail (Wentworth 18). Whereas most people can learn how to construct critical analyses, Dupin stands out as a detective because his analysis is more complete than others’; he uses his imagination to complement his observation (Van Dover 37). Furthermore, Van Dover also notes that Dupin’s method in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” stands in contrast with the unmethodical villain, the vicious orangutang (37).

In the same way, an essential characteristic of Sherlock Holmes’s method is his knowledge of *what* to observe (Wentworth 46). Unlike other, official investigators, Holmes is able to solve cases because he knows to what details he needs to pay attention. He exemplifies the “ideal” detective or analyst as described in the prologue to “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”: he is able to combine imagination and observation. Holmes’s attention to peculiar details is reflected by the stereotypical image people have of him; a cloak-wearing character that inspects everything in a crime scene using a magnifying glass. In “The Speckled Band”, Holmes visits the house where a murder has taken place and he carefully inspects every detail. Unlike others, he pays special attention to the fact that there is a bell chord attached to the ceiling and a ventilator hole in the wall (Hodgson 317-318). Given that the items do not seem

to serve any purpose in the room, yet have not been removed by the owner, Holmes quickly concludes that both items must have been used to commit the crime, in particular to let a murderous snake into the room (Hodgson 317-318).

To complement their observation and imagination, both Dupin and Holmes have an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of facts. This is especially visible in Holmes, whose mental recollections and written collections prove to be fundamental to his investigations (Caprettini 329). Given that Holmes is a self-trained detective whose whole existence is centred on detection of mysteries, he has become like a search engine, possessing everything one needs to solve almost any mystery (Wentworth 46). Holmes's own memory plays an important role in his investigations, since it often serves as a mechanism to produce evidence (Caprettini 329). However, not just his own mental recollection of events or people helps him in his analyses. In "A Scandal in Bohemia", Watson reveals that Holmes has created an extensive encyclopaedia, containing all different kinds of information that he suspects he will need at a certain point: "For many years he had adopted a system of docketing all paragraphs concerning men and things, so that it was difficult to name a subject or a person on which he could not at once furnish information" (Doyle 10). According to Ranchman, in the nineteenth century people tended to collect large amounts of information, either in statistical tables or in lists of data (22). When the amount of information was large enough, it "gave the illusion of problem-solving by presenting previously unknown facts" (Ranchman 22).

Ranchman sees detective fiction essentially as a combination of the "certainties of solution" and the endless possibility of suspicion (22). According to Ranchman, "Poe understood from the outset that ratiocination moves between these possibilities and that, in a sense, all detectives are potentially mere hypothesizers and that for every accurate solution that might be provided, there may be countless fake accusations" (22). In "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", Dupin says: "My own examination was somewhat more particular, and was so



for the reason I have just given – because here it was, I knew, that all apparent impossibilities *must* be proved to be not such in reality ... I proceeded to think thus – a posteriori” (Poe 126). Dupin’s method of analysis is essentially “a posteriori”. The detective starts from the result of a crime and then moves backwards, collecting evidence to form a hypothesis. Instead of using the term “a posteriori”, Doyle’s stories introduce the method of Holmes as the “science of deduction”. However, when one looks at the way Holmes tends to construct his trains of thought, it becomes clear that “deduction” is not entirely the correct term to describe his method. According to Binyon, Doyle’s stories made a notable contribution to detective fiction by popularising and continuing “the misuse of the term ‘deduction’” (10). Binyon mentions that, “strictly speaking, a deduction is an instance drawn out from a generality” (10). However, in the course of the stories, Holmes frequently states that even though his mind is already made up on the question of who committed the crime, he refuses to say what he thinks until he has collected all the necessary evidence. Therefore, Caprettini suggests that Holmes’s method is in fact what Peirce calls “abductive” (328). According to Caprettini, rather than departing from certain premises to arrive at logical conclusions, Holmes’s is “a reasoning from a particular result to a particular precedent, a hypothesizing” (328). According to Christopher Redmond, however, Holmes’s method could also be labelled “inductive”, since it moves “from the specific to the general, from effect to cause” (61). Based on these definitions, it becomes clear that Holmes’s method is not easily definable. Holmes himself, however, seems to side with Caprettini’s theory when he mentions: “There are few people, however, who, if you told them a result, would be able to evolve from their own inner consciousness what the steps were which led up to that result. This power is what I mean when I talk of reasoning backwards, or analytically” (Doyle *A Study* 103). Caprettini’s suggestion to mention “abduction” instead of “deduction” underlines the fact that Holmes essentially reasons based on probabilities: he reasons as to what might have happened to

arrive at conclusions about what has actually happened (Wentworth 47). In *The Sign of the Four* this is made clear when the detective says: “‘Ah, that is good luck. I could only say what was the balance of probability. I did not at all expect to be accurate.’ ‘But it was not mere guesswork?’ ‘No, no: I never guess. It is a shocking habit – destructive to the logical faculty’” (Doyle 114). In the same way, Dupin’s method, which is “a posteriori”, takes into account the probable, and seemingly impossible course of events to discover the actual course of events (Wentworth 47). Given that hypotheses are often false or need to be modified, it is rather remarkable how often those of Dupin and Holmes prove to be correct (Binyon 11). In fact, Holmes’s trademark is his ability to construct an entire characterisation of someone, based on nothing but his observations and consequent hypotheses (Binyon 11). When first meeting someone, Holmes immediately knows all there is to know about the person, such as where he or she comes from and what the reason is for the person’s visit. In “The Speckled Band” for example, Holmes recognises the transportation method of his client based only on the look of her clothes: “‘The left arm of your jacket is spattered with mud in no less than seven places. The marks are perfectly fresh. There is no vehicle save a dogcart which throws up mud in that way, and then only when you sit on the left-hand side of the driver.’ ‘Whatever your reasons may be, you are perfectly correct,’ said she” (Doyle 156).

It can be noted that most of Holmes’s hypotheses based on observations only work within a fixed society, in which clearly defined jobs and practices allowed for characterisation in a way that became impossible later on. The formal detective story presents a “stable and numerous society ... in which the moral code can in some way be externalized in the more or less predictable details of daily life” (qtd. in Grella 34). According to Grella, “a minute flaw in breeding, taste, or behaviour – the wrong tie, the wrong accent, ‘bad form’ of any sort – translates as a violation of an accepted ethical system and provides grounds for expulsion or condemnation” (34). Given that the detective is familiar with the social code of society, he is

able to interpret the “knowable world” in which he operates (Grella 34). Moreover, whereas the police often fail to solve mysteries, Holmes succeeds because he is isolated: “in order to protect the social order effectively, one must separate oneself from it” (Clausen 114). Furthermore, Grella notes that the formal detective story is perhaps one of the last places in literature where the traditional, fixed British attitudes and conventions triumph (47). After World War I, war, revolution and foreign enemies replaced domestic crime as threats to the stability of civilisation (Clausen 122). Whereas before 1914 everyone knew his place in society, after the war, society became more complicated and lost the stability that characterised Holmes’s world (Clausen 122).

