

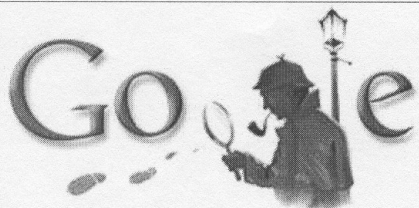


July/August Issue, 2006

Communication No. 264

The Pleasant Places of Florida

Vol.10 No.6



Darn cool logo used on Google May 22, the birthday of some guy by the name of Doyle...

KEEP DIGGING UNTIL YOU FIND IT by Carl L. Heifetz

Published in Holmes & Watson Report, 6 (3):27-31, (July) 2002; (almost) Presented at the 31st Spring Gathering

In a series of essays regarding Sherlock Holmes' application of the methods used by research scientists to perform his function as a Private Consulting Detective, I have focused on situations and circumstances appropriate to researchers whose labor is restricted to the pleasant environs of air-conditioned laboratories¹. However, as we are well aware, many major scientific advances are made by investigators who very infrequently sit comfortably in chairs while peering through a microscope or viewing the patterns of lines on a slab of gel from an electrophoresis run. No, they tromp the earth in practical walking shoes, wearing jeans or khaki shorts, while carrying shovels, sand pails, screens, and/or pick axes as they explore nature looking for scientific evidence to support their theories. Sherlock Holmes also fits this mold. How often have we encountered him crawling in the mud looking for candles, matches, or cigarette butts, or digging through cinders in a fire place?

Does this mean that such researchers do not use the method of scientists in a similar manner as their laboratory-bound colleagues? No, indeed. One can't just go digging helter-skelter anywhere, or search every cave in the world at random. They have to first know where to look. How else could four generations of Leakeys continue to unearth new evidences regarding the development of the human species, or archeologists discover additional undisturbed burial sites? As with all research scientists, they must follow the rules that I set forward previously: (1) Clearly state the PROBLEM in its simplest form. (2) Gather all of the DATA that you can find on the subject. (3) Be very diligent to OBSERVE everything no matter how unrelated it may appear at the time. (4) Read and master all of the available KNOWLEDGE on the subject to see what data has previously been reported. (5) Sift through all of the data, current and reported, and attempt to DEDUCE A TENTATIVE HYPOTHESIS and WORKING MODEL that reasonably fits all of the available information. (6) List further needed information, observations, and experiments that may refute or support your hypotheses. Seek EXPERIMENTAL PROOF and ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS and determine if the results fit or point a reformulation of the hypothesis. (7) With all data in hand, PUBLISH your observations, results, hypotheses, and conclusions in an appropriate format for others to read, challenge, and confirm.

Even though they have all of the available material in hand, scientific explorers must practice great diligence and patience in their quest for evidence. They may need to open many tombs, dig many holes in the earth, or scale many cliffs before they are finally successful. These requirements also pertain to scientific detectives such as Mr. Sherlock Holmes.

Acclaim and notoriety do not go to the scientists who fail in this quest, even if they try and try many times. No, it goes to the one who finally succeeds in locating the object being sought. Even if the prize eludes the initial investigator in five attempts, it is the one who succeeds in the sixth attempt who gets the fame and fortune associated with the accomplishment. Sometimes it is merely a matter of luck. For example, suppose a rare cache of golden Egyptian relics is in only one of six tombs. Using skill and acumen, an investigator may find and open five without finding what was sought. Statistically, this is an unlikely but possible occurrence. Thus, many scientists keep their explorations secret to avoid another from getting into their territory. This is done to prevent other investigators who come late into the field, from following the strategy already laid out to achieve (cont. on page 2)

From the Papers on the Sundial:

Well, for those of you who are obsessive compulsive, we apologize for messing up your filing system for the Communications. Somehow along the way Moriarty's minions (or gremlins) got into our typesetters and really mixed up the numbers. Starting this new year, you should have had a Jan/Feb 2006 Issue that was No. 259, Vol. 10 No.1 (so far so good), followed by a March/April 2006 Issue that was No. 260, Vol. 10 No.2 (it read Vol. 9). Next was a Special Issue No. 261 Vol. 10 No. 3 (it did not list a year and read Vol. 9) and then a May/June 2006 Issue No. 263 Vol. 10 No.5. (it read #259) What happened to No. 262 Vol. 10, No. 4 you ask? It's a special issue that didn't get done before the next one was sent out. I hope with this issue we're finally back on track. Apologies all around and remember, we're not professionals. This issue contains articles that were to be presented at the Spring Gathering but were not due to noise pollution.



