

Brainy is the New Sexy: Masculinity in Sherlock Holmes

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## Dedication

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Peter Liebrechts for all the support and guidance during the writing process. This thesis would not have come together the way that it has without it. I would also like to thank Dr Katy Mullin for the inspiration for this thesis.

## Abstract

This thesis focuses on the representation of masculinity in the Sherlock Holmes character, both in the original stories written by Arthur Conan Doyle in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as well as in the modern BBC interpretation which first aired in 2010. It employs a Foucauldian notion of gender, which sees masculinity as a socially constructed concept and as such perceptible to change. The Sherlock Holmes stories were written over a forty-year time period. Two major historical events from this period could be said to have influenced the definition of masculinity, namely the Oscar Wilde trials and the First World War.

Furthermore, Joseph Kestner has argued that Conan Doyle's Holmes stories aimed to promote an ideal form of masculinity, which led us to consider the representation of Victorian masculinity in the Holmes character. Moreover, this thesis analyses the adaptation of Victorian Holmes in BBC's *Sherlock*. Having defined Victorian and twenty-first-century masculinity, we will see that Conan Doyle's Holmes aligns with numerous Victorian traits that were seen as masculine, and is portrayed as the ideal man. He is heroic, strong, brave, moral, rational and creative. Similarly, BBC Holmes aligns with masculine ideals of the twenty-first century but does not seem to personify the ideal man. He is strong, rational and creative, but his heroism is ambiguous, as well as his morality.

**Key Words:** *Masculinity, Victorian literature, Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conan Doyle, BBC Sherlock*

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## *1. Introduction*

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote the Sherlock Holmes stories over a forty-year time period, from 1887 to 1927. Initially, he did not plan on keeping the character of Sherlock Holmes alive for as long as he did, but he was offered a significant sum to continue the stories. The forty-year period saw significant changes in the definition of masculinity, particularly with regard to the relationship between masculinity and sexual orientation. Alan Sinfield argues that the late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw the “crucial making” of heterosexual and homosexual identities (15).

A crucial event in this development was the 1895 Oscar Wilde trials. They gave male homosexuality a feminine connotation, which eclipsed the associations between masculinity and male homosexuality (Sinfield; Bristow). Wilde was arrested in 1895 in violation of the Criminal Law Amendment Act from 1885. This act recriminalized homosexuality by prohibiting gross indecency between men in public and in private (Bristow, 42). The vagueness of the act made it possible to persecute any sort of behaviour that was deemed homosexual. Wilde was convicted to two years’ penal servitude with hard labour (Edwards; Bristow, 41). The trial fuelled more negativity towards homosexuality. Anything that could be judged as “gross indecency” was legitimately punishable under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Therefore, tolerance of homosexuality declined as people were afraid it would be seen as promotion of homosexuality. Taking a clear stand against homosexuality was the safest option at the time. In his biographical profile on Wilde, Owen Edwards depicts the scene of Wilde’s transfer from one prison to another, saying that Wilde endured half an hour of mobbing as he was spat on during his change of trains (Edwards).

Wilde’s conviction led to a two-year punishment on paper, but the trial destroyed his social status and reputation, with similar effects on his wife and children (Edwards). Conviction under the Criminal Law Amendment Act then had lifelong repercussions. The consequences of a conviction further strengthened the disapproving view of homosexuality. Furthermore, the public nature of the trial ensured the consequences of a conviction were clear and well-known. The trial could be witnessed in person in court or followed closely in the newspapers, and produced a sense of fear within the queer as well as heterosexual community of Victorian England. Moreover, according to Bristow, the trial showed indecency to be a worse offence than blackmail (54). It seems Wilde’s blackmailers were excused in favour of prosecuting Wilde, which strengthened the fear of prosecution under the Criminal Law Amendment Act further. Wilde was typified by his effeminate character. As a

result of publicly portraying homosexuality and Wilde negatively, Wilde became an emblem of homosexuality. Consequently, it can be argued that his effeminate character became a symbol of homosexuality. All in all, Wilde's conviction led to a stronger public connection between homosexuality and femininity.

A second shift in gender perception and gender roles occurred as a result of the First World War. Women were not allowed to serve in the army as soldiers, although some worked as military nurses. Therefore, the majority of people that were taken out of society and sent to the trenches were male. Since males constituted the majority of workers at the time, there were a lot of vacancies and no men to fill them. The work had to be done by someone, and women, having lost their husbands' incomes, became the natural solution to the employment issue, either temporarily because they were serving at the front, or permanently if their husband had died during service. It was then that female gender roles forcibly and unexpectedly changed. It is important to note that the feminist protests during the decades leading up to the war, and the creation of the New Woman, made society more susceptible to the change. The influence of the Great War on masculinity has been outlined by Santanu Das in his article "'Kiss me, Hardy': Intimacy, Gender, and Gesture in First World War Trench Literature". As the masculinisation of female gender roles occurred, the cruel and harsh conditions of the trenches called for comradeship among men to keep up moral, necessary for the soldiers to deal with their environment (Das, 52). However, as a result of the aftermath of the Oscar Wilde trials, affection between men had gained a very negative connotation because it was so closely linked to sodomy. Expressions of emotion between men, with connotations of effeminacy, were reinvented in a masculine framework (Das, 51). There was now a new masculinity which accommodated "fear, vulnerability, support, succor, and physical tenderness" (Das, 69).

In his book *Sherlock's Men: Masculinity, Conan Doyle, and Cultural History* (1997), Joseph Kestner gives a thorough analysis of the Sherlock Holmes canon and its relation to masculinity. Kestner argues that Conan Doyle used the Sherlock Holmes stories to address contemporary approaches to Victorian masculinity and specifically to interrogate it (56). There was a belief in Victorian Britain that developing a hegemonic notion of masculinity in Britain would stabilize society. Kestner bases this claim on research by James Eli Adams and Michael Kimmel. Adams poses that "rituals of manhood are principally aimed at the social control of men" (as quoted in Kestner, 5). Adams' "rituals of manhood" largely overlap with our idea of masculinity as a code of conduct for men. Adams implies with his statement that men can be influenced through normative masculinity. Men will aspire to be manly, just as

women will aspire to be feminine. Consequently, adjusting the concept of manliness will adjust the behaviour of men.

Men have been established as the most powerful gender in Western culture, in the past as well as the present. This can be seen in the normative position men hold in Western societies. The ruling gender in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Britain therefore was men. Building on Adams' statement, this means that the most effective way of influencing society is through men, which according to Adams can be done by constructing hegemonic masculinity. Kestner then draws on Kimmel to strengthen the link between masculinity and societal control. Kimmel argues that "men's history reveals that constructs of masculinity have always resulted from conflicting pressures" (as quoted in Kestner, 5), which indicates that the instability of Victorian British society was a suitable breeding ground for a redefinition of Victorian masculinity. The nineteenth century saw many conflicting ideas about the notion of masculinity which made one hegemonic notion of masculinity difficult to define. The nineteenth and early twentieth century saw great changes in British society that dramatically influenced gender roles and thus ideals of femininity and masculinity. Kestner seems to suggest that perfecting and projecting masculinity was seen as the key to re-establish order in Britain.

One way to re-affirm masculine ideals was through literature, which could present the reader with an ideal of masculinity. Kestner claims that the Sherlock Holmes canon is an example of this type of literature. He demonstrates throughout his book that Conan Doyle attempts to construct an ideal hegemonic masculinity, with a keen focus on rationality. Kestner argues that Conan Doyle criticised the definition of reason, and its powerful relationship to masculinity. He did not so much disapprove of rationality but questioned it and linked it to contemporary debates in Victorian Britain. In line with Kestner's case study, this research proposes that Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes reflects Victorian masculinity.

The definition of Victorian masculinity has been said to have shaped modern masculinity (Beynon, 30). Therefore, these characteristics will be considered with regard to the character Sherlock Holmes in the original stories as well as the 2010 *Sherlock* rendition. Moreover, *Sherlock's* Holmes will be analysed with reference to our notion of twenty-first-century masculinity. This study will look at selected stories written at different dates, which have been used as a template for the BBC series. The aim is to uncover how masculinity is presented in the stories and how this has been translated to the modern British adaptation by the BBC. An analysis of the stories will endeavour to answer to what extent Conan Doyle was in line with contemporary notions of masculinity, and if not, what the reason for this

could be. The analysis of the BBC adaption of Sherlock Homes will attempt to answer to what extent the modern interpretation has taken aspects from modern and/or Victorian masculinity.

Chapter 2 offers a definition of Victorian as well as twenty-first century masculinity. Section 1 gives a brief history of masculinity studies, which explains the notions of masculinity this study employs. Section 2 proposes a definition of Victorian masculinity based on sociological and historical research. Section 3 offers a description of twenty-first century masculinity. Chapter 4 considers the representation of the Victorian masculine traits offered in Chapter 2 in Conan Doyle's Holmes. Chapter 4 focuses on the same masculine traits found in Conan Doyle's Holmes and looks at the realisation of those traits in *Sherlock's* Holmes. Moreover, this chapter analyses the connection between *Sherlock's* Holmes and twenty-first-century masculinity.



## 2. *Masculinity*

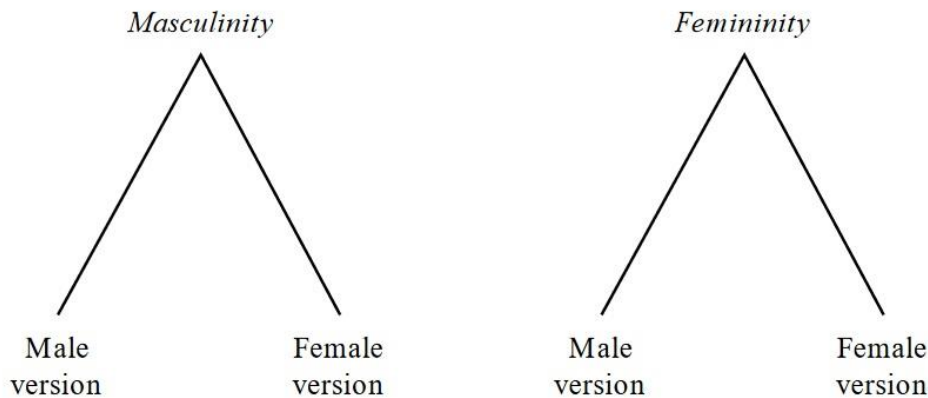
In this chapter, we will offer a definition of normative Victorian masculinity. Section 1 will present a general working definition of masculinity and give a short explanatory historical background to masculinity studies. Section 2 will look at Victorian masculinity specifically, outlining the established ideal of masculinity before what I will refer to as the Sherlockian period (1887-1927) as well as the changes masculinity, and more broadly gender, underwent. The third section will offer a short account of the developments in late twentieth-century and twenty-first century masculinity. Finally, the fourth section will summarize the characteristics described in the previous section, thereby giving a clear presentation of traits and changes that will be used for analysis in Chapter 3 and 4.

### 2.1 *Masculinity Studies*

In order to analyse the representation of masculinity, we must first establish a definition of masculinity. Masculinity is closely related to gender as it is strongly associated with men. Gender is a social category. Recent studies into social categories uncovered an underlying institutionalised pattern regarding differences in social categories, like gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation (Fenstermaker & West; Albiston). Within each social category there is a favoured normative option as well as secondary options. For instance, when we consider the social category sexual orientation, being heterosexual is the normative label, whilst gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, and pansexual are secondary options. By being the normative sexual orientation, heterosexuality gives a person the most favourable social position (when we isolate sexual orientation as a factor). For a long time, the norm was considered superior to the secondary options, something which was also reflected in literature.

This study will employ a Foucauldian base to define masculinity in its relation to its history and culture, seeing it as a social construct. Before Foucauldian theory, gender was largely synonymous with biological sex. Masculinity was seen as a part of a man's nature, thereby naturalizing masculinity. There is merit in biological masculinity because there are genetic and hormonal differences between men and women that influence character (Olweus et al.; Baucom et al.). However, there is a large discrepancy between the masculine ideal in a culture and the biological differences between men and women. A re-examination of masculinity throughout history shows that ideas of manliness have changed significantly. During the last few decades, gender has become a concept in itself, separating itself from the biological sex. The definition of gender has shifted towards one determined by culture instead

of one underpinned by biology. As a result of Foucauldian theory, ideas of femininity and masculinity throughout history were re-examined and were linked to gender. Masculinity and femininity were no longer seen as traits exclusively available to the ‘corresponding’ sex but seen as adaptable concepts created by culture. Cornwell and Lindisfarne propose a model that shows masculinity as well as femininity as possible characteristics of both men and women, as shown in figure 1 (Beynon, 9).