Overall, even though Dupin’s and Holmes’s general methods of investigation appear to be very similar, there seem to be some fundamental differences that are linked to the broader context of the stories, namely the nineteenth-century debate on science and method. According to Van Dover, Dupin “was the first hero to invite readers to identify with an intellect that uses methodical analysis to disentangle sensational moral crises” (29). Based on his methodical observation and interpretation, Dupin succeeds in uncovering the moral order of his world (Van Dover 30). However, even though the detective is methodical, his method denotes the dawn of science rather than exemplifying modern science (Van Dover 3). Moreover, an important difference can be noted between his method adopted in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” and the one adopted in “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” and “The Purloined Letter” (Van Dover). In the first short story, Dupin comes very close to practising scientific investigation; he reasons from a result to the possible causes of this result (Wentworth 11). Based on observation of relevant data and his subsequent creation of hypotheses he is able to discover a truth not previously known (Wentworth 11). Like a true scientific detective, Dupin questions things and he carefully examines the crime scene (Van Dover 45). In the succeeding two short stories, however, Dupin moves away from his

scientific methodology, as his “ratiocinative practice” becomes more peculiar (Van Dover 13). Whereas Dupin adopts an empirical mode of thinking in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” that fits within the theory of “baconianism”, in the other two short stories it seems he discards this mode and adopts a more “speculative method”, “constructing for him worlds in which patient baconian accumulation of facts leads only to accumulations of facts” (Van Dover 46). Van Dover states that Dupin’s method in these two short stories becomes more “idiosyncratic and esoteric at a time when real science in England and America was proclaiming itself thoroughly exoteric” (25). Dupin’s insights in the latter two short stories often become almost supernatural, even though the detective goes through the trouble of explaining how he arrived at them. A typical feature of Dupin’s “method” in these stories is his ability to identify with a person’s mind, merely based on his observation of the person’s facial expressions (Wentworth 14-15). In “The Purloined Letter”, Dupin explains how he manages to know the workings of a person’s mind: “When I wish to find out how wise, or how stupid, or how good, or how wicked is anyone, or what are his thoughts at the moment, I fashion the expression of my face, as accurately as possible, in accordance with the expression of his, and then wait to see what thoughts or sentiments arise in my mind or heart, as if to match or correspond with the expression” (Poe 249). Dupin takes his practice a step further in “The Purloined Letter” when he is able to identify with the mind of an opponent whom he has never even met, based on “speculative reasoning” (Van Dover 45). Van Dover states that this ability of Dupin’s to identify with a person’s mind shows that Poe was not really interested in making his character a pure scientific detective (45). Furthermore, in “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt”, Dupin offers a solution to the murder mystery merely based on his reading of newspapers and without even leaving his house (Van Dover 45). Dupin’s “method” in these last two short stories shows the detective favours “imaginative ratiocination” rather than “Baconian analysis of detail” (Van Dover 46).

Nevertheless, despite Van Dover's assertion that Dupin cannot really be considered a pure scientific detective, it must be noted that Dupin makes reference to medical works and must have conducted laboratory experiments, since he knows quite a lot about the workings of the human body (Wentworth 48). This can be seen in the following comment from "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt": "There are chemical infusions by which the animal frame can be preserved forever from corruption; the Bi-chloride of Mercury is one. But, apart from decomposition, there may be, and very usually is, a generation of gas within the stomach, from the acetous fermentation of vegetable matter ... sufficient to induce a distension which will bring the body to the surface" (Poe 742). This quotation shows Dupin has a knowledge of science that is more than superficial.

When looking back at the three phases that Van Dover distinguishes regarding the popular debate about science, the Dupin stories generally fit in the first phase, which extended from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the 1840s (Van Dover 47). According to Van Dover, in the 1840s the scientific method's power was visible and growing but had not yet claimed exclusive, absolute authority (46). Moreover, its nature was still disputable (Van Dover 46). Poe was therefore still free to experiment with his detective's methods; he let him try "near-scientific" methods as well as more metaphysical methods (Van Dover 47). Sherlock Holmes states that Dupin "had some analytical genius, no doubt; but he was by no means such a phenomenon as Poe appeared to imagine" (Doyle *A Study* 16). Introducing a theory by Kennedy, Joswick mentions that Poe seems to have abandoned detective fiction because he was displeased with the restrictions of ratiocination - "an intellectual system out of touch with the problems of human fallibility and mortality" (qtd. in Joswick 245). Nevertheless, according to Bloom, Dupin has to be considered "the greatest of all pre-Holmesian forensic experts" (21).

By the time Doyle created Sherlock Holmes in the 1880s, the debate about science had developed in such a way that “the only possible method for detecting truth was the scientific” (Van Dover 47). Holmes’s method is that of the “new science”, in which “empirical Baconianism” is combined with individual genius (Van Dover 25). In a period that saw the professionalization of science, Doyle made it possible for “normal” citizens to come into contact with modern science through the endeavours of a detective genius (Van Dover 2-3): “‘And if I show you too much of my method of working, you will come to the conclusion that I am a very ordinary individual after all.’ ‘I shall never do that,’ I answered; ‘you have brought detection as near an exact science as it ever will be brought in this world’” (Doyle *A Study* 28-29). In “The Case of the Great Detective”, Knight suggests that this adherence to science could also have negative consequences since “many people found facts and objective science potentially anti-humane” (369). Doyle solved this problem, however, by countering Holmes’s “anti-humaneness” with his eccentric, bohemian character (Knight 369). Sherlock Holmes clearly belongs in what Van Dover labels the third phase of the debate about science; a period in which scientific and popular culture were starting to undergo a separation and science was professionalized (Van Dover 2-3). In the course of the stories, the detective frequently refers to his “method” of investigation, by which he means “the method of his century”, namely the scientific method (Van Dover 4).