Back Row: Carl Heifetz, Art Walker, Jeff Dow, Mike Bryan. On Couch: Donna Vaurio, Sandy Heifetz, Madlyn Sanford, Culver Dow. Front Row: Elizabeth Dow, Wanda Dow, Geri Hynes.



(cont. from page 1) the desired result for themselves. Perhaps we can attribute, in part, Sherlock Holmes' reticence to reveal the details of his deductions until all of the facts are in hand and the solution has been clearly delineated.

Perhaps no case in the Canon serves as a more appropriate example of these principles than "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons." Take the situation of the unlucky Beppo. He very ably succeeded in finding the first five statues of Napoleon. Unfortunately for him, his capture prevented him from ferreting out the true location of the Black Pearl of the Borgias that he had secreted therein the year before. But, not suspecting that an equally diligent searcher was following in his tracks, he left a trail of shards behind him for Sherlock Holmes to follow them as did Hansel and Gretel follow the stones laid down in their trek through the forest. Thus, on the sixth and final attempt, Sherlock Holmes found the item that poor Beppo so dearly sought - the Black Pearl.

Adding up one piece of evidence after another until reaching an hypothesis, Sherlock Holmes was undeterred by minor side issues, such as a bloody murder. After observing the remains left by several seemingly, to Lestrade at least, random attempts on the part of the unlucky villain of this story, Sherlock Holmes was able to resolve the problem with a scientific evaluation of the data available to him. He opened the sixth cave, as it were, and uncovered the treasure therein.

Let us explore this process one bust at a time:

Bust 1: The first breaking of the Napoleonic statue appeared to be an isolated event. A nut walks into Morse Hudson's shop, seemingly becomes infuriated by the statue of Napoleon, and breaks it into pieces. "Queer madness," says Lestrade. "That's no business of mine," replies Mr. Holmes. *Bust 2 & 3:* However, the report that burglaries were used to obtain and destroy two identical statues in two separate locations - Dr. Barnicott's surgery and his residence - get Mr. Holmes' attention. A pattern was starting to form. In three occasions, the identical statue was the victim. The fact that Morse Hudson's shop and the doctor's residence were filled with other Napoleonic representations revealed that this was more specific more than a hatred of Napoleon. *Bust 4:* The events leading to the discovery of broken bust number four obfuscated the search for the hidden treasure. The killing of an unknown Italian, by Beppo, in self defense we later find, got the full attention of Inspector Lestrade. Unlike Sherlock Holmes, Lestrade failed to note the possible relationship between that bloody event and the quest for the pearl. Lestrade, to investigate the "murder," went to great lengths to determine the identity of the corpse and the identity of the man in the picture that was in the possession of the felled individual.

Sherlock Holmes followed the trail of the Napoleonic busts. The fourth broken bust was found in the garden of an empty house down the street. A conversation with the owner of the bust, the journalist Mr. Harker, revealed its purveyor,

Harding Brothers. Unable to obtain any information from that source due to Mr. Harding's absence from his shop, Mr. Holmes revisited Morse Hudson to locate the manufacturer, who was Gelder and Co. A visit to Gelder and Co. revealed the date that Beppo ran through the shop fleeing from the police. Then, finally able to interview Mr. Harding, Sherlock Holmes was able to identify the purchasers of the final two busts. As we shall see, this information led to the capture of the unfortunate Beppo and the resolution of the mystery. *Bust 5:* The events detailed in Dr. Watson's account document the trap that Sherlock Holmes laid leading to the arrest of the unlucky Beppo. Lured into the home of Mr. Josiah Brown, Beppo was captured after he came out the window and broke the bust that he had removed from the residence. As with the previous four, this bust also contained nothing noteworthy.