*Figure 1: Model of Masculinity and Femininity by Cornwell and Lindisfarne*

In this model masculinity (and femininity) is seen as a relational concept, incomprehensible when taken out of our understanding of gender as a whole (Roper and Tosh, 2). Moreover, masculinity and femininity are binary opposites, thereby directly relational to each other. When a trait is deemed feminine the mirroring trait is considered masculine, for instance being rational on the one hand and being emotional on the other. Rationality is considered a manly quality whilst expressing emotion is considered a feminine quality. Cornwell and Lindisfarne’s model shows that masculinity is not a natural part of a man but can also be a part of a women.

In addition to the de-naturalization of masculinity and femininity with regard to sex, gender studies also revealed a long-term connection between sexual orientation and masculinity and femininity. Historical analysis showed a fluctuation in the way conceptions of the feminine and masculine were combined with sexual orientation. The Greeks saw homosexuality as the ultimate form of masculinity because it excluded the female entirely. In the twentieth century however, heterosexuality for men was commonly deemed masculine whilst homosexuality was not. The possibility of variation in attributing masculinity or femininity to a sexual orientation implies that the definition of masculinity (and femininity) cannot be essentialist, as femininity and masculinity need not be traits solely linked to one

sexual orientation. That do not mean to say that sexual orientation is not of importance when defining masculinity. On the contrary, it shapes varying definitions of masculinity.

David Morgan correctly posits that masculinity and femininity can be attributed to both heterosexuality and homosexuality in his study on masculinity *Discovering Men* (as cited in Beynon, 7). Beynon produced a second gender map based on Morgan which shows the different realisations of a man based on sexual orientation, seen in figure 2 (7). As we can see from Morgan's gender map there are multiple realisations of masculinity as opposed to one fixed definition.

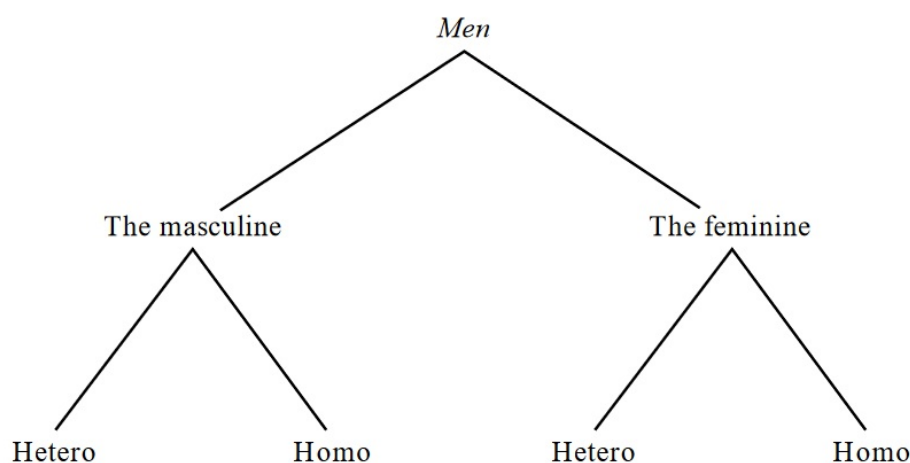


Figure 2: Morgan's Gender Map

All in all, post-structuralist gender studies have made a claim for the social construct underpinning ideas of gender. Extending this analysis to masculinity in particular, masculinity is interpolated with the culture and history of its surroundings and alters when those surroundings change (Beynon, 3). Moreover, the combination of social categories create co-existing variations of masculinity. Michael Roper and John Tosh argue that masculinity is shaped “in relation to men's social power” (2). A man's social power is influenced by differences in class, location, and ethnicity, which create different levels of social power. John Beynon rightly claims that we cannot speak of masculinity but should necessarily speak of masculinities when aiming to define it. A singular form implies there is one definition of masculinity that is pertinent to everyone, whilst that evidently is not the case. Instead of one overgeneralizing conception of masculinity, differences in class, location, and ethnicity, create varied realisations of masculinity, resulting in an intersectional understanding of masculinity (Beynon, 3). Not all variations of masculinity hold equal power in society. Instead there is hegemonic masculinity, which “defines the successful way of

‘being a man’ in a particular time and place” (Beynon, 16). Hegemonic masculinity is the most dominant and powerful realisation of masculinity at a given location and point in time. Social power is a “crucial factor in hegemonic masculinity”, as that power (in various forms) establishes dominance (Beynon, 16). We will be looking at the realisation of hegemonic masculinity in Britain during the Sherlockian period and the twenty-first century.

This dissertation will therefore follow the sociological or ‘culturalist’ approach to understanding masculinity as sketched above and will be based for the most part on Beynon’s theory. In doing so, it puts aside the sociobiological and evolutionary psychological explanations of masculinity, which tend to ‘neutralize’ male behaviour by determining it as an innate biological symptom (Beynon, 3). The analysis that follows will consider masculinity (and femininity) a “child of culture” (Beynon, 2). Furthermore, we will see masculinity and femininity as relational and more specifically as binary oppositions. Therefore, it can be assumed that if a trait is recognised as feminine, the opposite (or negation of it) can be considered masculine.

For the purposes of this dissertation we will try to offer a definition of British masculinity, in relation to the British Sherlock Holmes character (and British author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle). Beynon has shown there are many realisations of masculinity within one nation, meaning that for the purpose of this thesis our understanding of masculinity needs to become more specific. To see to what extent the character Sherlock Holmes fits into the category of hegemonic masculinity we have to specify hegemonic masculinity in Britain. During the Sherlockian period, the hegemonic form the ideal man was a British Victorian, middle-class, white, straight man. Furthermore, Sherlock Holmes was a popular character in his time, implying he possessed qualities that attracted readers to engage with him and be interested in him. Conan Doyle was paid hefty sums to continue the Sherlock Holmes Stories well after his desired ending (Johnson and Upton). It is feasible that his popularity may be linked to the narrative’s compliance to normative society, and thus normative masculinity. In this context, it is important to note that the ruling class of a nation mirrors the norm prevalent in that nation (Macionis and Plummer, 121). In British, society in the nineteenth century that would be white, straight, and male.

## *2.2 Victorian Masculinity*

To be able to consider particular traits and shifts in Victorian masculinity, a base set of characteristics must be established. Michael Roper and John Tosh have examined the concept of masculinity in Britain since 1800. They define Victorian masculinity as the code of

conduct for men, and is therefore applied exclusively to males (Roper and Tosh, 2). Employing a sociological and new historical approach, Roper and Tosh investigated different forms of literary discourse to deduce an ideal form of masculinity. For most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, code of conduct for men was a major part of education. Educators aimed to teach young boys the appropriate type of masculinity through school activities and literature. Roper and Tosh argue that “moral courage, sexual purity, athleticism, and stoicism” were central to eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century masculinity (2). The remainder of this chapter will sketch shifts in gender identity throughout the Sherlockian period (1887-1927), relating them to the four masculine traits outlined by Roper and Tosh.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was born in the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution, which had led to a rapidly growing factory-based job market. During that same period there was an increasing number of men in job sectors separated from the household, whilst women were more commonly seen in domestic jobs (Roper and Tosh, 76). There was a rise in female employees in domestic service, where 80% were female (Roper and Tosh, 76). Moreover, women were excluded from job opportunities in mining, agriculture, and transport, all of which had been revolutionised as a result of industrialisation, effectively eliminating them from the industrial workplace (Roper and Tosh, 76; Beynon, 28). Roper and Tosh claim that the changes in the occupational sphere enhanced the gap between genders. Men were gaining social status by means of better paid and higher skilled employment, while women by comparison remained in lower paid, less skilled, and less productive jobs. A man's life in Western culture became centred around the public life rather than private life. As a consequence, the domestic sphere in Western culture was traditionally associated with women, but John Tosh argues that the home was considered as a measure of masculinity before the Industrial Revolution.

Before the Industrial Revolution, men spent their days at home, in charge of keeping order in the household (Tosh, 4). In doing so, the man's job was to protect, provide for, and control his home, therefore transforming the domestic sphere into an integral part of masculinity. If a man failed to keep up a home and run it, he seemed weak and therefore unmanly. As more and more jobs became available outside the home, the specifications defining the male provider role altered, diminishing the importance of domestic patriarchy. The provider used to be a leadership role, whilst the labour was done by servants, children and women (Tosh, 4). Physical strength became the basis of the provider rather than intellectual capability as more high-paying jobs which centred around physical labour became available. It is important to note here that this shift occurred among the lower and

middle classes whilst the aristocracy and upper classes seemed to undergo the shift much later (post World War One) as they could afford to forgo new industrial occupations. As a result of the new physical provider role, intellectual ability was associated with femininity, explains James E. Adams, because femininity converged with the domestic (1). As the role of men became disconnected from the home, domesticity was associated distinctly with the feminine, to such an extent that the domestic sphere could threaten masculinity. The domestic concern was reflected in the British educational system, which took boys away from their homes to educate them in 'un-domestic' practices.

A disconnection from the home further caused the devaluation of fatherhood as a defining characteristic of masculinity. As a part of the domestic provider role, the man was expected to produce a suitable, masculine heir to his estate (Tosh, 4). However, as validation of one's masculinity now took place at the workplace away from home, the direct interaction between father and son diminished. The father was unable to be at home with his son as much as he had been able to when he was running the household. Where previously the father had been an active role model for his son, he was now an absent one. Thus, the father had less control over shaping his son's masculinity directly, which resulted in a decreased feeling of responsibility among men when it came to producing a masculine male heir.

Finally, the change of men shifting from a private to a public sphere could be seen as a stimulus for the interest in sexuality. The notion of the ideal woman was rooted in her role as a wife, defined by her chasteness and innocence (Hunt, 164; Gorham, 4). This ideal made female sexuality highly important to men. As the leader of the house the man could use his home to exercise his authority (Tosh, "Authority and Nurture", 50). His wife became an example of how well he executed this authority. When the man's place was at home, it was easier to establish control over his household and family. After the man's occupation took him out of the home, it becomes more difficult to maintain his authority in the home. Female dependency was emblematic of male authority. Arguably, if a woman was sexually unsatisfied she would be more likely to look for that satisfaction elsewhere, especially because women were becoming more empowered in light of first-wave feminism at work in Britain. It is feasible that the interest in female sexuality that followed in the latter half of the nineteenth century was a response to maintaining a form of control over women by keeping them satisfied sexually. Moreover, a faithful wife is necessary to produce a suitable heir to a man's estate, which similarly attested to his masculinity. A woman that is sexually promiscuous cannot confirm paternity of her child when she falls pregnant. Again, this indicates a possible motivation for the interest in female sexuality.

The interest in sexuality prompted research into homosexuality, which clearly influenced the idea of masculinity during the Sherlockian period. Nineteenth-century sexologist Havelock Ellis attempted to explain sexuality in his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, published in 1897, by constructing the effeminacy model. The effeminacy model hypothesises a duality between the biological sex and psychological gender. For a heterosexual person the biological and psychological correlate (both are female or both are male). Homosexuality could then be analysed as a biological man with a female psyche and vice versa for lesbianism. The effeminacy model is based on the binary notion of gender and the predominant idea in Victorian England which naturally links masculinity to the male, and femininity to the female. Ellis' theory offers an explanation for female masculinity and homosexual femininity.

A second theory on homosexuality was established by Edward Carpenter in a study from 1906, opposing Ellis' analysis. Carpenter argues that the majority of homosexual men are not effeminate but "thoroughly masculine" (Ellis, 114). His theory takes inspiration from Greek mythology and philosophy which deemed homosexuality the purest form of love and quintessentially masculine. Love between two men was seen as the purest form of love because both parties in the relationship worked, which decreased "idleness" in the relationship (Ellis, 115). The all-male relationship seems to be the most productive version of a romantic relationship according to Carpenter. A man could fulfil an economic and imperialist role for British society that a woman could not because she could not work. The "exclusion of the feminine", and so disconnection from the effeminate, was key to Carpenter's theory (Ellis, 115). All in all, opinions were divided on the nature and definition of homosexuality and consequently masculinity, but it seems that the impact of the 1895 Oscar Wilde trial gave society a means to answering the homosexuality debate (Sinfield, 15).

The 1895 Oscar Wilde trials provided a final connection between femininity and homosexuality (Sinfield; Bristow). Beynon claims that there was an intense homophobia in Victorian Britain after 1850 (28). During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the industrialisation of the job market had caused a large gender gap and institutionalisation of heterosexuality in the Victorian family. The man's role in the Victorian family paralleled his masculinity: if he failed as a provider, he failed as a man. Homosexuality by default was marginalised because it was not compatible with the Victorian family ideal and therefore not compatible with masculinity.