Looking back at the historical framework of detective fiction, it can be noted that detectives like Dickens’s Inspector Bucket and Collins’s Sergeant Cuff cannot really be considered “masters of method” (Van Dover 49). Van Dover notes that the focus in Dickens’s and Collins’s stories lies on the minds and actions of the protagonists rather than on the method with which they attain knowledge (49). However, a detective who is very methodical is Gaboriau’s Monsieur Lecoq, whom Van Dover describes as “the most important detective between Dupin and Holmes” (50). Just like Holmes insults Poe’s Dupin in *A Study in Scarlet*

calling him an inferior detective, he also talks about Lecoq in a degrading way: “‘Lecoq was a miserable bungler,’ he said, in an angry voice; ‘he had only one thing to recommend him, and that was his energy. That book made me positively ill’” (Doyle *A Study* 16-17). Since it is known that Doyle was inspired by Gaboriau’s stories, it seems that he made it a habit of letting his detective mention his sources of inspiration in a negative way. Even though Lecoq does not claim to be a scientist, he displays interesting methods of analysis that are based on observation of people’s behaviour and appearance (Van Dover 51). Van Dover claims that Gaboriau was especially impressed by the empirical method of Dupin in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” and he was inspired to imitate Poe’s tales in his own work (51). In the stories in which Lecoq features as protagonist, the detective proves to possess “a genius for methodical, Dupinian investigation” (Van Dover 52). Nevertheless, Van Dover states that Gaboriau overall failed to let his detective “take method as his soul and essence” (56). Gaboriau’s stories were translated to English in the 1880s, which made it possible for Doyle to read them and be inspired by them for his own work (Van Dover 56). However, since Gaboriau was mainly inspired by Poe for his detective’s “method”, we could say that Dupin is the one who inspired both the method of Monsieur Lecoq and that of Sherlock Holmes. Moreover, we must not discard the fact Doyle confirmed that not so much Dupin, but his mentor Dr. Bell was the main source of inspiration for his detective’s peculiar analytical method (Lycett 118).

### 3.3.2 Holmes and Science: Dr. Bell

Despite the similarities between the methods of Dupin and Holmes, Doyle was not entirely inspired by Poe’s stories for his detective’s investigation method. Lycett mentions that Doyle desired to follow in the same track as Poe but also wanted to add something new to the genre of detective fiction (118). This is why he looked to his mentor Dr. Bell and “his technique of

picking up clues from the minutiae of a person's appearance" (Lycett 118). Doyle believed that his mentor would be an ideal detective since Bell considered the basis of successful diagnosis to be "the precise and intelligent recognition and appreciation of minor differences" (qtd. in Lycett 118). According to Doyle, Dr. Bell would have approached the profession of detective "as if it were a science" (Lycett 118). This particular attention to (modern) science, combined with an extraordinary attention to detail, would become Doyle's "added ingredient" to the detective genre (Lycett 118). With regard to Bell, Doyle mentions in *Memories and Adventures*: "It is no wonder that after the study of such a character, I used and amplified his methods when in later life I tried to build up a scientific detective who solved cases on his own merits and not through the folly of the criminal" (26).

Given that Doyle was chosen by Bell to become his outpatient clerk at the Royal Infirmary, he was able to observe the man's interests and ways of working (Lycett 54). Bell, a distinguished surgeon, was someone who meticulously observed his patients' behaviours and gestures, "which allowed him to make instant diagnoses from minimal evidence" (Lycett 53). Doyle's biography mentions "Bell claimed he could tell from a man's appearance that he had served, until recently, as a non-commissioned officer in a Highland regiment in Barbados" (Lycett 53). Explaining his reasoning process to his students, Bell said: "You see, gentlemen, the man was a respectful man but did not remove his hat. They do not in the army, but he would have learned civilian ways had he been long discharged. He had an air of authority and is obviously Scottish. As to Barbados, his complaint is elephantiasis, which is West Indian and not British, and the Scottish regiments are at present in that particular land" (Lycett 53-54). Bell's analysis reminds us of *A Study in Scarlet*, in which Holmes immediately notes that Watson has just returned from Afghanistan: "How are you? ... You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive" (Doyle 6). Moreover, Bell's clarification of his reasoning process comes very close to Holmes's characteristic ability to construct an entire characterisation of someone,



based on meticulous observations and consequent hypotheses, of which I included an example in the previous chapter.

Bell himself contacted Doyle to offer him some suggestions for further cases (Lycett 190). However, Doyle explained that he was reluctant to introduce the laboratory too much into his stories because he wanted to make sure that his readers would still be interested (Lycett 190). The cases could therefore not become too specialised or go “beyond the average man, whose interest must be held from the first, and who won’t be interested unless he thoroughly understands” (qtd. in Lycett 190). Doyle created a detective who exemplified modern science in such a way that contemporary readers were able to understand it.

Apart from the figure of Dr. Bell, also Doyle himself and his own interest in contemporary scientific developments influenced his detective’s scientific method. Reflecting both his creator’s interest in science, and that of Dr. Bell, Holmes is described as follows in *A Study in Scarlet*: “Holmes is a little too scientific for my tastes – it approaches to cold-bloodedness. I could imagine his giving a friend a little pinch of the latest vegetable alkaloid, not out of malevolence, you understand, but simply out of a spirit of enquiry in order to have an accurate idea of the effects” (Doyle 6). Moreover, when Watson meets Holmes for the first time, he finds him working with test tubes in a chemical laboratory.

Especially towards the end of the nineteenth century, many scientific developments took place. Sir William Herschel observed that people’s fingers could serve as a means for identification since the structure of each person’s finger’s ridges is different (Lycett 119). Moreover, Henry Faulds suggested that fingerprints could potentially play an important role in tracking down criminals (Lycett 119). Furthermore, in 1882, Alphonse Bertillon introduced his theory of “anthropometrics”, according to which one could describe and predict a criminal’s behaviour based on his precise body measurements (Lycett 119). Bertillon backed up his theory with photographs, “thus helping institutionalize the police ‘mugshot’” (Lycett

119). In the same decade, Francis Galton believed that “every aspect of human personality and temperament can be measured” (Lycett 120). Moreover, he executed his study of eugenics by gathering basic physical data from a large number of people, including people’s fingerprints (Lycett 120). Doyle was fascinated by all of these scientific developments, as he corresponded with Galton about fingerprints and included Bertillon’s system of measurements in one of his Holmes stories (Lycett 120). According to Lycett, “it was the latest phase of the great nineteenth-century scientizing project Arthur had embarked on when he became a doctor and which he subtly reflected in the character of Sherlock Holmes” (148).