Bust 6: The final bust arrived in the hands of Mr. Sandeford of Reading. He was enticed to visit Mr. Holmes Baker Street quarters by a communication offering £10 sterling for the bust of Napoleon that he had purchased from Harding Brothers. After the departure of Mr. Sandeford, Sherlock Holmes performed one of those theatrical stunts for which he is renowned. Using his hunting-crop, Mr. Holmes broke the item into several fragments to reveal the Black Pearl of the Borgias that Beppo had secreted therein a years ago to hide it from the police. As had been determined by Mr. Holmes, Beppo's "visit" was consistent with the date on which the pearl was stolen.

"Follow the money," has become a favorite phrase in recent years. That is just what Sherlock Holmes did to solve the "Adventure of the Six Napoleons." In the process, he discerned the events leading to the death of the man eventually identified as the Mafioso Pietro Venucci, from Naples. He revealed that this death resulted from Venucci's unsuccessful attack on our friend Beppo. Thus, by stringing together all of the information at his disposal, Sherlock Holmes was able to form a scientifically based hypothesis of the events leading to the destruction of the Six Napoleons featured in this account. The experimental proof of his hypothesis came with the final denouement, the destruction of the sixth bust and finding the Pearl of the Borgias located inside.

1. Heifetz, C. L. 1997. Staying Focused. Communication (a publication of the Pleasant Places of Florida), No. 173 New Series, Volume 1, Issue 5, pages 3-4; Heifetz, C.L. 1998. The Scientific Detective Solves the Sign of Four. The Wigmore Street Post Office, Issue Number 11, Spring 1998, p 3-9; Heifetz, C.L. 1998. A Study in Scarlet Yields to the Methods of Sherlock Holmes, Scientist. The Wigmore Street Post Office, Issue Number 12, Summer 1998, p 18-21,24; Heifetz, C. L. Sherlock Holmes Crosses a Thor Bridge to Scientific Inspiration. Holmes & Watson Report, Vol.3, No. 4, September 1999, p 13-5; Heifetz, C. L. A "Second Stain" Saves the Day. Holmes & Watson Report, Vol.3, No. 6, January 2000, p 36-9.2 Doyle, A. C. "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons" In: The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, with a preface by Christopher Morley, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, single volume, 1988, p582.



Beppo's Idee' Fixe'

By Wanda Dow

As (not) presented at the 31st Spring Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida, May, 2006 in Orlando, Florida

In *The Adventure of the Six Napoleons*, Inspector Lestrade states at the beginning of the case that the smashing of the first 3 busts falls under Dr. Watson's line of work more so than Holmes' or his own. Watson, quite naturally asks "Disease?" to which Lestrade replies "Madness, anyhow. And a queer madness, too." No doubt the Inspector is indicating that because it is a madness for which he has no experience, rather than, say, the madness that causes one man to seek revenge on another rather than present his case for the laws of society to decide. It is an interesting side-note that Lestrade considers Watson a doctor of all trades, even though during this period in history, medicine was indeed branching off into specialties and had done so for some time. But we will consider this a compliment to Watson's talents, rather than further indication of the Inspector's ignorance.

Watson, of course, steps up to the plate with some knowledge of monomania. He states, "There are no limits to the possibilities of monomania." The word "monomania" comes from the Greek - mono, meaning "one" and mania, meaning, well, mania or obsession. In psychiatry, monomania is a type of paranoia in which the patient has only one idea or type of idea. Intellectual monomania is that which is related to only one kind of delirious idea or ideas. It is also a term attached to subcultures that to the general public appear esoteric. Hence terms such as fanboy, nerd, geek, anorak, trekkie or, ahem, Sherlockians. The difference between monomania and passion can be very subtle and diffi-

cult to recognize. That said, we can easily ascertain from whence Watson's knowledge of monomania comes, since at the time of this case, he had quite a fan base himself with his writings of Holmes' cases.