In the course of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries, Britain became a major Imperialist state. The Empire re-imagined British masculinity (Roper and Tosh, 113). It

facilitated an array of new jobs in service of the Empire and with it new aspirations for men. In the 1880s and 90s the Empire motivated a flight from domesticity, as men left Britain in favour of a new role within the Empire (Beynon, 34; Tosh, 170). The flight from domesticity together with secularisation in Britain instigated a change in the perception of marriage at the end of the nineteenth century. Secularisation reduced the authority of the church, which can be seen in diminished church attendance. Tosh argues that secularisation caused a decline of marriage (Tosh, 170). The Christian church had always prescribed and promoted marriage, and its strong position in society painted marriage as the only way of life. As a result of secularisation, marriage became a possibility rather than obligation and this flexibility opened up a man's life to bachelorhood. Bachelorhood was frowned upon during the first half of the nineteenth century, as it was seen as resistance to the patriarchy and as a disregard of lineage (Tosh, 173). However, the marriage registry shows a large scale avoidance of marriage starting in the 1860s, which seems to counter the association between bachelorhood and weakened masculinity (Tosh, 173). Tosh claims that among men there was an increasing awareness of the drawbacks of married life, where some felt it was more of a constriction rather than a source of comfort (172).

The mid-1880s developed the new best-selling literary genre, adventure fiction, which was "heroic, exotic and bracingly masculine" (Tosh, 174), and connected bachelorism to Victorian masculinity. Adventure stories gave heroic protagonists (adventure heroes) a central role, who were courageous, strong, and selfless, qualities that align with the Victorian masculine ideal. The stories were set in foreign lands, and depicted adventures experienced by the protagonist. Tosh claims that these stories depicted men that were separated from feminine influences, and, therefore, deemed more masculine, because they travelled abroad in favour of settling down and starting a family in England (174). Abroad, the protagonists were surrounded mostly by male companions, whilst in a marriage they would inevitably share their life with a woman. This, then, seems to draw a link between masculinity and bachelorism, as both come together in the adventure hero.

Furthermore, bachelorism and Imperialism seem to be closely knit together, as the adventure hero is typically unmarried and located abroad. Marin Green contends in his study *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire*: "they [the adventure stories] charged England's will with the energy to go out into the world and explore, conquer and rule" (as quoted in Roper and Tosh, 119). Green's statement suggests that the adventure stories spread Imperialist ideas across Britain. The verbs 'explore' 'conquer' and 'rule', are highly Imperialist, which strengthens the Imperialist undertone of the adventure stories. As the British Empire



expanded, masculinity fused with Imperialist ideologies to sustain British rule abroad. A larger empire meant an increase in job opportunities in British colonies, which needed to be filled in order to sustain British rule. As most vocations were suited to bachelors, the bachelor's connotation of unmanliness was detrimental to the imperialist cause. Imperialism, then, gives a functional explanation for the rise and masculinisation of bachelorism. The adventure hero can be seen as a reflection of the Imperialist masculine ideal, as he embodies Victorian masculine values, Imperialist values, and Bachelorism.

It is in education that ideals of Imperialist masculinity can most clearly be seen. Beynon as well as Roper and Tosh demonstrate that the process of shaping and teaching of young boys shows the 'untainted' constructed form of Imperial masculinity. The school system was the first stage of education that aimed to teach boys normative Victorian masculinity. It took boys away from their homes, disconnecting them completely from the perceived femininity at home (Beynon, 32). At school, boys were malleable, and were confronted with education that aimed to create an Imperialist masculine man.

Literature was the second part of the education process, read not only by boys in school but also reaching those not able to attend school, published in the form of periodicals or magazines (Beynon, 32; Olsen, 765). Such texts made sure that the correct kind of masculinity was readily available to boys through heroic adventure narratives. This presented masculinity in a relatable and attractive manner. The adventure stories were initially set in foreign lands but later shifted to more familiar home territories during the interbellum period (Roper and Tosh, 145). Additionally, the interwar period saw the erosion of the aristocratic hero in favour of the ordinary boy hero "learning to fit into a society over which they had little control" (Roper and Tosh, 145). The switch aligns with the meritocratic system unfolding in Britain, which traded heritage for effort when earning a social position.

The narratives sported a heroic protagonist who held power by virtue of his arrogance or superior class position (Roper and Tosh, 145). A sense of superiority was at the heart of boys' stories, as it showed which social label was accepted and which was not, thereby shaping the model version of masculinity. Firstly, superiority of class was dictated by the stories as the adventure hero was often middle-class and educated. Secondly, the stories show superiority of race, where the boy hero bestows civilisation and order on the savage natives (Beynon, 33). Sports was a major theme in the adventure stories which mirrored both racial and class superiority. Cricket, rugby, and football were the sports often featured in the narratives, quintessentially British sports. The presentation of these sports exhibited loyalty to teammates, discipline in learning to play well, sportsmanship and physical strength. Beynon

further elaborates that emphasis was put on loyalty in all story settings, whether to school, college, regiment, or nation, which silently promoted patriotism and racism (32). To an extent, Britain institutionalised Imperialist masculinity in an attempt to stabilise the empire, which inadvertently kept in place sexist, racist, and classist structures. The focus on physical strength in the boys' stories aligns with the predominance of physical labour in the aftermath of the industrial revolution. Additionally, Roper and Tosh note that the adventure hero had previously relied on cleverness to solve problems, instead of brutal force. In light of the feminisation of intellectual labour, it is viable to posit that cleverness was by extension associated with femininity.

### *2.2.1. Summary of Victorian Masculinity*

All in all, the findings of socio-historical research discussed in the previous section present an assessable set of traits defined as masculine throughout the Victorian era. This does not mean that a definitive or absolute definition of normative Victorian masculinity can be constructed, even at a fixed point in time. However, one can deduce the most common and agreed upon characteristics. Victorian manliness meant being stoic, strong, loyal, patriotic, and a leader. Social, economic, and cultural events came to specify and add to this definition. Masculinity was connected to the public life after the industrial revolution, which pulled men out of the private sphere and into the public space. As a result, strength as a masculine trait came to be narrowed down to physical strength because many new vocations required physical and not intellectual strength. Moreover, intellectual strength was feminized, as indicated by the masculine ideals that were put forward in boys' stories. These stories portrayed what was considered the ideal normative Victorian masculinity, which changed its clever protagonist into a muscular one. British society gradually transformed into a capitalist society, where men were no longer solely judged on hereditary status but on earned status. As men were able to climb up the social ladder through hard work and earn a higher status, they became more keen to establish themselves in the public sphere. This meant that men put more effort into their occupation instead of a domestic life through marriage. Secularisation strengthened the declining appeal of marriage. Christianity had previously given marriage an honourable and admirable status. As a result of diminishing church support, marriage lost its status and consequently, some of its appeal. However, bachelorhood, being the opposite of marriage, contradicted masculinity as the foundation of masculinity lay in family life at the start of the nineteenth century. The rise of the empire, and the occupations it produced, promoted bachelorhood, which was consequently linked to masculinity. Together with the feminisation

of the domestic, bachelorhood was seen as the complete omission of the female. The turn of the nineteenth century saw the decline of the masculine idea of homosexuality as a result of the public depiction of the Oscar Wilde trials. The Oscar Wilde trials together with the Criminal Law Amendment Act gave homosexuality a clear negative connotation.

Masculinity, then, became connected to heterosexuality, in line with patriarchal female dependency. A heterosexual relationship facilitated the opportunity to assert authority over the female sex, which strengthens masculinity. Finally, the First World War altered the relationship between femininity, homosexuality, and masculinity. Soldiers were linked to ideal masculinity. They exemplified loyalty to country and empire, strength, courage, heroism, which were all traits that were considered masculine. Until the First World War, soldiers were typically associated with stoicism. During the war, stoicism was exchanged for sympathy and care as war-life in the trenches saw the acceptance of comradeship and emotion between soldiers. Sympathy became a part of heroism and so of the masculine norm. We see, then, that many sociological and economic changes took place in Britain that influenced the notion of normative masculinity.

### *2.3 Twenty-First Century Masculinity*

The definition of Victorian masculinity has been said to have shaped modern masculinity (Beynon, 30). In this section we will offer a brief account of the developments in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries western masculinity (from now on referred to as modern masculinity). It will focus on the Victorian traits that we have proposed in the previous section and consider their role in the twenty-first century. The aim of this section is to construct a framework of modern British masculinity that can be used to examine BBC Sherlock's relationship with modern masculinity. The section will follow Beynon's account of late twentieth-century British masculinity and connect that to the Victorian traits proposed in the previous section (when relevant and possible). Beynon gives a basic overview of modern British masculinity. He concludes that men have historically been seen as 'naturally' more powerful, competitive, successful, vigorous, better equipped to handle the outside world.

Beynon starts in the 1980s and argues that this decade transformed the definition of Western masculinity by redefining it through a postmodern view. We see that multiple strands of masculinity developed in the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s, that are all still present in the twenty-first century. This does not mean that there was no normative form of masculinity but rather that multiple ideals of masculinity emerged and were recognised as a

variant form of masculinity. This fragmentation of masculinity reflects the fragmentation that is central to postmodernism. Beynon proposes two dominant strands of masculinity that have emerged during the late twentieth century: the New Man and the Lad.

The New Man developed in the 1980s under the influence of the commercialisation of Western culture. We see that masculinity became commercialised and started to emphasise physical appearance. This is evident in the rise of the men's style press, the visual representation of men in advertisements, and the redevelopment of menswear (Beynon, 99). Menswear had been relatively uniform until the 1970s. The 1950s and 1960s produced a unified youth culture, which created a few popular and distinct styles in men's fashion. The 1950s centre around the rock and roll style. The early 1960s split menswear into two styles: punk and mod. The second half of the 1960s sees the emergence of the flower power era. The 1970s saw the disintegration of a unified masculine style. It was a decade fuelled by creativity, where men wanted to "play about with masculinity" (Beynon, 102). The 1970s produced many more masculine styles than the 1960s, and the 1980s built on the diversification of masculinity from the 1970s. The men's style press and advertisements facilitated many different representations of masculinity, but promoted a universal narcissist masculinity. Masculinity was now a trait that could be bought.

Moreover, second-wave feminism in the 1970s shaped the New Man (Beynon, 100). The feminist movement strived for gender equality, and aimed to reconstruct the notion of femininity. As a result, masculinity underwent reconstruction as well because of the binary relationship between femininity and manliness. The New Man saw justice and merit in the feminist movement as it would re-imagine masculinity in a more fluid framework (Beynon, 100). He felt that the patriarchal system was detrimental for women and for men. Men felt that the patriarchal notion of masculinity was difficult to live up to and not inclusive, particularly when it came to sexuality, race, and emotional expression (100). Therefore, the New Man was sexually fluid and developed a nurturing character.

The New Man adjusted the traditional associations between homosexuality and femininity by putting it into this new conception of masculinity. Beynon notes that gay men play a larger role in the conception of New Man too, as gay men worked at the forefront of the fashion industry and visual representation industry (Beynon, 104). Gay men influenced the style that men were offered in two ways. Firstly, as models for magazines and advertisements, they would represent masculinity through fashion and appearance. Secondly, as fashion designers they had a hand in developing new menswear. This role for the gay man was made possible because of commercialisation and the new inclusive form of masculinity

created by the New Man. Altogether, gay men were more accepted in the 1980s than they had been in the 1970s.

The New Man's nurturing character created a new kind of relationship between masculinity and emotional expression. A study by Sam de Boise and Jeff Hearn (2017) examines the relationship between masculinity and emotions. De Boise and Hearn argue that historically men have been considered stoic because of biology or social construction (2). They argue against the wholly stoic idea of manliness, but instead demonstrate that some emotions are considered masculine. Masculine traits, such as aggression and rationality, engage with emotions (De Boise and Hearn, 7-8), and these emotions are accepted as masculine. Aggression is an action that is clearly based on emotions of anger, frustration, or irritation. The interaction between rationality and emotions is less apparent at first glance. De Boise and Hearn posit that a rational action cannot occur without using the emotional centres of the brain (8), because actions become an incessant "weighing up of potential outcomes" (8). This implies that actions rely on emotions, which means that true stoicism is impossible. The study by De Boise and Hearn, then, touches upon the incorrect opposition of masculinity and emotionality because masculine stoicism does not exist. This ties in with the more emotional realisation of masculinity embodied by the New Man.

The second strand of masculinity at work in the twenty-first century is Laddism, which originated in the 1990s. Laddism reacted to the feminized New Man and attempted to steer normative masculinity back to traditional ideas of manliness (Nichols, 3). This traditional attitude created a form of masculinity that highlighted heterosexuality, aggression, and strength (Nichols, 3). The clear reconnection between masculinity and heterosexuality contrasts the fluid view of sexuality embodied by the New Man. The focus on heterosexuality is evident in the role of women in Lad culture. Lad culture resulted in the objectification of women, which is reflected in the depiction of women in Lad magazines and Lad banter. Lad magazines printed sexualised pictures of women, which projected the image of women as a source of entertainment for men. Lad banter similarly illustrates the Lad's notion of male superiority over women. Laddish banter is framed as "just a laugh" but is also a display of "everyday sexism" (Nichols, 2). It can be argued that Laddism normalised sexism in an attempt to go back to traditional masculinity.