### 3.4 Interaction of Dupin and Holmes (and Poe and Doyle) with Nineteenth-Century Print Media

As was mentioned in the chapter concerned with the origins of detective fiction, newspapers and their reports on crime cases had a great influence on the creation of the detective genre. Authors were often inspired by real-life crimes that they read about in the newspapers and adapted the most interesting cases to fiction (Ousby 80-81). Stephen Ranchman notes that Conan Doyle is known to have “raided” *Tit-Bits*, “a London magazine of miscellaneous information,” for inspiration (25). Furthermore, ever since Poe’s Dupin tales, detective stories have been interested in crime reports to explore the permeation of reality and fiction: “through the use of the newspaper as the medium of criminal representation, detective fiction situated itself from the outset in a complex negotiation between worlds of facts and worlds of fictions” (Ranchman 20). Both Poe and Doyle were interested in crime as it was reported in the newspapers and they connected their fictional detective stories to contemporary society based on the integration of print media (Ranchman 20-21). This chapter will investigate how nineteenth-century print media are present in the Sherlock Holmes and Auguste Dupin stories by looking at the detectives’ interaction with newspapers. The comparison will be accompanied by information on the development of print media in the nineteenth century. Additionally, the interaction of the authors with nineteenth-century media will also be taken into account.

First of all, print media are a medium for Dupin and Holmes, as well as for the “ordinary” masses in society, through which they perceive urban reality (Ranchman 23). Since both Holmes and Dupin tend to lead a secluded life, their interaction with newspapers allows them to keep in touch with everything that happens in society. Furthermore, as was mentioned in the chapter concerned with the detective’s character, Holmes constantly looks

for stimulation, which he either finds in mysterious cases or in drugs. According to Susan Zieger, however, to this list also tobacco and newspapers need to be added (24). In fact, tobacco and print prove to be his favourite substances, which can be linked to a wider popular interest in consuming print and tobacco (Zieger 24-25). In the course of the nineteenth century, mass literacy increased, which led to a proper “media addiction” in the final decade of the century (Zieger 26). Holmes therefore exemplifies nineteenth-century readers who were active consumers of stories (Zieger 25). In the same way, Dupin is also a “voracious smoker, reader and contemplator of the abstruse” who embodies nineteenth-century society’s interest in print (Zieger 35). As a fervent reader, “books, indeed, were his sole luxuries, and in Paris these are easily obtained” (Poe “The Murders” 109).

Furthermore, during the detectives’ investigations, newspapers prove to be indispensable, since they often inform them of new developments in a case. It is the narrator’s task in the Dupin stories to get hold of all the newspapers that contain information about a certain case: “In the morning, I procured, at the Prefecture, a full report of all the evidence elicited, and, at the various newspaper offices, a copy of every paper in which, from first to last, had been published any decisive information in regard to this sad affair” (Poe “The Mystery” 728-729). Especially in “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt”, print media play an essential role, since Dupin is able to solve the case, entirely based on his analysis of the information provided in newspaper articles. In the same way, Holmes and Watson keep an eye on all the newspapers that are published, to see if they introduce new or interesting information on a case. Watson says in *The Sign of the Four*: “on opening the *Standard*, however, I found that there was a fresh allusion to the business” (Doyle 167). Moreover, Holmes also actively interacts with newspapers, as he sometimes sends in advertisements to lure his suspects: “‘Look at this advertisement,’ he answered. ‘I had one sent to every paper this morning immediately after the affair.’ ... ‘And who do you expect will answer this

advertisement?’ ‘Why, the man in the brown coat ... If he does not come himself, he will send an accomplice’” (Doyle *A Study* 34). The extracts cited show that the detectives see newspapers as an important complementary source on top of the official police reports that they receive. Moreover, for Holmes, newspapers are also an active resource since he uses them to place advertisements.

In both Doyle’s and Poe’s work, the detectives not only use information from print media to further their investigations, they also frequently comment on the papers’ coverage of crimes. With regard to Auguste Dupin, the following extract from “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” seems relevant:

“We should bear in mind that, in general, it is the object of our newspapers rather to create a sensation – to make a point - than to further the cause of truth. The latter end is only pursued when it seems coincident with the former. The print which merely falls in with ordinary opinion (however well founded this opinion may be) earns for itself no credit with the mob. The mass of the people regard as profound only him who suggests *pungent contradictions* of the general idea” (Poe 738).

Ranchman mentions that detective fiction is often accused of being too sensational, creating shocking stories about corpses just for the “pleasure” of the readers (19). However, the genre’s reputation can be traced back to its origins. If detective fiction is sensational, “it acquired this from the newspaper by way of Poe” (Ranchman 19). The print media themselves, in their turn, fitted within a wider interest in sensationalism, culminating in the sensation novel. The extract cited above shows that Dupin agrees newspaper articles are often too concerned with sensation instead of with objective reports. The truth, according to Dupin, is only important to writers when it serves a purpose in their sensationalist aims. The way

certain crimes are covered in the Dupin stories confirms this nineteenth-century fascination for sensationalism. In “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” for example, the Parisian newspaper *The Gazette* introduces the headline: “EXTRAORDINARY MURDERS” (Poe 113). This title implies that “ordinary murder is commonplace in the metropolis and not worthy of full caps” (Ranchman 19). “Ordinary” murders are not interesting enough to be written in capitals; the public is only captivated by “extraordinary” mysteries. One has to note, however, that even though the rational Dupin critiques the sensationalism of newspapers, he himself is only interested in solving crimes characterised by extraordinary aspects. He frequently remarks that he mostly pays attention to what he calls “outré” events: “it appears to me that this mystery is considered insoluble for the very reason which should cause it to be regarded as easy of solution – I mean for the outré character of its features” (Poe “The Murders” 122). Only if a certain crime is extraordinary or “outré” enough, can the detective, as well as the nineteenth-century masses, be captivated.

Dupin’s rather negative opinion on newspapers in the extract cited above can be linked to the development of print media in nineteenth-century America. From the start of the century up until the 1850s, America experienced a first “information explosion” due to a great increase in literacy (Lehuu 16). Lehuu mentions that the literacy rate of white adult Americans in the 1850s was 90 percent, whereas Britain’s literacy rate was only about 60 percent in the same period (17). This American “democratization of reading” naturally had an impact on the development of print media, with a “print upheaval” in the first half of the century (Lehuu 16). American society saw an increase in cheap books, periodicals, and newspaper circulation, in order to meet the demands of the new, vast reading public (Lehuu 17). According to Lehuu “the once well-ordered and controlled world of print had exploded, catering to a multifaceted reading public” (17). However, not everyone regarded these changes as positive, since the increase in popular print was associated with “ephemeral

entertainment rather than sound knowledge” (Lehuu 17). Lehuu even mentions that newspapers circulating in the big cities transformed into a “substitute for village gossip” (51). Moreover, more people became fascinated by police reports and the hidden mysteries of the city (Lehuu 52). Even though statistics proved that police forces mostly had to concentrate on minor offenses, the masses increasingly perceived the city as a place full of hidden dangers, which was reflected by the “invasion of crime news in New York’s cheap newspapers” (Lehuu 53). More papers, especially the so-called penny papers, started to serve as an alternative for the police force, by reporting on crimes and by conducting their own investigations (Lehuu 53). The newspaper reports on crime, however, were focused on sensational details, often providing their readers with “bloody and bodily descriptions” (Lehuu 53). Lehuu affirms that “antebellum readers viewed sensational news with both horror and pleasure, for the popular press represented ‘low’ entertainment reminiscent of the carnivalesque” (57). Poe’s Dupin stories, published in the 1840s, can be situated at precisely the time when these great changes in American print media were in order. This is why Dupin’s attitude towards newspapers, expressed in the extract cited above, is rather negative. The articles he reads are mainly examples of sensationalist crime reports, which often provided the readers with exciting news instead of focusing on fact-based, truthful narratives. Remarks on some of the newspaper articles in “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” provide further evidence for this: “L'Etoile was again over-hasty” (Poe 733). Furthermore, it is said that “as time passed and no discovery ensued, a thousand contradictory rumors were circulated, and journalists busied themselves in *suggestions*” (Poe “The Mystery” 731).