Another writer of mono-mania subjects was Edgar Allen Poe. Many of his poems and stories were concerned with a man's passion, or monomania of certain subjects - a black cat (*The Black Cat*), a painting of a wife (*The Oval Portrait*), a cousin's teeth (*Berenice*), a disease (*The Red Death*) and so on. Poe was well known to Watson and the public.

The other expression used by Watson, an *idée fixe* has come to mean an idea that dominates the mind, in other words, a fixed idea, an obsession. This can be good or bad, depending on your point of view. The French refer to an *idée fixe* as a mild obsession.

Thus the common act of fandom is actually a form of monomania. According to Wikipedia's explanation of the characteristics of a fan, a fan will focus on a specific area of interest, and will be insignificantly concerned if non-fans (read as friends & family) don't derive pleasure from the area of interest. Fans also wish to acquire material objects related to their area of interest. They desire external involvement and social interaction. When a fan crosses the line, however, the mania is more severe and the fan becomes a fanatic. The difference between a fan and a fanatic is that

while both have an overwhelming interest in a given subject, the behavior of a fanatic is viewed as violating prevailing social norms. Something Beppo did when his obsession not only resulted in burglary but murder.

Once the smashing of the busts results in a murder, however, everyone seems to toss away any idea of monomania, when in fact, Watson just may have hit the nail on the head from the very beginning. Once he had hidden the pearl, was not Beppo's obsession locating the busts of Napoleon? Did he not commit acts frowned upon by the normal public in order to obtain his subject? Was not the Black Pearl his *idée fixe*?

Yes, for the entire year that he was imprisoned for another crime, our poor Beppo had nothing more to think about than the pearl. And upon his release, it would have been his only thought to recover it. Imagine his surprise when, in attempting to right the error he had made, he was attacked by his partner or employer (we're not sure which Venucci was) and in defending himself, killed his attacker. What more was there to do but continue on his quest and present the pearl to his victim's sister, the woman that he loved. Or was she the mastermind of it all and he had to recover the pearl to save his own neck? Alas, we shall never know. Just as Watson will never get the credit he is due.



Cargo magazine Dec'05/Jan'06 issue had this page smack dab in the middle of the issue, the first page of the "Editor Gift Pick".

He's EVERYWHERE ... The May 2006 issue of *Discover* magazine states that Astronomer Brad Schaefer of Louisiana State University was "a maverick who unmasked the scientific inspiration for Sherlock Holmes." We're not sure to what they are referring - hasn't everyone known all along it was Bell? ... In a recent *Ask Marilyn* column (*Parade Magazine*, *St. Petersburg Times*), a reader asked: **When I think of people with a super-high IQ, characters like Sherlock Holmes come to mind. Could you use little clues to solve a mystery?** Marilyn vos Savant (1986 *Guinness Book of Records* - Highest IQ) replied: I think I would be a good detective in the pre-technology style of Holmes, which means finding clues among one's perceptions to solve a mystery. Sherlock once said, "...the reasoner can produce an effect which seems remarkable to his neighbor, because the latter has missed the one little point which is the basis of the deduction." That one puzzle piece might be right in front of your nose, but you must recognize it! ... There are several *Sherlock's* in the Atlanta, GA area. No, not Holmes, but evidently someone associates the master detective with "Wine, Spirits, Beer & Cigars" You can go to their website to find out about events at their various locations. www.sherlocks.com If you're in the Fremont, OH area, you can enjoy a Victorian Tea at the Dillon House. It is held the first Wednesday of every month from 1-4pm, followed by a tour of the Victorian Mansion ... Laurie King has begun promotion on her book *The Art of Detection*. It is a Kate Marinelli series with a Sherlockian crossover. You can visit her website at www.lauriekind.com.