Although Laddism developed later than the New Man, Laddism did not eclipse the New Man's conception of masculinity. Both strands remained active in British society throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. However, there are indications that the Lad held a stronger position in Britain than the New Man. Laddish behaviour can be seen in working

class as well as middle class men (Jackson and Dempster, 343). The New Man, on the other hand, was linked to educated men, who were often middle class or upper-middle class (Beynon, 100). In comparison, Laddism occurred in a larger portion of the male population than the New Man, which indicates Laddism held a more powerful position than the New Man.

There is an important similarity between the New Man's and the Lad's conceptualisation of manliness that needs to be highlighted. We know the New Man developed under the influence of the 1980s consumerist boom, but the Lad finds his roots in consumerism as well (Beynon, 112). Just as the New Man had a distinct style, so did the Lad. Laddism is an "exploitation of working class machismo", where men exchanged their Armani suits for t-shirts and trainers by Hugo Boss (Beynon, 112).

### *2.3.1 Summary of Twenty-First Century Masculinity*

We see that two main strands of masculinity developed in Britain in the late twentieth century that shaped modern masculinity: the New Man and the Lad. These strands stand for two distinct realisations of masculinity that are, in many ways, oppositional. The New Man is narcissistic, progressive, ambivalent in his sexuality, generally anti-sexist, and in touch with his emotions (Beynon, 118). He tries to blur the lines between traditional femininity and masculinity, and is influenced by second-wave feminism and the rise of consumerism in the 1980s. The form of masculinity that was embodied by the New Man is more inclusive than normative masculinity had been previously because it was not limited to heterosexual men. The Lad, on the other hand, attempts to push masculinity back towards tradition. He steps away from the feminized masculinity projected by the New Man. The Lad promotes heterosexuality, physicality, and sexism. The Lad's manliness has important resemblances with Victorian masculine ideals, for instance when we look at the role of women and the exclusion of homosexuality. Both strands will be considered when we look at Sherlock Holmes in BBC's *Sherlock* in Chapter 4 because both seem to be active in the twenty-first century, but we expect Laddism to come through in the series more so than the New Man.

Finally, we see that the relationship masculinity has with emotions seems to have developed further since the New Man. The New Man addressed the stoicism that was historically linked to masculinity by attempting to connect emotional expression to masculinity. The feminine connotation attached to emotional expression was seen as a restriction for men because it was not their natural state. However, de Boise and Hearn propose that true stoicism cannot exist, as the emotional centres of the brain are necessary for

human function. Emotions, then, are not exclusively feminine but some are associated with femininity and some with masculinity. Moreover, the setting in which emotions take place determine the gender association.

### 3. *Masculinity in Conan Doyle's Holmes*

The following chapter examines the representation of Victorian normative masculinity in Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. It examines six of Conan Doyle's original stories: *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), *A Scandal in Bohemia* (1891), *The Final Problem* (1893), *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901), *The Adventure of the Dying Detective* (1913), and *The Illustrious Client* (1924). The stories cover the whole of Conan Doyle's writing period, so we can look at the development of the Sherlock Holmes character. The characteristics of Victorian masculinity (as offered in Chapter 2) have been grouped together to form five sections that each pertain to a different aspect of Victorian masculinity in relation to Conan Doyle's Holmes. In Section 3.1 we explore Holmes' childlike character and his relation to empathy and emotional expression. Section 3.2 looks at possible signs of femininity in Holmes and discusses his sexual orientation. In Section 3.3 we focus on Holmes as a heroic character. Section 3.4 continues with a consideration of Holmes' association with rationality and science. Finally, Section 3.5 explores Holmes' bachelorhood in connection with sexual purity.

#### 3.1 *Emotion and Empathy*

Conan Doyle's Holmes exhibits stoic traits as well as childlike emotions and politeness throughout the stories. Watson clearly establishes a lack of emotions in Holmes as he says that "[a]ll emotions, and that one particularly [love], were abhorrent to his [Holmes] cold, precise but admirably balanced mind" (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 239). The disconnection between Holmes and emotions such as love, resonates with the masculine stoic ideal. Holmes's stoicism is strengthened by his belief in rationalism which will be discussed separately in Section 3.4. Rationality and emotionality are traditionally perceived as oppositional (De Boise and Hearn, 2), because rationality is closely linked to factual information whilst emotions are not considered factual. Rationality, then, is associated with stoicism. This section will continue with an examination of the emotional side of Holmes rather than his stoicism. The emotional side of Holmes combined with his rationality supports the claim that Conan Doyle's Holmes questions the idea of rationality as discussed in the introduction.

The first time the audience meets Holmes in *A Study in Scarlet*, Holmes exhibits a childlike excitement as Watson describes that Holmes "sprang to his feet with a cry of pleasure" (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 7), "looking as delighted as a child with a new toy" (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 8). Holmes' childlike demeanour connects him to the



child, the domestic, and femininity. Watson compares Holmes to a child with a toy, which emphasises the playfulness connected to children. Moreover, the association between Holmes and the child connects Holmes to the domestic and the mother. Children are typically connected to the private sphere because they spend the majority of their time at home. The home was connected to the feminine as the mother was the key figure in the domestic sphere. During the nineteenth century, the father was removed from the domestic sphere and into the public sphere because employment had moved into the public sphere. The woman would keep the household running whilst the father earned money to provide for the family.

The image of childishness in Holmes can also be interpreted as a recognition of the negative influence of domesticity, and femininity, on masculinity. Childishness evokes the notion of femininity, as discussed in the previous paragraph. Authority at the home was still attributed to the man but when the man was out of the house the authority transferred to the woman. The mother, then, became the predominant role-model for children. There was a conception in British society that the feminine role-model for young boys could negatively impact their masculinity. Childishness, then, can be seen as a symptom of over-exposure to femininity, which could impede the development of masculinity.

According to Kestner, the Holmes stories were endorsed by Robert Baden-Powell, who wrote a conduct book for men and young boys called *Scouting for Boys* in 1908. As mentioned in Chapter 2, educating young boys in the correct form of masculinity was done on a large scale by means of literature. Baden-Powell's recommendation of the Holmes canon implies that the stories depict a favourable version of masculinity. Holmes' association with the child makes him more identifiable to the young reader. When Holmes becomes more relatable to the reader, that reader would also be more likely to adopt characteristics from Holmes. This would suggest that Conan Doyle wished to educate boys and men with his novel, which would align with the hypothesis that Conan Doyle attempted to depict ideal masculinity. Childishness further implies a need for guidance as well as an underdeveloped mind and body. Conan Doyle's work would serve as that guidance.

Conan Doyle's Holmes is very polite, which implies he is not wholly disconnected from emotion. Politeness requires empathy in order to understand what is considered polite and what is not. Holmes seems to understand etiquette, politeness, and rudeness. Holmes' interaction with Henry Baskerville in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* demonstrates his polite and considerate character.

“Now,” said Sir Henry Baskerville, “perhaps you will tell me, Mr. Holmes, what in thunder is the meaning of that, and who it is that takes so much interest in my affairs?”

“What do you make of it, Dr. Mortimer? You must allow that there is nothing supernatural about this, at any rate?”

“No, sir, but it might very well come from someone who was convinced that the business is supernatural.”

“What business?” asked Sir Henry sharply. “It seems to me that all you gentlemen know a great deal more than I do about my own affairs.”

“You shall share our knowledge before you leave this room, Sir Henry. I promise you that,” said Sherlock Holmes. “We will confine ourselves for the present with your permission to this very interesting document, which must have been put together and posted yesterday evening. Have you yesterday’s Times, Watson?” (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 2, 29*)

When Sir Henry first addresses the issue of the case of the hound, Holmes does not directly respond to the inquiry. Instead he asks Dr. Mortimer for his opinion on the letter Sir Henry received. Sir Henry, then, becomes agitated and frustrated because he is being kept in the dark, which can be seen in his sharp tone of voice (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 2, 29*). In response to Sir Henry’s agitation, Holmes acknowledges his question, and solves the issue by saying that he will share their knowledge by the end of the meeting. To be able to respond to Henry’s irritation in this manner, Holmes must understand the emotions Sir Henry is feeling and be empathetic towards Henry. Conan Doyle’s Holmes, then, does not seem to be wholly stoic.

Holmes’ empathetic character is further elucidated in *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Illustrious Client*. When Holmes meets Watson, Holmes posits that the two men should “know the worst of each other” before they live together (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1, 9*). Watson informs Holmes that he objects to rows as his “nerves are shaken” from his time in the army (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1, 9*). Holmes responds by asking if violin playing will cause similar effect on his nerves, which indicates he understands and considers Watson’s PTSD. Holmes again exhibits an empathy for others when he recalls his meeting with Violet de Merville in *The Illustrious Client*. In *The Illustrious Client*, Holmes is asked to save Miss de Merville from her fiancée Adelbert Gruner. Gruner is a clear-cut killer, his last victim being his former wife, but he was never charged. Miss de Merville believes in Gruner’s innocence and Holmes attempts to convince her of his guilt. During his recollection

of his meeting with Miss de Merville, Holmes expresses that he is “sorry for her”, and that he drew upon all the emotion he could find in his “cold nature” in order to convey Gruner’s evil nature to de Merville (Doyle and Robson, 119). The effort Holmes puts into convincing Miss de Merville of Gruner’s guilt implies that he cares for her well-being and is empathetic towards her situation.

The relationship between manliness and emotions underwent significant changes during Conan Doyle’s Sherlockian period as we have discussed in Chapter 2. Looking at the progression of Holmes’ relationship with emotions throughout the stories, we see that Holmes seems to consistently display empathy towards others. He demonstrates a consideration and understanding of emotions in *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901), and *The Illustrious Client* (1924). The childlikeness that we see in Holmes in *A Study in Scarlet*, does not occur in the other stories. *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) was written before the Oscar Wilde trials, whilst *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901) and *The Adventure of the Dying Detective* (1913) were written after the trials. This could indicate that emotional expression for men held a negative connotation after the Wilde trials. However, *A Scandal in Bohemia* (1891) and *The Final Problem* (1893) were similarly published before the Wilde trials and do not portray a childlike Holmes. This suggests that the Wilde trials did not influence the presentation of childlikeness in Holmes.

### 3.2 *Femininity and Sexual Orientation*

Conan Doyle’s Holmes is most prominently associated with femininity through his connection to the creative arts. The arts came to be viewed as feminine as they took place in the domestic sphere and were no longer of use to masculinity. Masculinity was relational to the man’s ability to earn a living and supply for his family. Industrialisation shifted labour from the domestic sphere into the public sphere, and manual labour became the most common form of labour amongst men. Education in the arts was not relevant for physical labour. As the man’s job removed him from the domestic sphere, the home was feminised. A feminisation of the arts, then, took place because “domestic and intellectual labour” converged (Adams, 1). The feminine association with the arts was strengthened by the division in children’s education. Boys were taken away from the home to be taught ‘un-domestic’ practices, supported by a curriculum that focused on physical education and sports (Beynon, 33). Girls were educated at home with a curriculum focusing on domestic practices and the fine arts, such as music (Dyhouse, 44). William J. Gatens proposes a feminine view

of music during the Victorian period, arguing that it was seen as an “effeminate and ungentlemanly pursuit” that “should be left mainly to the ladies” (519).

Holmes can be linked to the creative arts through his passion for the violin (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 44; Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 2*, 27). Holmes is first associated with music in *A Study in Scarlet*, the first story of the canon. Upon their first meeting, Holmes informs Watson of his passion for the violin. Even though they have barely spoken two words, Conan Doyle adds this musical element to Holmes’s character, which highlights Holmes’ musicality. In the early pages of the novel, soon after Watson’s move into apartment 221b, Watson describes hearing the “low melancholy wailings of his [Holmes’] violin” (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 44). Low tones are most commonly perceived as male and manly, whilst high tones are perceived as female and feminine. By describing the melody as ‘low’, Conan Doyle connects manliness to Holmes’ violin playing. Holmes, then, is portrayed to the reader as musical which evokes femininity, but Conan Doyle presents Holmes’ musicality with a manly undertone.