It is interesting to note how Edgar Allan Poe shared Dupin’s attention to newspapers and their coverage of crimes. As was mentioned before, in the second short story, “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt”, newspaper articles are the detective’s only medium to solve the case. The reason why Poe wrote this story was because he himself wanted to investigate a

murder which he had read about in the newspapers. At the start of the story, the narrator says: “The extraordinary details which I am now called upon to make public ... whose secondary or concluding branch will be recognized by all readers in the late murder of Mary Cecila Rogers, at New York” (Poe “The Mystery” 724). “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” simply transports the case of the murdered Mary C. Rogers (1841) from New York to Paris (Priestman 5). Since Poe had already set his first detective story in Paris, it seems logical that for a sequel to this story, he transported the New York case to Paris in order to let his detective solve it: “Thus, under pretence of showing how Dupin (the hero of “The Rue Morgue”) unraveled the mystery of Marie’s assassination, I, in reality, enter into a very long and rigorous analysis of the New York tragedy” (qtd. in Mabbott 718). In the story, Dupin therefore represents the author himself, who introduces his own perspective on the murder case. The murder of Rogers received a lot of attention from the city newspapers, since her violent death lent itself to sensational coverage (Lehuu 54). According to Lehuu, “both her violent death and her unknown whereabouts in the city created an enigma that the press sought to resolve by speculations about her romantic life, her elopement, an abortion, or even a street gang” (54). Whereas the newspapers focused on evoking strong emotions, Poe wanted to counter this sensationalism by the use of reason and an overall more meticulous attention to facts (Lehuu 54). Poe collected the known facts as they appeared in newspapers and police reports and sought to provide an answer to the mystery based on his “ratiocinative practice” (Krystal 86). He succeeded in presenting readers with a new perspective on the case, shifting attention from what the press considered to be the main suspects to other possible culprits (Priestman 6). Whereas the American press was confused as to whether Mary was murdered by one man or by a gang, Poe suggested the possible culprit was a naval officer with whom Mary had been having an affair (Krystal 86-87). With his story, Poe showed “his distaste for excesses of popular sensationalism and advocated the use of reason and deduction” (Lehuu 56). However,



it can be noted that even though Poe wants to represent a rational point of view, like his detective Dupin, he was intrigued to investigate a murder characterised by extraordinary and sensational aspects. According to Ranchman, “through the example of Poe, mass culture began to participate more widely in the modern fantasy of rendering the mysteries of the great city suddenly legible by analysing the details of cases in newspapers” (25).

As was explained in the first paragraphs, Sherlock Holmes essentially interacts with newspapers in the same way as Dupin; he attaches great importance to them as an additional resource to his own intellect and the official police reports he receives. Holmes’s attitude towards the press, however, overall seems to be more positive than Dupin’s. In *A Study in Scarlet* he says: “‘Have you seen the evening paper?’ ‘No.’ ‘It gives a fairly good account of the affair’” (Doyle 34). In this example, Holmes shows his appreciation for newspapers as truthful reporters on crime. On other occasions, however, he is more sceptical towards the press, which can mostly be linked to the fact that his extraordinary mind often considers other people’s opinions to be inferior or false. Holmes’s overall positive attitude towards newspapers can again be linked to the development of print media, this time in Britain. At the start of the century, so-called “penny-a-liners”, “old-style” newspaper journalists who were paid by the line, occupied an important position in the press (Rowbotham et al. 21). These writers were, however, gradually replaced by more “modernizing newspaper editors and proprietors” in the course of the nineteenth century (Rowbotham et al. 21). This was associated with the desire of the national press to expand their readership and establish a more respectable character (Rowbotham et al. 20). At the same time, the legal profession was becoming aware that they had a rather poor reputation, which was furthered in the press (Rowbotham et al. 20). This is why, as a result, the press and the legal profession started to work together in a more efficient way (Rowbotham et al. 21). Often, lawyers were directly involved in the production of texts, which enabled the establishment of “a more detailed or

forensic (which might also be described as a more professional) approach to presentations of crime and the criminal justice process in the media” (Rowbotham et al. 21). This development led to more accurate reports on crime and events in the courtroom (Rowbotham et al. 21). News coverage gradually moved towards a more objective and truthful narrative, which was associated with a separation of the occupations of reporter and journalist (Rowbotham et al. 21). Overall, there was a significant shift from sensationalist reportage, which was frequently inaccurate, to a focus on legal accuracy, “acting as a new frame for a continuing sensationalism” (Rowbotham et al. 23). Whereas especially from the 1850s onwards one can notice great changes in the level of accuracy in newspaper reports, from the 1880s onwards, journalism became a proper profession that required specialist knowledge and training (Rowbotham et al. 65). According to Rowbotham et al., the period from 1885 to 1900 saw a “new approach for incorporating sensationalism into crime reportage, with a renewed emphasis on investigative journalism” (60).

Like his character, also Arthur Conan Doyle interacted with contemporary media. As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Doyle read popular papers and magazines hoping to find inspiration for his own stories. Furthermore, in the historical chapters of my dissertation, it became clear that Doyle’s contribution to the field of detective fiction, apart from having created a famous detective character, is to have made use of contemporary media in an innovative way (Binyon 12). Instead of only writing traditional novels in serial form, he created a series of short stories, which was a highly popular medium in the late nineteenth century (Binyon 12). Doyle’s short stories were then published in *The Strand*, which let them actively interact with popular ways of reading (Binyon 12). Especially in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the reading public expanded greatly in Britain, which had a big impact on the presentation of news (Paterson). Papers and magazines had to be made entertaining and “to the point”, since readers often had limited time to read them (Paterson). By the nineties, it

also became possible to include photographs in print, which led to the fact that “news had to be told more concisely, and text had to be more eye-catching because it had to compete for attention” (Paterson). During this period, the “new journalism” gave way to cheap newspapers, evening papers and illustrated weekly papers, such as *The Strand Magazine* (Paterson). Doyle therefore interacted with new developments, directly linking his Holmes stories to popular currents in contemporary media.