EDITOR GIFT PICK

Challenge your pals to outwit the original supersleuth.
—Matt Trainor, *Cargo* culture editor

\$81.42
The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes Volumes 1 and 2, \$48.45; The Memoirs, \$32.97, amazon.com.

There's no mystery about where to turn if you want to please a thrill seeker. The world's most famous detective is back. This edition is handsomely bound and slipcased, and it includes the entire canon penned by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle about Sherlock Holmes and his know-it-all sidekick, Dr. Watson. The final piece of the puzzle "The Norwiche," our this holiday season contains all four longer works and joins last year's two short-story collections. A must-have? Elementary, my dear....

What up, Holmes?

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2006 CARGO

STYLE: GADGETS BODY WHEELS CULTURE

Toasts for the 2006 Spring Gathering - Some Given, Some Not

Jeff Dow (given) - Lestrade is a detective, that's true. For working hard at Scotland Yard - give him his due. But Holmes, if you please, Will solve it with Ease. Poor Lestrade, well, he hasn't a clue. To Detective Lestrade - whatever his first name is.

Wanda Dow (given) - John Hamish Watson. In this adventure, he was a medical doctor with knowledge of psychiatry. A recorder. An author so well-written as to cause the formation of a fan base. An observer of the observer of details. A stalwart companion, with a gun. And an appreciative audience, ready with applause. To Dr. Watson.

Elizabeth Dow (not) - **The Adler Rap** Yo yo Pips! I got a toast, That is made to The Woman, who is the most. The King was afraid of a Scandal becoz , He lived a life that was Scan-da-luz. But today our game is the Six Napoleons. Holmes is here, Adler's not, so I guess I'm done.

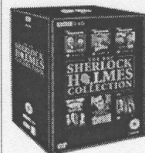
As for Scandal in Bohemia, I think it's kind of sorry, Irene out-smarted Holmes, but he still got all the glory. And yet we toast her still, when she's not in THIS story. What up? Peace.

NO, THIS IS NOT A FAMILY CONSPIRACY. IF YOU'LL NOTICE, I DON'T HAVE CULVER DOW'S TOAST. THESE ARE THE ONLY TOASTS I RECEIVED AFTER THE MEETING. ANYONE WISHING TO HAVE THEIR TOASTS PUBLISHED, PLEASE FORWARD TO CARL HEIFETZ FOR PRINTING IN THE NEXT ISSUE.



Sherlock Holmes Collections (DVD)

Starring: Peter Cushing, Nigel Stock
Peter Cushing stars as Sherlock Holmes in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Sign of Four*, *The Blue Carbuncle*, *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*.



A collection of BBC adaptations of Sherlock Holmes adventures. Peter Cushing stars in *A Study In Scarlet*, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*, *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*, *The Sign Of Four*, *The Blue Carbuncle*. Richard Roxburgh plays Holmes in *The Hound Of The Baskervilles* while Rupert Everett takes on the role in *The Case Of The Silk Stocking*. Also includes *The Strange Case Of Sherlock Holmes & Arthur Conan Doyle*.

Both available from the BBC. Go to bbcshop.com and search Holmes. There are 50 items, including books and audio tapes.



If you'd like to find out what's going on in Bohemia and pick up a little Czech on the side, visit the website of The Czech Society of Sherlock Holmes. For instance, the Czech translation of *The Veiled Detective* was launched at the Prague International Book Fair on May 6th.

Sherlockian Resources on the Internet: A Survey

Updated May 2006

"Data! data! data!" [Holmes] cried impatiently. "I can't make bricks without clay." (COPP)

The Sherlockian Web surfer of today has more data at his or her disposal than even the Master could have assimilated. Whether one is interested in pursuing serious research, seeking out rare books or memorabilia, or keeping up with the doings of other Sherlockians, the World Wide Web provides vast stores of information. This modest survey attempts to help one pick out a few choice strands to follow. First, some caveats:

The Web is not "a fixed point in a changing age," (LAST) but rather a moving target in constant flux. Web sites and URLs disappear or change often and without notice. Sometimes a site's Web server may be temporarily down -- just try back later.