Throughout the stories, Holmes is connected to acting and the role of the actor. Acting was seen as a feminine occupation, similarly to occupations in music and other arts. Women were considered more capable of deception and more “psychologically volatile” than men (Lehman, 24). This is in line with the categorisation that women are more emotional. Watson describes Holmes to be an expert actor in *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*, saying the “stage lost a fine actor [...] when he [Holmes] became a specialist in crime” (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1* 255). In *The Adventure of the Dying Detective* and *A Scandal in Bohemia*, the audience sees Holmes acting. Both stories depict Holmes taking on a role but the acting in *A Scandal in Bohemia* seems more emotional than in *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*.

In *A Scandal in Bohemia*, Holmes adopts the role of a clergyman to fool Adler into letting him into her home. Watson comments on Holmes’ transformation into a clergyman by saying: “his expression, his manner, his very soul seemed to vary with each fresh part he assumed” (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1* 254). The description of Holmes’ acting in *A Scandal in Bohemia* focuses on the empathic side of acting. Watson’s observation, then, emphasises Holmes’ connection to emotion. Moreover, Watson praises Holmes’ acting skills, which implies Holmes is able to understand the emotions he portrays. Additionally, *A Scandal in Bohemia* depicts a scene that is distinctly melodramatic. In the story, Holmes, the Christian clergyman, swoops in “to protect the lady” as Watson describes (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 256). Melodrama is traditionally designed to appeal to emotions (Oxford British Dictionary). The damsel-in-distress scene that is depicted aims to appeal to the

readers' emotions. A woman in distress evokes feelings of anxiety and anticipation in the reader. When she is saved, the reader feels a sense of relief and joy, and the hero brings about feelings of admiration. The scene in *A Scandal in Bohemia*, then, evokes many emotions in the reader, in line with our definition of melodrama. The melodramatic plot of this scene underlines the emotionality of the scene and strengthens the connection between Holmes and emotions.

The acting portrayed in *The Adventure of the Dying Detective* relies on science and costume to create a state of disbelief in the reader. This is in contrast to the acting portrayed in *A Scandal in Bohemia*, which created a state of disbelief largely through emotional expression. *The Adventure of the Dying Detective* features Holmes as himself instead of a fictional character, which distances the scene from traditional acting. Holmes' costume further distances his acting from the traditional feminine conception of acting. Holmes explains that he achieved his ill appearance by using Vaseline, rouge and beeswax to create a sickly sheen on his face (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 2*, 444). A large part of Holmes' successful rendition of his illness relies on his costume. Holmes himself states that he could not have fooled Watson into believing he was seriously ill if Watson had come too close to Holmes because he would recognize Holmes' symptoms as fake. This implies that expressive acting could not compensate for the failure of Holmes' costume. The state of disbelief that Holmes creates in *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*, then, depends more heavily on factual and material alterations of Holmes' appearance than his acting skills. The focus on factual information correlates with science and rationality, which subtly links acting to masculinity.

Homosexuality was strongly associated with femininity in men during the Victorian period. Christopher Redmond in *In bed with Sherlock Holmes* (1984) speculates about the possibly homosexual relationship between Holmes and Watson. However, Holmes does not have an explicit romantic relationship with either men or women throughout the six stories. The most meaningful relationships Holmes has are with Watson and Irene Adler. To Holmes, Adler is "the woman" (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 239; 263) who "eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex" (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 239), according to Watson. This description of Adler suggests that Holmes admires and praises Adler. She is the perfect realisation of the female sex. Additionally, Holmes acknowledges Adler's physical beauty by saying that she was "a lovely woman, with a face that a man might die for" (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 252). The recognition of physical beauty in Adler and the association with its sexual effect on a man suggests that Holmes understands and feels sexual

attraction towards women. At the end of the story, Holmes asks the King for the picture of Adler that she had left in her safe. Keeping the photograph strengthens the idea that Holmes feels sexual attraction towards Adler, and towards women.

Additionally, we see that Holmes has a meaningful relationship with Watson. There is a strong sense of comradeship between Holmes and Watson as they address each other with “[m]y dear Watson” (Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, 5;6) and “[m]y dear Holmes” (*The Hound of the Baskervilles*, 26), respectively. In *The Illustrious Client*, we see concern and care in Watson when he reads about a murderous attack on Holmes in a newspaper. Watson describes a “pang of horror” passing through him, and before he finished reading the news item he was on his way to Bakerstreet (Doyle and Robson, 121). At Bakerstreet, Watson sits by Holmes’ bedside, and Holmes comments on the “scared” expression on Watson’s face, as he sees the extent of Holmes’ injuries. The fact that Watson rushes over to Holmes’ side, and is described feeling horror and fear after hearing about the possible loss of his friend indicates that Watson feels concern for Holmes’ well-being, which implies that he cares for Holmes. Holmes shows similar feelings of concern and care for Watson, as he instantly notices Watson’s fearful expression. In response, Holmes tries to ease Watson’s fear by saying: “All right Watson. Don’t look so scared. [...] It’s not as bad as it seems” (Doyle and Robson, 122). These fragments indicate that there is mutual affection between Holmes and Watson.

*The Final Problem* depicts the intimate friendship between Holmes and Watson most clearly. The narrative is largely a eulogy for Holmes. The value of their friendship is evident in the heartfelt grief expressed by Watson in the opening lines of the story: “*It is with a heavy heart that I take up my pen to write these the last words in which I shall ever record the singular gifts by which my friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes was distinguished*” (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1* 736). Watson is not expressively emotional in the other stories, which underlines the intensity of his grief. Watson goes on to make explicit that there were “very intimate relations [...] between Holmes and myself” which had diminished as a result of Watson’s marriage. Watson’s diction has an erotic tone to depict the relationship that existed between himself and Holmes. Watson ends his final narrative with: “I shall ever regard [Holmes] as the best and the wisest man whom I have ever known”, which further exhibits a loving tone (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1* 755). For Watson, Sherlock Holmes depicts the best version of a man, which is a statement often uttered by a spouse. It can, then, be argued that the relationship between Watson and Holmes has a romantic undertone. However, there

are no clear references that indicate a homosexual relationship, so the relationship between Holmes and Watson can equally be interpreted as homosocial.

In his book, Redmond gives an explanation for the rise of male comradery. He draws upon a study by Fraser Harrison, a commentator on Victorian sexuality in art and literature, who poses that “men will place an especially high value on the emotional satisfaction to be derived from male friendship during periods when they feel that their prowess is being threatened, rather than flattered, by women” (quoted in Redmond, 129). In late nineteenth-century Britain, women were gaining more rights, such as rights to hold estate (established in 1870) and equal pay (established in 1888), and became more self-sufficient. A woman’s place in society became more independent as a result. The importance of female dependence for masculinity has been outlined by Eleanor Gordon and Gweneth Nair. They propose that when women become more self-sufficient, their necessary dependency on men decreases, and the female gender role changes. Male and female gender roles are considered binary oppositions (as we have discussed in Chapter 2). Therefore, when the female gender role alters, the male gender role consequently follows. Independent women could then be interpreted as a threat to traditional Victorian masculinity. We see that women gained rights at the beginning of Conan Doyle’s Sherlockian period, which could mean that male and female gender roles were changing, and more specifically, that normative Victorian masculinity was changing. Redmond and Harrison’s explanation of male comradery supports the homosocial view of the relationship between Holmes and Watson.

Looking at the representation of femininity and homosexuality throughout the stories, we see that Holmes’ association with music, acting, and homosexuality show different patterns. Holmes is associated with violin playing in two stories: *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Holmes’ relationship with music does not seem to follow a pattern that is significant with regards to the Wilde trials and the First World War. The Wilde trials may have been expected to cause a stronger disconnection between masculinity and femininity because of the link of effeminacy to homosexuality. *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) was published before the Wilde trials but *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901) was published after. The connection between Holmes and acting shows a pattern more in line with our expectations. Holmes takes on a role in *The Adventure of the Dying Detective* (1913) and *A Scandal in Bohemia* (1891). The manner in which Holmes successfully portrays his role is masculinised in *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*. This performance relies more on factual alterations and deceptions seen as a part of his costume rather than his acting abilities. In *A Scandal in Bohemia* Holmes’ performative success is based largely on his acting

abilities, and his role is fictional, which portrays a traditional realisation of acting, and can be associated with femininity. This division follows the division of a relatively negative view of effeminacy after the Wilde Trials compared to the relatively neutral view before the trials. Lastly, the presentation of comradeship reflects the historical analysis of masculinity in Victorian England we proposed in Chapter 2. We see the strongest signs of comradeship in *The Final Problem* (1893) and *The Illustrious Client* (1924), but see the least comradeship in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901). *The Final Problem* was published before the Wilde trials, when there was no indication that homosexuality was viewed exclusively as negative and unmanly. Comradeship between men was accepted. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was published after the Wilde trials but before the First World War. The period between these events saw comradeship as homoerotic. *The Illustrious Client* was written after the First World War, which can explain the strong comradeship. The First World War saw the re-invention of comradeship as a coping mechanism for soldiers. This gave comradeship a masculine rather than effeminate and homosexual connotation.

### 3.3 Heroism

Conan Doyle's Holmes personifies a number of heroic traits throughout the stories. The first is his morality, exemplified by his profession. A detective symbolises a good moral compass because they go after the immoral. What defines the detective is the manner in which he eradicates immorality: through deduction and problem solving. Holmes solves problems to catch the culprits rather than fight them physically. This differs from the traditional classical hero, who fights in battles. As a detective, Holmes catches culprits that are a threat to society like murderers and blackmailers. Four of the six stories depict Holmes catching a murderer. The murderer epitomizes immorality as it is considered a very clear-cut form of criminality. The mystery around Jack the Ripper put murder on the map as a threat to civilisation and safety, and made killers a contemporary Victorian issue. Holmes' ability to solve murder cases, then, strengthens his morality because it is juxtaposed with the innately evil act of murder.

The second and third trait that strengthen Holmes' heroism are his selflessness and bravery. During his cases, Holmes puts himself in harm's way to be able to catch the culprits, which attests to his courage and selflessness. *The Final Problem* demonstrates this selflessness and courage, which enhances his heroism. Published in 1893, *The Final Problem* records the death of Holmes at the hands of his nemesis James Moriarty. Holmes dies a heroic death, sacrificing himself to stop Moriarty, as he falls off an edge into a waterfall



together with Moriarty. Holmes indicates in his final letter to Watson that he had anticipated his death: “I have made every disposition of my property and handed it to my brother Mycroft” (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1* 754). The knowledge of his demise turns Holmes’ death into a noble sacrifice, akin to a death of a soldier in battle. Yet Holmes’ death can be deemed more noble than that of a soldier, because there is a certainty in the knowledge of his death, whilst for a soldier it would have been a likely but uncertain possibility. Holmes’ death bestows him with a highly honourable and brave character at the end of his life. Additionally, when we reconsider Watson’s honourable eulogy, Holmes is admired for his death, which strengthens the heroic characterisation of Holmes.

However, Holmes is resurrected in the later short story *The Adventure of the Empty House*. The resurrection from death can be read in two ways. It can be seen as an undermining of the sacrificial symbolism attributed to Holmes earlier because he does not sacrifice his life for the greater good. However, it can also enhance Holmes’ heroism when we interpret his resurrection as a defeat of death. This gives Holmes an almost invincible godly character. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* reinforces the god-like strength in Holmes. According to William W. Robson, the hound is reminiscent of the hound Cerberus from Greek mythology (xxviii). Cerberus was the guardian of Hades, the Roman god of the underworld. If we extend this metaphor to Mr Stapleton, keeper of the hound of the Baskervilles and murderer, we can interpret Stapleton as a symbol of Hades, the god of the underworld. Stapleton is the force of evil that Holmes and Watson have to unveil and defeat, but the hound gives Stapleton a god-like quality, which enhances the importance of Holmes’ victory. Holmes does not only defeat a mere common murderer in Stapleton but the implication is that he has neutralised a god-like threat.

Finally, looking at the villains Culverton Smith, we find a connection between Holmes’ heroism and colonialism. In *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*, Smith has murdered his nephew and attempts to infect Holmes with a tropical disease. It becomes apparent that Smith discovered this disease in Sumatra. Sumatra can be seen as a symbol of the Other. The villainization of the Other reflects contemporary Victorian ideas of the Other in an Imperialist Britain. British society feared that the colonised countries, and their cultures, could negatively influence Britain. The British associated their colonies with degeneration of society. They believed that the colonised indigenous populations were ‘uncivilised’ and that “British manhood would bring civilization to the hinterlands of the world [the British colonies]” (Windholz, 1). Moreover, the French Count Arthur de Gobineau suggests that miscegenation with people of colour caused racial “degeneration and the subversion of

civilization” (Brantlinger, 113). His theory became known in Britain, also through many works that entertained the same views (Brantlinger, 114). Although a Dutch and not English colony, Sumatra is a non-Western country that was colonised during Conan Doyle’s life. Smith can be seen as a demonstration of the negative influence of non-British cultures. This paints Holmes as the hero who combats the threat of non-British, and specifically non-Western, cultures.