In conclusion, it has become clear that both in the Dupin stories and in the Holmes stories print media play an essential role. A comparison between Dupin and Holmes shows that both detectives consider print media to be an ideal way of keeping in touch with events in society. Furthermore, there is a similarity in the way they both use articles about crime cases to further their investigations. With regard to the detectives’ opinions on newspaper coverage of crimes, one can notice a difference between the attitude of Dupin and the one of Holmes, which can be linked to the development of print media from inaccurate or hasty sensational reports in the first half of the nineteenth century to proper investigative journalism by the last decades of the century. Both detectives therefore seem to respond to certain contemporary changes. Moreover, both Poe and Doyle, like their detectives, responded to popular developments in the media, linking their fictional world to contemporary society through their interaction with print media. As the introduction of this chapter has already shown, it was normal for detective stories to connect the fictional world to real-life society through interaction with print media. Charles Dickens for example, even though his work cannot be considered pure detective fiction, was inspired by contemporary newspaper police reports and articles on crime when writing his stories about criminals and detectives (Pykett 27-28). Furthermore, he wrote numerous articles about police work, which he published in the magazine *Household Words* (Ousby 85-86). This is why, even though similarities can be found in the way print media are present in the stories of Poe and Doyle, Doyle did not

necessarily consciously reproduce this aspect from Poe. Poe was however the first author to introduce the permeation of reality and fiction in detective stories through the use of newspaper reports on crime, which means ultimately Poe did inspire Doyle indirectly for this aspect. Overall, we can say that both authors responded to contemporary developments in that they tried to enrich their literary works by making the link with popular mass media.

## 4 Conclusion

Poe's and Doyle's influence in the field of detective fiction has been acknowledged to satiety before. Poe is generally considered to be the first author who wrote "proper" formal detective stories, whereas Doyle's Holmes tales are often cited as a peak in the genre's development. Although Poe and Doyle have been discussed separately on numerous occasions, a detailed comparison between both authors' stories, in particular between their two detectives, left some room for exploration. In this dissertation, I have investigated the link between Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and Poe's Auguste Dupin tales, to see to what extent Doyle was inspired by Poe's detective when he created Holmes. In the discussion of various aspects, the context in which the detective stories originated, both the context of detective fiction and developments in nineteenth-century society, was taken into account. By comparing certain aspects, various affinities between Holmes and Dupin became clearly visible, which showed that Poe's detective probably had considerable influence on Doyle when he created Sherlock Holmes. Furthermore, the discussion of the stories' context showed which other people could have inspired Doyle and to what extent Holmes's creator adapted certain aspects of Poe's stories to make his detective respond to contemporary changes.

Given that Sherlock Holmes remains one of the most popular characters in literature, a study of his origins and a specific comparison with Auguste Dupin, who is one of his most important predecessors, continues to be relevant. However, since the nineteenth century saw the publication of numerous detective stories, it is somewhat problematic to know for certain which specific aspects Doyle reproduced from which authors. We can only observe the affinities between his work and that of writers who preceded him, and concentrate on the people that were mentioned by Doyle as sources of inspiration. Since Poe was the first author

who constructed detective stories, which contain many stock elements of detective fiction, he undoubtedly influenced many authors succeeding him, including Doyle.

Before comparing Holmes and Dupin, a historical framework was offered, which positioned the stories of Doyle and Poe in the context of nineteenth-century detective fiction. Moreover, I selected a few important authors who made a contribution to detective fiction in the nineteenth century and who are known to have also inspired Doyle.

The dissertation then zoomed in on a specific comparison between Dupin and Holmes, taking into account various aspects that characterise Poe's and Doyle's stories. First of all, the character of the detective was looked at, specifically his personality and profession. From this chapter it became clear that all of Dupin's character traits also characterise Holmes. Even though Dupin is often described as a "voice of reason", he also possesses a "human" side. In Holmes, however, this human and eccentric side is more fully developed, which makes him memorable to readers. When looking back at the other detectives who preceded Holmes, it became clear that some authors, such as Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins, whom we know inspired Doyle, created eccentric detective characters before Doyle. This could then show that Doyle also looked to these authors' detectives when developing the "human" side of Holmes. Furthermore, both Dupin and Holmes can be described as consulting detectives who interact with contemporary conceptions about detective work.

Secondly, the relationship between the detective and narrator was investigated. In this chapter, I looked at various elements that characterise the relationship between Holmes and Dr. Watson and made the comparison with Dupin's relationship with the unnamed narrator. In comparing this aspect of the detective stories, also the context of the stories was taken into account, in particular the concept of "homosociality". It became clear that many similarities can be found between both relationships, such as the relationship between master and student and between detective and biographer. Moreover, both Poe's and Doyle's detective stories

seem to respond to the same phenomenon in society, namely the need for homosocial bonds. Whereas at the time the Dupin stories emerged these bonds were still seen as natural, by the end of the nineteenth century, when Doyle's stories were published, they were accompanied by a homosexual panic, which is why many people began to feel uncomfortable when reading about two bachelors living together.

Thirdly, the detective's methods of investigation were examined. In this chapter, Dupin's and Holmes's methods were linked to the development of science in the nineteenth century. Even though there are many affinities between Dupin's and Holmes's ways of working, the context in which the stories were written contributed to important differences. Since the Holmes stories emerged at a time when science had developed considerably compared to the 1840s, Holmes's method can be described as exemplifying a more modern scientific approach. Furthermore, Doyle himself affirmed that it was not only Poe's detective who inspired him for the method Holmes adopts. Since he desired to add something new to the stories and character Poe created, he decided to mainly look to his mentor Dr. Bell, who was known for his peculiar analytic abilities. We can therefore conclude that for this aspect of Holmes, Dupin had less influence than Dr. Bell and the development of science, even though the detectives' methods are essentially quite similar.

Finally, I examined an aspect that is usually not looked at in studies of detective fiction, namely the interaction of the detective with print media, which I linked to the development of media in the nineteenth century. When reading Poe's and Doyle's detective stories it becomes clear that newspapers play an essential role, since both Dupin and Holmes attach a lot of importance to them as (re)sources for their investigations. Furthermore, there is a difference in Dupin's and Holmes's attitude towards the papers, which I linked to the fact that print media experienced a significant development in the nineteenth century. At the time of the Dupin stories, newspaper reports on crimes were still very much concerned with

sensationalism, whereas by the end of the nineteenth century there was more focus on investigative journalism. This could then explain why Dupin is rather negative towards the paper coverage, whereas Holmes overall seems to express a more positive attitude. For this aspect, however, Doyle was probably not consciously influenced by Poe.