Because of the Web's vastness and ephemeral nature, this survey is of necessity incomplete and will be outdated as soon as you view it.

The quality of Web sites and the accuracy of their content is uneven, since most sites lack the editorial safeguards of print media. Many Sherlockian sites would not win any design awards, yet their enthusiasm helps one overlook any shortcomings.

This a great website dedicated to those who need to research anything Sherlockian. Kudos to John Bergquist for collecting info on where to go to find what you need Sherlockian!



Speaking of websites, *The Baker Street Journal* now has a blog at its address. Go to <http://bakerstreetjournal.blogspot.com>

CALENDAR SHERLOCKIANA 2006

(being a listing of Sherlockian events worldwide)

June 21 - Raise your glasses! Her Most Excellent Majesty Victoria, by the grace of God Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; Defender of the Faith, Sovereign of the Most Noble Order of the Garter; of the Most Ancient Order of the Thistle; of the Most Illustrious Order of St. Patrick; of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath; and of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, of the Ionian Islands and of the Island of Malta on this day in 1837 ascends the Throne. (Whew! No wonder we just toast "the Queen"!)

June 27 - Light a candle for our boys on the front. On this day in 1880, Medic J.H. Watson was wounded as he knelt to give aid to a fellow soldier on the battlefield. The bullet pierced through his shoulder and entered his hip, causing him pain and discomfort for the rest of his life.

July 29 - *Silver Blaze* Race at Saratoga Race Track, New York. Contact Lou Lewis,

August 29 - September 1 - BSI excursion sequel to the one in *Valley of Fear*. To Salt Lake City, UT. Contact Gideon Hill

September 15-17 - *Canonical Convocation & Caper* in Door County, WI at the Waterbury Inn in Ephraim. Contact

September 28 - October 1 - *Bouchercon* 37, Madison, WI. Guests of Honor are Nevada Barr & M.C. Beaton. Go to www.bouchercon.com for details

October 19-22 - *ACD at Thirty-five* presented by The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, The Bootmakers of Toronto and the Arthur Conan Doyle Society, celebrating the 35th anniversary of the collections.

October 27-29 - *Magna cum Murder*, Mid-American Crime Writing Festival, Muncie, IN Hotel Roberts & Horizons Convention Center. Visit the website www.magnacummurder.com

November TBA - *31st Fall Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida*, Dunedin, FL. Info forthcoming.

November 4 - *Gasfitter's Ball* sponsored by The Curious Collectors of Baker Street. Contact Jerry Kegley, (see back page)

The Pleasant Places of Florida

*founded in 1972
by Leslie Marshall, B.S.I. (dec.)*

Recorder Emeritus: Dr. Benton Wood, B.S.I.

For the Record:

THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS

David McCallister, Master of the House,

(Master of Ceremonies at most gatherings, host of the annual Wessex Cup)

Carl Heifetz, Representative (both with the Servants and with the Tradespeople),

(Correspondent & Communication)

Wanda & Jeff Dow, The Papers on the Sundial,

(Communications and Bookkeeping)

Please make note of the date after your name on the mailing label. This is the expiration date of your club membership. You will not receive further Communications after this date unless you renew. Renewals should be sent, with any updates, to Wanda Dow. Make all checks payable to Wanda Dow. US\$12.00 (US/CAN) or US\$13.00 (INTL)

(from page 5) 818-893-1501 or
cjkovac@ aol.com

2007

January 11-13 - BSI Festivities in New York, NY.

September 27-30 - *Bouchercon 38*
Bearly Alive in Anchorage, AK.
Anchorage Hilton Hotel. Guests of Honor are Ann Rule, Alexander McCall, Jayne Ann Krentz (aka Amanda Quick aka Jayne Castle) & Barbara Peters See bouchercon2007.com

2008

October 9-12 - *Bouchercon 39*
Charmed to Death in Baltimore, MD at the Wyndham (410-385-6605). Guests of Honor Laura Lippman & John Harvey with Toastmaster Mark Billingham. See bouchercon2008.blogspot.com