As in the other Holmes narratives, Holmes solves the crime and enables the arrest of Smith, metaphorically cleansing Britain from non-Western cultures. In light of Holmes’ role as a hero, the details of his plot become relevant. Holmes’ illness, despite being a trick, nevertheless sees him in a less than formidable position, mentally as well as physically. When he reveals his disguise, Holmes is no longer perceived and portrayed as ill, and so the formidable Holmes is resurrected argues Kestner (174). Considering Conan Doyle’s consistent focus on masculinity and the reimagination of it, the illness in Holmes can be interpreted as a reflection of the illness that is plaguing society, namely the issues that have been challenging masculinity. Conan Doyle seems to link the fate of Britain with the fate of men, aligning with the belief that restructuring masculinity will restructure and stabilize British society. Holmes’ resurrection as the saviour could be viewed as the model for every man; they can get rid of the ‘illness’ by adhering to the values and characteristics portrayed by Holmes, again placing Holmes in the position of the role-model.

### *3.4 Reason and Science*

Conan Doyle’s Holmes is rational and scientific. The association between Holmes and science is made in the first story *A Study in Scarlet*. Before meeting Holmes in the novel, the reader gets to know Holmes through the eyes of other characters. The text paints an image of Holmes as a scientific type, through the eyes of Watson’s friend Stamford. Stamford describes Holmes as “an enthusiast in some branches of science”, such as chemistry and anatomy (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 5). When the reader meets Holmes, during his first encounter with John Watson, the scientific characteristics previously attributed to Holmes are reinforced as he is depicted experimenting with blood analysis in a laboratory. Science is considered a field of study that is based on facts. Likewise, reason relies on factual information rather than emotional judgement. The depiction of Holmes as a scientific man establishes his rational character. Holmes’ scientific nature is shown throughout the stories; when he talks about the anatomy of the skull with Dr Mortimer in *The Hound of the*

*Baskervilles* or when he explains to Watson how he feigned his illness in *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*.

Holmes' rationality is exemplified by his extraordinary skills of deduction. Holmes is able to discover facts by drawing upon his own factual knowledge and observations. When Holmes meets Watson, he instantly sees that Watson was an army Doctor in the Afghan war (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 7). Later in the narrative, Holmes explains how he came to know of Watson's time in Afghanistan, saying:

“I *knew* you came from Afghanistan. From long habit the train of thoughts ran so swiftly through my mind, that I arrived at the conclusion without being conscious of intermediate steps. There were such steps, however. The train of reasoning ran, ‘Here is a gentleman of a medical type, but with the air of a military man. Clearly an army doctor, then. He has just come from the tropics, for his face is dark, and that is not the natural tint of his skin, for his wrists are fair. He has undergone hardship and sickness, as his haggard face says clearly. His left arm has been injured. He holds it in a stiff and unnatural manner. Where in the tropics could an English army doctor have seen much hardship and got his arm wounded? Clearly in Afghanistan.’ The whole train of thought did not occupy a second” (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 18).

We see that factual knowledge and observation come together in Holmes' analysis of Watson. Holmes observes the difference in colour between Watson's wrists and his face, and draws upon his own prior knowledge of current events (knowledge of the Afghan War), climate (a tropical climate), and geography (the location of Afghanistan) to conclude Watson has spent time serving in the Afghan War.

Holmes's rational character is strengthened by the aphorisms he utters. From the early stages of the novel, Holmes utters motivational aphorisms that endorse rational thinking. Holmes tells Gregson: “to a great mind, nothing is little” (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 49). We have seen that Holmes's deduction skills rest upon the consideration of small details. The information hidden in those details goes unnoticed by the other characters in the stories. The ‘nothing’ Holmes talks about, then, can be interpreted as information that is often considered insignificant. The aphorism implies that focusing on factual details will create a great mind. Holmes himself serves as an example of the greatness that is created when the mind registers insignificant details; a unique set of deduction skills. Aphorisms are memorable, instructional, and generally applicable, which make them particularly suitable for educational purposes. As Holmes is the speaker of the aphorism, he is placed in an

educational role. This supports the educational purpose of the Holmes Canon set out by Kestner (as discussed in the Introduction).

Although the text indicates that Holmes is a rational character, his skills of deduction use rational factual thinking but also require creativity. Holmes uses factual information as a basis for his deductions, but to create a coherent deduction, Holmes needs to connect different pieces of information. Rationally, every piece of information is equally valuable. Holmes selects the relevant information in his mind and draws connections between them and his observations. This type of selection process draws upon a kind of creativity: a creativity that filters information and sees unique connections between different facts. Taking Holmes' explanation of his deduction as an example once again, we see that Holmes chooses specific details from his observation of Watson to form a conclusion. Holmes notices the tint of Watson's skin on his face and wrists. When we consider an image of a face, that image shows many pieces of information, such as the colour of the person's eyes. Holmes is confronted with an image of Watson when they meet, and he chooses to highlight the features that relate to each other.

### *3.5 Bachelorhood and Sexual Purity*

Holmes remains a bachelor throughout the six stories. Although he has meaningful relationships with both Watson and Adler, he does not engage in a romantic relationship with either of them. Holmes' disinterest in romance gives him the flexibility to move around the world because he is not bound to a partner and family life in the UK. In the Conan Doyle period, Britain wanted to move British men to its colonies in order to assert direct control over them, and keep the empire more stable. The latter half of the nineteenth century saw a crisis of Imperialism in Britain as the empire kept expanding, which facilitated a large number of jobs abroad. Bachelorhood became lucrative for British society. Holmes' bachelorhood, then, enhances his manly character.

Holmes has no romantic relationships but he is able to feel and understand sexual desire, as we have argued in the analysis of his relationship with Adler in section 3.2. This suggests that Holmes chooses to abstain from sex rather than him being asexual in the Conan Doyle stories. Watson gives a reason for Holmes' celibacy, saying that "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, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*, 239). Watson therefore concludes that "as a lover he [Holmes] would have placed himself in a false position" (Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1*

239). The intrusions Watson refers to are emotions (such as love). Watson implies that Holmes' work as a detective would suffer if he were to let himself engage with romance, and that Holmes possesses the agency to control the invasion of emotions. Holmes, then, willingly abstains from romantic relationships for the sake of his work, which places a higher importance on work compared to romance and love.

## 4. *Masculinity in the BBC Sherlock's Holmes*

The following chapter will examine the representation of masculinity in *Sherlock's* Holmes by focusing on the characteristics that have been linked to Conan Doyle's Holmes, and considering how these have been translated to *Sherlock's* Holmes. Moreover, we will consider the Holmesian manly characteristics in relation to our notion of twenty-first-century masculinity outlined in Chapter 2. The chapter looks at five episodes from *Sherlock* that are adaptations of the stories discussed in Chapter 3, namely, "A Study in Pink", "A Scandal in Belgravia", "The Hounds of Baskerville", "The Lying Detective", and "The Reichenbach Fall". Each section will compare and contrast the original Holmes and *Sherlock's* Holmes. Section 4.1 will discuss the relationship between Holmes and emotion. Section 4.2 will elaborate upon the femininity in Holmes and his sexual orientation. Section 4.3 will look at the heroism presented by Holmes. Section 4.4 focuses on Holmes' trust in science and reason. Finally, section 4.5 will look at Holmes' sexual purity and bachelorhood.

### 4.1 *Emotion and Empathy*

BBC *Sherlock* has created a Holmes that foregoes sentiment and emotion, similar to the Holmes we see in the original stories. Holmes himself tells the audience "sentiment is a chemical defect found in the losing side" ("A Scandal in Belgravia"), which indicates that he sees emotion as a weakness. Although Holmes in the original stories expresses a trust in reason and logic (see Chapter 3), he does not express any particular disdain for emotion. Moreover, original Holmes seems to be adequately empathetic to be able to function in Victorian society. He is polite, pleasant, and understanding, as we have argued in Chapter 3. BBC Holmes, on the other hand, seems to be underdeveloped on an emotional level. He often fails to see what appropriate behaviour in a certain situation is, which gives him an insensitive quality. The audience often sees John correct Holmes in the series when he is inappropriate. When the plot in "The Hound of the Baskerville" unravels, Watson, Holmes, Henry Knight, and Lestrade are on the moor and are attacked by the dog which is perceived as the hound by Knight. The dog is killed by Watson, and Henry Knight is pictured on the brink of breaking down. It is at this point Holmes comments that the case is "brilliant" ("The Hound of the Baskerville"). Henry Knight has undergone twenty years of psychological torture, deceit, and drugging, and in the scene with Holmes is on the verge of suicide. Holmes's remark seems to neglect the damage done to Knight by attaching a positive term to the case. Watson makes Holmes aware of the inappropriateness of his comment, saying

“Sherlock, timing” (“The Hounds of Baskerville”). The correction of Holmes’ behaviour highlights Holmes’ lack of sensitivity to other people’s emotions. Additionally, it implies that Holmes’ insensitivity is socially frowned upon and abnormal. This seems to go against the notion that *Sherlock’s* Holmes is the personification of ideal masculinity.

However, it is not the case that BBC Holmes does not feel any emotions. As the following paragraphs will argue, both Conan Doyle’s Holmes and BBC Holmes express a childlike excitement throughout their respective narratives, but BBC Holmes seems to embody more childlike characteristics than his original counterpart. In the first episode, “A Study in Pink”, Lestrade visits Holmes to inform him of the note that has been found at the crime scene of the most recent suicide. Sherlock responds to Lestrade’s visit with “Ah! Brilliant! Four serial suicides, and now a note [...] Oh! it’s Christmas”, while exuding clear enthusiasm in his tone of voice (“A Study in Pink”). Holmes here compares a murder case to Christmas, a holiday typically exciting for children because they receive presents. The suicide note, then, could be interpreted as the Christmas gift Holmes has been waiting for as he expresses an eagerness that would befit a child at Christmas. The mirroring of the child at Christmas and Holmes strengthens his childlike character.

Holmes’ dramatic nature and emotional outbursts support the parallel between Holmes and the child. Mycroft, Holmes’ older brother, states that Holmes “does love to be dramatic” in the first episode of the series, which foregrounds Holmes’ dramatic character (“A Study in Scarlet”). Holmes’ actions align with Mycroft’s assessment as *Sherlock* depicts Holmes shooting the wall when “bored” (“The Great Game”), or refusing to dress himself in more than a sheet at Buckingham palace (“A Scandal in Belgravia”). Both actions are motivated by emotion, which Holmes is unable to temper in order to behave appropriately. In the scene where Holmes fires at the wall, it is the boredom that gets the better of him. He does not know how to handle his boredom, and this frustrates him to the extent that he shoots the wall to relieve the pressure of his frustration. The Buckingham palace scene depicts Holmes’ frustration with Mycroft, who is unwilling to share the identity of Holmes’ client, to which Holmes responds with an unwillingness to dress. Mycroft works at the highest level within the government where image and etiquette are very important. Holmes is aware that his action will be embarrassing for his brother. Holmes’ response, then, possesses a childlike petulance. When Mycroft frustrates Holmes, Holmes will return the favour, so to speak. Both of these scenes indicate that Holmes is underdeveloped emotionally, much like a child. Holmes does not seem to comply to social norms regarding appropriate behaviour and is unable to keep his emotions in check.

Linked to the idea of Holmes and control, is the presentation of Holmes in *Sherlock* as an addict, whilst Holmes in the Conan Doyle stories is not, despite original Holmes' use of heroin. BBC Holmes' addiction reflects emotion in him as well as an incapability to control them. Addiction constitutes the need or strong desire to do or to have something, which implies that addiction is linked to desire. Giving into a desire can be equated with yielding to an emotion. The addiction manifests itself in Holmes' obsession with fixing puzzles and his smoking. Holmes is obsessively fixated on solving cases and becomes irritable and frustrated when he cannot find a case to solve as shown in "The Hounds of Baskerville". At the start of the episode, Holmes is struggling to find a case to work on which makes him frustrated and anxious. The scene shows Holmes pacing erratically around the room, plopping into his armchair and tapping his fingers rapidly on the armrest, during which he yells "I need a case!" at Watson. Moreover, the scene alternates between Holmes expressing his need for a case and his need for cigarettes. This links Holmes' smoking addiction and his need for cases because the scene implies that they solve the same purpose. Both the cigarettes and the cases relieve a need. The expressions of extreme desire that can be found in Holmes support the claim that BBC Holmes is not stoic, but rather is ruled by certain desires.