In the introduction, I mentioned that some nineteenth-century critics accused Doyle of plagiarism. However, Doyle frequently expressed his admiration for Poe's stories, which shows he acknowledged the author's influence. Moreover, the results of my dissertation have shown that even though there are clear similarities between both detectives, once the context of nineteenth-century detective fiction and various developments in society has been taken into account, one cannot claim there is a unique link between Dupin and Holmes. Once the context of the stories has been taken into account, it becomes clear that the Dupin stories originated in a period in which big changes were in order in terms of gender, science, and print media. The Holmes stories on the other hand can be situated at a time when most of these developments had reached a new stage. Dupin and Holmes both react in their own way to these changes. Furthermore, when looking at the context of detective fiction it appears that many other detective characters possess affinities with Holmes. Since we know that Doyle read and digested stories written by authors such as Dickens, Collins and Gaboriau, it seems logical that aspects of their detectives also found their way into Holmes. In conclusion, even though there is considerable overlap between the Dupin and Holmes stories, we must not discard the influence that the stories' context had on the aspects that were discussed. It does seem clear, however, that without Auguste Dupin, Sherlock Holmes and the development of detective fiction would probably have looked very different.



## Works Cited

- Ashley, Robert P. "Wilkie Collins and the Detective Story." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1951, pp. 47-60. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/3044284](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3044284).
- Bell, A. Craig. "The Rise and Fall of the Detective Novel." *Contemporary Review*, vol. 272, no. 1587, 1998, pp. 196-200. *ProQuest*, [search.proquest.com/docview/204917783?accountid=11077](http://search.proquest.com/docview/204917783?accountid=11077).
- Binyon, T. J. *'Murder Will Out': The Detective in Fiction*. Oxford UP, 1989.
- Bloom, Clive. "Capitalising on Poe's Detective: the Dollars and Sense of Nineteenth-Century Detective Fiction." *Nineteenth-Century Suspense: From Poe to Conan Doyle*, edited by Clive Bloom, Brian Docherty, Jane Gibb, and Keith Shand, Macmillan, 1988, pp. 14-26.
- Caprettini, Gian Paolo. "Sherlock Holmes: Ethics, Logic, and the Mask." *Sherlock Holmes: The Major Stories with Contemporary Critical Essays*, edited by John A. Hodgson, Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994, pp. 328-335.
- Church, Joseph. "'To Make Venus Vanish': Misogyny as Motive in Poe's 'Murders in the Rue Morgue'." *American Transcendental Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 2, 2006, pp. 407-418. *ProQuest*, [search.proquest.com/docview/222376382?accountid=11077](http://search.proquest.com/docview/222376382?accountid=11077).
- Clausen, Christopher. "Sherlock Holmes, Order and the Late-Victorian Mind." *The Georgia Review*, vol. 38, no. 1, 1984, pp. 104-123. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/41398643](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41398643).
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *Memories and Adventures*. 1924. Cambridge UP, 2012. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=LKusgEu5uvUC&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.be/books?id=LKusgEu5uvUC&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- . "A Scandal in Bohemia." *The Adventures and Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Julian Wolfreys, Wordsworth, 1996, pp. 3-26.
- . "The Sign of the Four." *A Study in Scarlet & The Sign of the Four*, edited by David Stuart Davies, Wordsworth, 2004, pp. 107-204.

- . "The Speckled Band." *The Adventures and Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Julian Wolfreys, Wordsworth, 1996, pp. 154-180.
- . "A Study in Scarlet." *A Study in Scarlet & The Sign of the Four*, edited by David Stuart Davies, Wordsworth, 2004, pp. 1-106.
- Dove, George N. "Formula, Myth and Reality Formula." *The Police Procedural*, Popular, 1982, pp. 112-144. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=KOlPkYBjygc&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=KOlPkYBjygc&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- "The Duo of Dr. Watson & Sherlock Holmes." *Dr. John Watson – The Clue to Understanding*, GRIN Verlag, 2011, pp. 4-6. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=PIOA-74QLaAC&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=PIOA-74QLaAC&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- Gilbert, Elliot L. "Detective." *Dictionary of Literary Themes and Motifs A-J*, edited by Jean-Charles Seigneuret, Greenwood, 1988, pp. 372-387. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=OCHXr3RIETQC&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=OCHXr3RIETQC&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- González-Moreno, Beatriz. "Approaching the Dupin-Holmes (or Poe-Doyle) Controversy." *A Descent into Edgar Allan Poe and His Works: The Bicentennial*, edited by Beatriz González-Moreno, and Margarita Rigal Aragón, Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 59-78. *ProQuest*, [search.proquest.com/docview/742370619?accountid=11077](https://search.proquest.com/docview/742370619?accountid=11077).
- Grella, George. "Murder and Manners: The Formal Detective Novel." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, vol. 4, no. 1, 1970, pp. 30-48. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/1345250](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1345250).
- Hodgson, John A. "The Recoil of 'The Speckled Band': Detective Story and Detective Discourse." *Poetics Today*, vol. 13, no. 2, 1992, pp. 309-324. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1772535>.
- Humble, Nicola. "From Holmes to the Drones: Fantasies of Men without Women in the Masculine Middlebrow." *The Masculine Middlebrow, 1880-1950: What Mr. Miniver Read*,

- edited by Kate Macdonald, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 90-104. *Springer*,  
10.1057/9780230316577\_6.
- “James Boswell.” *WordNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection*, Farlex Inc, 2003-2008. *The Free Dictionary*, [www.thefreedictionary.com/James+Boswell](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/James+Boswell).
- Joswick, Thomas. “Moods of Mind: The Tales of Detection, Crime, and Punishment.” *A Companion to Poe Studies*, edited by Eric W. Carlson, Greenwood, 1996, pp. 236-257.
- Kennedy, J. Gerald. “The Limits of Reason: Poe’s Deluded Detectives.” *American Literature*, vol. 47, no. 2, 1975, pp. 184-196. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/2925480](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2925480).
- Knight, Stephen. “The Case of the Great Detective.” *Sherlock Holmes: The Major Stories with Contemporary Critical Essays*, edited by John A. Hodgson, Bedford Books of St. Martin’s Press, 1994, pp. 368-381.
- Krystal, Arthur. “THE USUAL SUSPECT: Edgar Allan Poe, Consulting Detective.” *Harper’s Magazine*, vol. 314, no. 1880, 2007, pp. 83-88. *ProQuest*, [search.proquest.com/docview/233446144?accountid=11077](http://search.proquest.com/docview/233446144?accountid=11077).
- Lehuu, Isabelle. *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media in Antebellum America*. 2000. UNC Press, 2003. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=ER-ytBcYap4C&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.be/books?id=ER-ytBcYap4C&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- Lemay, J. A. Leo. “The Psychology of ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’.” *American Literature*, vol. 54, no. 2, 1982, pp. 165-188. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/2926129](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2926129).
- Liebow, Ely. *Dr. Joe Bell: Model for Sherlock Holmes*, Popular, 1982. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=i5nb6TywMIQC&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.be/books?id=i5nb6TywMIQC&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- Lycett, Andrew. *The Man Who Created Sherlock Holmes: The Life and Times of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*. Simon and Schuster, 2007. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=zxzVQEMsCWwC&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.be/books?id=zxzVQEMsCWwC&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- Mabbott, Thomas Ollive, ed. *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe*. Vol. 3, Harvard UP, 1978.