#### *4.2 Femininity and Sexual Orientation*

The representation of femininity and sexual orientation are decidedly different in the series than in the original stories. Holmes' main connection to femininity in the stories was his passion for the violin and his connection to acting. In the series, Holmes holds the same passion for the violin ("A Scandal in Belgravia", "The Great Game", "The Sign of Three"), and can be seen performing a number of roles throughout the narrative. Similar to the original stories, Holmes thinks of a ruse which will help him get into Irene Adler's home. In the series, Holmes has Watson punch him to make it appear as if he was mugged ("A Scandal in Belgravia"). Acting and music have been transferred from the stories to the series, but they do not seem to hold the same feminine connotation. In the stories, creative arts were associated with femininity because these arts were typically practiced at home. The domestic sphere was similarly connected to femininity in Victorian Britain. Research on the current relationship between art and masculinity indicates that art is now considered masculine. Creativity seems to be a characteristic valued more in men than in women (Proudfoot et al., 1751). This could be the case because creativity is associated with characteristics that are perceived as masculine, such as self-reliance and being daring (Proudfoot et al., 1751). Creativity is the basis for an artistic profession like music, which suggests that music is



currently connected to masculinity. Acting requires the understanding of emotions and the expressing of emotions. Beynon explains that a masculine persona called the New Man emerged in the 1980s. The New Man got in touch with his emotional side instead of his rationality. The emotional base attributed to acting is no longer associated with femininity because of its foundation in creativity. BBC Holmes' passion for music and connection to performance, then, does not imply a clear relation to femininity in twenty-first century Britain.

With regard to the representation of homosexuality, *Sherlock* seems to make the possibly homoerotic tension between Watson and Holmes explicit, whilst the original stories do not reference this tension specifically. As we have discussed in the previous chapter, the comradery and affection between Watson and Holmes gives their relationship a light romantic tone but this is never discussed by any characters in the stories (including Holmes and Watson themselves). In *Sherlock*, the first episode "A Study in Pink" gives the audience several references to a homosexual relationship between Watson and Holmes. First, Mrs Hudson asks Watson and Holmes if they'll be needing the second bedroom in the flat ("A Study in Pink"), insinuating that she considers the relationship between Holmes and Watson as being friendly but also as possibly homosexual. In the same episode, Watson is perceived as Holmes' date at a local restaurant. The waiter, an old friend of Holmes', comes to their table to bring the menu and says "for you [Holmes] and your date [Watson]" ("A Study in Pink"). The characters who observe Holmes and Watson seem to interpret their relationship as romantic in the BBC series. The backdrop of the dinner scene strengthens a romantic tone with the restaurant's soft lighting and candles on the tables.

When Holmes is confronted with these references, he seems disinterested by the references, not correcting or responding to them. The fact that Holmes does not correct the references could indeed indicate that he does not care about whether people perceive him as gay, straight, or otherwise. This would align with the sexual ambiguity attributed to 'the New Man' (Beynon, 118). However, the lack of correction by Holmes could also be interpreted as a silent admission of his sexual orientation. The rest of the dinner scene alludes to a homosexual rather than straight sexual orientation in Holmes. Next in the dinner scene, Watson first asks Holmes if he has a girlfriend, to which Holmes responds "[g]irlfriend? no, not really my area" (A Study in Scarlet"). Watson naturally follows up on his previous question and asks if Holmes has a boyfriend, to which Holmes answers a simple "no" (A Study in Scarlet"). Holmes' response can be interpreted as a euphemism for, expressing he is not straight, which is highlighted by the fact that Watson interprets Holmes response as

exactly that. Contrastingly, Holmes expresses that he is “married to [his] work” later in the dinner scene which brings the audience back to ambiguity (“A Study in Scarlet”). Holmes’ statement hints towards the notion that he is disinterested in romance, particularly when we consider his feelings about sentiment discussed in section 4.1.

Throughout the series, Holmes’ sexual orientation remains ambiguous and unknown. The closest the spectator gets to seeing Holmes in a romantic relationship is his relationship with Adler and Watson. In both relationships Holmes does not pursue a sexual relationship, yet he does show loving feelings towards both Adler and Watson. “The Lying Detective” depicts Holmes’ care for Watson most explicitly of the five episodes. In “The Lying Detective”, Holmes goes after serial killer Culverton Smith, whom he catches by means of an intricate plan. As a part of this plan, Holmes shoots himself up with heroin to make himself seem unreliable, incapable, and mentally unstable, enticing Smith to lower his guard. But capturing Smith is not the only reason for Holmes to use heroin.

Although Holmes’ reason for using heroin is capturing Smith, later in the episode it becomes feasible that Holmes’ motivation, at least in part, was regaining John’s friendship. The episode depicts Mary Watson giving Holmes a DVD with a recorded video message. In the message, she implores Holmes to “save John Watson”, “the man we both love” (“The Lying Detective”). Here the bond Holmes has with John is defined by Mary, who labels the bond love. The word love can be used for romantic as well as unromantic love (think of loving a mother or brother). Mary explains in the video how Holmes should go about saving Watson, telling Holmes:

“[t]he only way to save John is to let him save you [...] go right into hell and make it look like you mean it [...] put yourself in harm’s way [...] if he thinks you need him, I swear, he will be there.” (“The Lying Detective”)

Particularly the final line of her speech implies a mutual affection between Watson and Holmes. As the definition of love in the Oxford English dictionary states, love manifests itself as “concern for the other's welfare” (Oxford English Dictionary “Love *n.*”).

It could also be argued that both men act the way they do out of love and honour for Mary. After all, she is the person that brings the two men together; her message seems to convince Holmes to put himself in the hands of Smith, and the same message seems to motivate Watson to save Holmes. However, Mary’s vocalisation that Watson is “the man we both love” seems to suggest that it is more likely that it is affection between Holmes and Watson, particularly if we look at the extent of the danger Holmes puts himself in. Holmes effectively puts his life in Watson’s hands. When Smith visits Holmes in his hospital room,

with the intent to kill him, Holmes' life is dependent on Watson understanding that Holmes needs him. Holmes does not vocalise the need for help directly, partly because he needs to uphold his part of the plan by embodying the role of the junkie, but also because expressing a need for help implies he is unable to solve a problem and needs to express an emotion. Additionally, the manner in which Mary's message was filmed interlaces images of Holmes and Watson, which alludes to an affection between Watson and Holmes. The scene shows Mary's message but it is constantly interrupted by scenes of Holmes and Watson.

The end of "The Lying Detective" strengthens the affection between Holmes and Watson. The final scene depicts Holmes comforting Watson, when he becomes emotional about Mary's death. Hugging Watson because he becomes emotional again suggests that Holmes cares about Watson's wellbeing, wanting to comfort his friend when he is down. The small display of affection becomes more significant because Holmes does not express his affection often. In fact, Holmes does not hug anyone else in the five episodes discussed. Despite expressing affection, Holmes does not seem to express sexual interest in Watson or Adler. By way of comparison, John shows multiple signs of sexual interest in women. An interaction between John and Mycroft's assistant shows John's interest peaking as he looks her up and down, seemingly enticed by her appearance ("A Scandal in Belgravia"). Holmes does not respond in the same way to women or men, which suggests that Holmes is asexual.

Holmes' relationship with Adler underpins the asexual classification of Holmes. As with Watson, Holmes and Adler exhibit an affectionate relationship. The episode "A Scandal in Belgravia" depicts Holmes saving Adler's life. When Holmes cracks the code to Adler's phone, she loses her leverage over the many clients she has had in the past. As a result, Adler is captured by a terrorist cell in Karachi and sentenced to death. The plot unfolds by showing Holmes has followed Adler and has dressed as a member of the cell. At the moment of her execution, Holmes swoops in by attacking her executioners so Adler can escape. Holmes puts himself at risk when he saves Adler. Moreover, he did not need to save her for the good of his case; the case had already been solved. Holmes' saving of Adler shows that he feels affection for her because he cares about her wellbeing. As we have argued earlier, caring for someone's wellbeing is an indication of love. Mimicking the sexual relationship with Watson, Holmes does not show a sexual interest in Adler. Although Adler makes many advances towards Holmes, he does not return them, or acknowledge their sexual connotation.

Both Holmes' relationship with Watson and his relationship with Adler suggest that Holmes is capable of love. However, *Sherlock* does not seem to allude to a capacity for sexual desire in Holmes. The most suitable label for Holmes, then, is asexual. Holmes does

not seem to be more linked to heterosexuality than any other sexual orientation, indicating a disconnection between Holmes and heteronormative sexuality. As Beynon outlines in his book *Masculinities and Culture*, the New Man was ambiguous about his sexuality because he was trying to break with the restraints of normative conceptualizations of sexual orientation and gender. The ambiguous nature of Holmes' sexual orientation can then be linked to the New Man. Holmes' sexuality thus enhances his masculinity through his link to the New Man.

### 4.3 Heroism

At first glance Holmes seems similarly heroic in *Sherlock* as he does in the Conan Doyle stories. The general plotline of the episodes matches the general plotline of the original stories. Each episode gives Holmes a person to save or murderer to catch, which he succeeds in doing (based on the five episodes listed above). By catching the murderers or culprits, Holmes protects the people he and Watson meet in the episodes, such as Henry Knight in "The Hound", but indirectly he also protects future victims of the culprits and so the British nation. When looking at Holmes' activities, they align with a heroic character but the motivation behind the activities sheds an ambiguous light on his heroism. Focusing on Holmes' motivation, it seems as though Holmes solves cases because it satisfies his own needs, instead out of a selfless sacrifice for others. Holmes sees sentiment as a weakness, as we have argued in the previous section, which implies that sentiment cannot be the reason he attempts catch culprits (or save victims). This raises the question: what motivates Holmes to capture the villains in his narrative? The earlier analysis of Holmes' addiction indicates that Holmes solves cases to satisfy his own desire which works against Holmes' heroic image. Holmes' motivation for solving crimes is then not selfless.

Moreover, when BBC Holmes is depicted in a sacrificial role, again it is not selfish, which contrasts the original stories. In the original stories Holmes is selflessly sacrificial during his last battle with Moriarty. Holmes is depicted giving his own life to kill Moriarty. Contrarily, in *Sherlock*, whenever a question of morality arises, Holmes' sacrifice is connected to people he cares about. In his final battle with Moriarty, he sacrifices his life, mirroring original Holmes, but here Holmes' sacrifice means saving Watson, Lestrade, and Mrs Hudson (in addition to Moriarty's future victims). This connects Holmes' sacrifice to his own gain. BBC Holmes is, nevertheless, brave and sacrificial but in a less heroic manner than original Holmes. The selflessness attributed to original Holmes cannot be seen in BBC Holmes. A comparable pattern can be found in the capture of Culverton Smith. To capture Culverton Smith, Holmes sets up an elaborate plan that involves injecting himself with

heroin. Holmes tells Watson “if the only thing I ever do in this world is drive him [Smith] out of it, then my life will not have been wasted” (“The Lying Detective”). It appears as though Holmes is so adamant in his quest that he is willing to put himself at risk for the good of the British nation. Building on his own words, Holmes seems brave and selfless. Yet when Holmes’ motivation is considered, his sacrifice is sentimental. At first it seems as though Holmes has revived his addiction solely for the purpose of catching Smith but later in the episode it becomes feasible that his motivation was also regaining John’s friendship (as we have argued in section 4.2). BBC Holmes, then, does not fit into the traditional role of the hero, as original Holmes does.

On the other hand, the fact that Holmes has chosen to be a detective alludes to a heroism in him. Mycroft touches upon the question of Holmes’ caring nature when he says to Watson, “my brother has the brain of a scientist or a philosopher yet he elects to be a detective [...] What might we deduce about his heart?” (“A Scandal in Belgravia”). Mycroft implies that there is a reason for Holmes’ profession. To simply satisfy his need for puzzle solving he could have chosen many other jobs that would not involve helping other people directly. It seems, then, there is a tension between heroic acts and the selfish motivation behind the act in *Sherlock’s* Holmes. Holmes is sacrificial and brave, but also selfish. Selfishness is a trait that is generally considered negative. Holmes’ connection to selfishness suggests that he is not the ideal man in the way that original Holmes was. Holmes’ imperfection could allude to his humanity and make him more relatable to the audience.

Despite being an imperfect version of the hero, looking at the villains Holmes faces will give insight into the possible emblematic role for Holmes (as in the original stories). In the original stories, the villains represent contemporary issues of Victorian society, which supported the claim that Holmes represented an answer to those issues. His character is linked to masculinity, which linked masculinity to the combatting of issues. The villains in BBC *Sherlock* seem to align with twenty-first century issues. Firstly, the *Sherlock* version of *The Hound of the Baskerville* associates the villain with technology and a fragmented reality. The episode significantly edits the original story, as it changes the murderer and his motive. In the original story, the murderer is Dr Stapleton, who wants to inherit the Baskerville estate and money (see Chapter 3). In *Sherlock*, the episode “The Hound of the Baskerville” features Dr Frankland as the villain. Frankland is obsessed with a drug he developed which causes him to murder Charles Baskerville. The drug makes its users “highly suggestible” and “paranoi[d]” (“The Hounds of Baskerville”). Frankland, together with the H.O.U.N.D. institution, designed the drug to be used as a weapon in chemical warfare. Frankland, then,

represents a very different evil than the original story; a technological evil. In light of the increasing role of technology in Britain, Frankland seems to mirror a twenty-first century fear that technology can be used for the wrong reasons. The Baskerville military base, where Frankland works, adds to the negative view of technology. At the base, they conduct extensive research on genetic manipulation. Genetic manipulation is another form of technology that has been debated over the years. By catching Frankland, Holmes rids the world of a murderer but, inadvertently, also rids the world of technological development gone wrong.