- MacDonald, Janice. "Parody and Detective Fiction." *Theory and Practice of Classic Detective Fiction*, edited by Jerome H. Delamater and Ruth Prigozy, Greenwood, 1997, pp. 61-73.
- Nickerson, Catherine Ross. "Women Writers Before 1960." *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, edited by Catherine Ross Nickerson, Cambridge UP, 2010.
- Ousby, Ian. *Bloodhounds of Heaven: The Detective in English Fiction from Godwin to Doyle*. Harvard UP, 1976.
- Paterson, Michael. "The Press and Literature." *A Brief History of Life in Victorian Britain: A Social History of Life in Queen Victoria's Reign from the Court to the Slums*, Hachette UK, 2013. *Google Books*,  
[books.google.be/books?id=5hWeBAAAQBAJ&lpg=PP1&hl=nl&pg=PT139#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.be/books?id=5hWeBAAAQBAJ&lpg=PP1&hl=nl&pg=PT139#v=onepage&q&f=false).
- Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." *Tales of Horror*. Rev. ed. Alma Classics, 2016, pp. 106-138.
- . "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt." *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, vol. 3, edited by Thomas Ollive Mabbott, Harvard UP, 1978, pp. 715-789.
- . "The Purloined Letter." *Tales of Horror*. Rev. ed. Alma Classics, 2016, pp. 240-257.
- Priestman, Martin. "Detective Fiction and Scandal." *Detective Fiction and Literature: The Figure on the Carpet*. Macmillan, 1990, pp. 1-16.
- Punter, David. "Edgar Allan Poe: Tales of Dark Heat." *Nineteenth-Century Suspense: From Poe to Conan Doyle*, edited by Clive Bloom, Brian Docherty, Jane Gibb, and Keith Shand, Macmillan, 1988, pp. 1-14.
- Pykett, Lyn. "The Newgate Novel and Sensation Fiction, 1830-1868." *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, edited by Martin Priestman, Cambridge UP, 2003, pp. 19-41. *Google Books*,  
[books.google.be/books?id=9vTsSixUodYC&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=9vTsSixUodYC&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).

- Ranchman, Stephen. "Poe and the Origins of Detective Fiction." *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, edited by Catherine Ross Nickerson, Cambridge UP, 2010, pp. 17-29.
- Redmond, Christopher. "Characters and Adventures." *Sherlock Holmes Handbook*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Dundurn, 2009, pp. 38-66. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=X3OIoRbJFhAC&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=X3OIoRbJFhAC&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- Reiter, Paula J. "Doctors, Detectives, and the Professional Ideal: The Trial of Thomas Neill Cream and the Mastery of Sherlock Holmes." *College Literature*, vol. 35, no. 3, 2008, pp. 57-95. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/25115509](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25115509).
- Rowbotham, J., et al. "The Beginnings of Crime Intelligence: 1800-1860." *Crime News in Modern Britain: Press Reporting and Responsibility, 1820-2010*. Springer, 2013, pp. 14-39. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=xcjQAQAAQBAJ&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=xcjQAQAAQBAJ&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- . "Challenging the 'Golden Goose'? 1885-1900." *Crime News in Modern Britain: Press Reporting and Responsibility, 1820-2010*. Springer, 2013, pp. 60-84. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=xcjQAQAAQBAJ&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=xcjQAQAAQBAJ&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- Rzepka, Charles J. *Detective Fiction*. Polity, 2005.
- Scaggs, John. "The Police Procedural." *Crime Fiction*, Routledge, 2005, pp. 85-105.
- Schmid, David. "Manhood, Modernity, and Crime Fiction." *A Concise Companion to American Fiction 1900-1950*, edited by Peter Stoneley and Cindy Weinstein, John Wiley & Sons, 2008, pp. 94-113. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=WFsU9HEyeoMC&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=WFsU9HEyeoMC&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- "Serendipity." *Online Etymology Dictionary*, Douglas Harper, 2010. *Dictionary.com*, [www.dictionary.com/browse/serendipity](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/serendipity).

- Sims, Michael. "Your Powers of Deduction." *Arthur & Sherlock: Conan Doyle and the Creation of Holmes*, Bloomsbury, 2017. *Google Books*, [books.google.be/books?id=-RmLDQAAQBAJ&hl=nl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.be/books?id=-RmLDQAAQBAJ&hl=nl&source=gbs_navlinks_s).
- Van Dover, J. Kenneth. *You Know My Method: The Science of the Detective*. Popular, 1994.
- Van Leer, David. "Detecting Truth: The World of the Dupin Tales." *New Essays on Poe's Major Tales*, edited by Kenneth Silverman, Cambridge UP, 1993, pp. 65-93.
- Walton, James. "Conrad, Dickens, and the Detective Novel." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 23, no. 4, 1969, pp. 446-462. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/2932684](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2932684).
- Wentworth, Robert B. *Comparison of the Mystery Solution Methods of Auguste Dupin and Sherlock Holmes*. Dissertation, Boston University, 1936. *OpenBU*, [hdl.handle.net/2144/18783](http://hdl.handle.net/2144/18783).
- Werner, James V. "The Detective Gaze: Edgar A. Poe, the Flaneur, and the Physiognomy of Crime." *American Transcendental Quarterly*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2001, pp. 5-21. *ProQuest*, [search.proquest.com/docview/222375922?accountid=11077](http://search.proquest.com/docview/222375922?accountid=11077).
- Zieger, Susan. "Holmes's Pipe, Tobacco Papers and the Nineteenth-Century Origins of Media Addiction." *Journal of Victorian Culture*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2014, pp. 24-42. *Taylor & Francis Online*, [dx.doi.org/10.1080/13555502.2014.889428](http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13555502.2014.889428).