Similar to Frankland, Moriarty can be argued to represent an issue of contemporary Western society. Moriarty's power lies in his knack for deceit and manipulation. In "Reichenbach Falls", we see that he can convince the British public to believe a story, regardless of whether it is true. Moriarty convinces a reporter for the Sun that he has been hired as an actor by Holmes to play the villainous Moriarty. He has created a new identity to corroborate his story and a video of himself acting in another television program. The media eats up this revelation shown in the many headlines that pop into view ("The Reichenbach Falls"). The credibility of the information does not deter the media from printing its gossip. The episode seems to suggest that factual truth no longer determines the significance or believability of a story. Holmes deduces a similar suggestion, noting that people believe "a lie that's preferable to truth" ("The Reichenbach Falls"). The foundation of a narrative is then no longer truth but believability. Moriarty's lie is so convincing that even John begins to doubt Holmes' credibility, which alludes to Moriarty's success in manipulating reality ("The Reichenbach Falls"). Moriarty's success in convincing the world of his lie suggests that the truth is not what really happened, but whatever people believe has happened. The implication here is that truth has become subjective.

A connection can be drawn between constructed truths and the postmodern fragmentation of reality. Frederic Jameson argues that the fragmentation of the economic world, through capitalist globalisation, has changed the perception of reality. He suggests that contemporary reality experienced by the individual in a capitalist state, is not the true reality.

At this point the phenomenological experience of the individual subject – traditionally, the supreme raw materials of the work of art – becomes limited to a tiny corner of the social world, a fixed view of a certain section of London or the countryside or whatever. But the truth of that experience no longer coincides with the place in which it takes place. The truth of that limited daily experience in London lies, rather, in India or Jamaica or Hong

Kong; it is bound up with the whole colonial system of the British Empire that determines the very quality of the individual subjective life. Yet those structural coordinates are no longer accessible to immediate lived experience and are often no even conceptualizable for most people. There comes into being, then, a situation in which we can say that if individual experience is authentic, then it cannot be true; and that if a scientific or cognitive model of the same content is true, then it escapes individual experience (Jameson, “Cognitive Mapping”, 349, as cited in Chapter 2)

Jameson’s excerpt implies that there is a malleability and subjectivity to reality and truth. Truth and reality have become disconnected, whilst they were previously linked in a pre-capitalist state. Reality is now personal and plural. This poses an issue for art which has always attempted to replicate reality (Jameson, “Cognitive Mapping”, 349). Looking at reality as a subjective matter means it cannot be defined with one definition, which makes representing reality problematic. Jameson’s theory suggests that capitalism facilitated the dissolution of one truthful reality into multiple constructed realities. It is this issue that *Sherlock* addresses through Moriarty’s manipulation of reality and truth. Moriarty highlights the problematic nature of reality that is no longer intertwined with truth. When reality does not need to be truthful, it can be made into anything.

Moriarty seems to take the notion of subjective reality to an extreme by making lies a perceived reality. By defeating Moriarty, Holmes can be interpreted as the hero who has exposed the issue of constructed reality. Holmes offers a solution to Jameson’s proposed disconnection between reality and truth, namely, his way of thinking and his trust in facts. Holmes looks critically at the information that is presented to him and attempts to eliminate the influence of technology. The next section will elaborate on the relationship between Holmes and factual knowledge, but there are already implications that can be made for masculinity. BBC *Sherlock* does not seem to embody ideal heroism, as original Holmes did, but his actions address contemporary issues in society. By addressing these issues, BBC Holmes can be argued to represent a new way of dealing with a fragmented postmodern society. Conan Doyle’s Holmes fulfilled a similar role. He catches criminals that can be linked to Victorian issues. The difference between the two renditions of Holmes is their masculinity, which is shown in the realisation of their heroism. Original Holmes is the personification of ideal heroism. He is honourable, noble, selfless, and sacrificial (see Chapter 3). Additionally, he is quintessentially masculine based on the characteristics outlined in Chapter 2 (see Chapter 3 for the full analysis). By depicting Holmes as masculine,

masculinity becomes linked to combatting issues in society. The same cannot be argued for BBC Holmes. BBC Holmes is imperfectly heroic and does not seem to embody the ideal personification of masculinity.

#### 4.4 Reason and Science

Like the original Holmes, BBC Holmes trusts in reason and science. From the beginning of the series Holmes is associated with science and deduction, similar to the original stories. In the first episode of *Sherlock*, titled “A Study in Pink”, the audience meets Holmes in a morgue, where he is conducting an experiment on post-mortem bruise patterns. By depicting Holmes performing an experiment during his first scene in the series, the series foregrounds the scientific nature of Holmes’ character. In the series, as in the stories, Holmes relies on the science of his senses instead of technology. During the Conan Doyle period, there was no computerized science, so there could be no distinction between technological science and visual science, but during the BBC period computerized science is alive and active. BBC Holmes chooses to believe in the sciences of his senses, avoiding technological science. He states in “The Hound of the Baskerville” that he has “always been able to trust [his] senses” (“The Hound of the Baskerville”). His reliance on his senses is mirrored in his use of a microscope to analyse data from his crime scenes. He could have used computers to analyse substances but prefers to directly see the substances he needs to analyse. The trust in visible science is the first indication of Holmes’ aversion to technology. A second indication is the fact that Holmes chooses people over technology to gain information. Holmes does not hack social media accounts or phones to track his clients or suspects, instead he uses his “homeless network” which he calls his “eyes and ears all over the city” (“The Blind Banker”). The disconnection between Holmes and technology underlines the notion that Holmes is addressing the issues involved in a capitalist society.

Holmes’ cleverness again, like in the stories, establishes his logical thinking. He deduces that Watson has recently returned from the war in Afghanistan (this time referencing the war from 2001 to 2014) in “A Study in Pink”. Contrary to the original stories, *Sherlock* elaborates on the method of Holmes’ deduction skills, introducing “the mind palace” (“The Hound of the Baskerville”). The mind palace is a kind of “mental map”, in which you bind memories to locations in a map so you can go back to them (“The Hound of the Baskerville”). Holmes’ use of mind mapping is significant for two reasons. Firstly, mind-mapping is a mental, and therefore human, act. Therefore, Holmes’ mind-mapping can be categorized as another example of his disconnection from technology. Secondly, the idea of



cognitive mapping is used by Jameson, who connects the idea of mapping to the self and society. As referenced in section 4.2, Jameson posits that in our capitalist society, we can no longer map our position in the world relative to the capitalist system as a whole because reality has become subjective and distanced from truth (Jameson, “Cognitive Mapping”, 349). Creating a capitalist version of mental mapping could aid society in dealing with a fragmented reality. A parallel can then be drawn between the cognitive mapping by Jameson and by Holmes. Holmes mentally maps his memories so he can always find them. Always being able to retrieve memories implies that his map is transparent and complete. Modern capitalism has rendered the creation of a transparent and cognitive map of our position in society problematic. Holmes, then, could symbolise a way of dealing with the fragmented reality in twenty-first century capitalist Britain.

A second parallel can be drawn between Holmes and the postmodern fragmented reality in Britain. In addition to his mind-mapping, Holmes sees the world differently than most people. He sees what other people cannot see, or fail to see at the moment. Again, there is a similarity between Holmes and postmodern capitalist society. The fragmentation of reality has caused a disconnection between truth and reality. Therefore, it is impossible to experience and see a reality that is true. Holmes is able to see what for most people is invisible and untouchable. He interprets the world around him in a unique way. Holmes takes meaning from details that would be disregarded by most. Moreover, his observations are based on facts. Facts are closely knit with the idea of truth. It could be argued that Holmesian observation will produce a view of reality that is closer to a possible truth. This does not mean to say that Holmes is able to see beyond the issues of reality. Instead we pose that Holmes seems to offer an alternate way of dealing with the issue of truth and reality.

#### *4.5 Bachelorhood and Sexual Purity*

Bachelorhood and sexual purity are the two attributes of Holmes that *Sherlock* has translated from the original stories to the series that seem to find a base in multiple strands of modern masculinity. Firstly, Holmes’ bachelorhood could connect him to laddism. As Beynon indicates, laddism was a new masculine ideal that developed in the 1990s, which was focused on men going back to their basic instincts and natural manliness (Beynon, 112). Laddism refocused manliness on heterosexuality and the sexual objectification of women. Sexual virility was a large part of laddish masculinity. As we have argued in section 4.3, BBC Holmes aligns most with asexuality, which contrasts the sexual virility central to the laddish masculine culture. Secondly, bachelorism could indicate a disconnection from the female

influence, and so femininity, as in original stories. Similarly, laddism wanted to disconnect ideas of femininity and masculinity to be able to go back to a traditional masculinity (see Chapter 2). Holmes in *Sherlock*, then, seems to draw masculine attributes from 90s laddism.

Contrastingly, the sexual purity in Holmes connects him to the notion of the New Man and disconnects him from laddism. Adler and Moriarty refer to Holmes as “the virgin”, which alludes to sexual purity in Holmes (“A Scandal in Belgravia”). Additionally, Adler questions Holmes on his virginity depicted in the following transcribed dialogue between Holmes and Adler:

“[Adler:] Have you ever had anyone?

[Holmes:] I’m sorry?

[Adler:] And when I say had, I’m being indelicate.

[Holmes:] I don’t understand.

[Adler:] I’ll be delicate, then. [long pause] Let’s have dinner.

[Holmes:] Why?

[Adler:] You might be hungry.

[Holmes:] I’m not.

[Adler:] Good.

[Holmes:] Why would I want to have dinner if I wasn’t hungry?” (“A Scandal in Belgravia”)

Holmes does not seem to comprehend the sexual meaning of Adler’s question and comments, but this leaves the question of Holmes’ virginity unanswered. Holmes’ asexuality, as we have argued in section 4.2, would harmonise with the idea that Holmes is sexually pure. Building upon the notion of a sexually pure Holmes, the interpretation of Holmes as a laddish man contradicts his sexuality. However, the sexual ambiguity attributed to Holmes is reminiscent of the masculine ideals of the New Man.

## 5. Conclusion

All in all, we see that Conan Doyle's Holmes and *Sherlock's* Holmes share many traits but the realisation of those traits in each version of Holmes reflect the masculine norm of its own time. The analysis of Conan Doyle's Holmes suggests that he aligns with our notion of normative Victorian masculinity. Victorian masculinity was perceived to be a universally applicable concept, applicable to all men. It foregrounded stoicism, reason, physical strength, heroism, and bachelorhood. We see that Conan Doyle's Holmes exemplifies many of these traits. Holmes is distinctly rational and trusts in facts. His rational mind comes forward in his association with science and his unique skills of deduction. Holmes is depicted as being physically skilled and trained in sports, which demonstrates his physical strength. As a detective, we see Holmes' heroism most clearly. Holmes catches immoral culprits that have committed some sort of a crime. By imprisoning the villains of the stories, Holmes protects the British public and promotes and demonstrates morality. During his investigations, Holmes puts himself in physical and mortal danger, most clearly illustrated by the almost deadly battle between Moriarty and Holmes in *The Final Problem*. It seems, then, that Holmes puts himself at risk to be able to catch criminals, which endows Holmes with selflessness and courage. Holmes is a bachelor, and remains celibate throughout the stories, which shows his sexual purity. His bachelorhood connects Holmes to the Empire as the Empire promoted bachelorism across Britain. Bachelorism produced unattached men who could move abroad to serve the Empire, which would strengthen British rule in their colonies. Holmes, then, aligns with the ideal Victorian masculinity proposed in Chapter 2. These characteristics frame Holmes in an enviable, admirable light, and indicates that Holmes represents a model form of Victorian masculinity.

However, in addition to his masculine traits, Holmes' character shows traits that are associated with femininity: creativity, intellectual strength, music, and acting. Still, the feminization of Holmes is not as clear cut as it seems. The feminine traits each show different patterns throughout the six stories. Holmes' intellectual strength is constant throughout the texts, seen in his skills of deduction. These skills rely on his intellectual strength, but his intellect is factual and rational. Intellectual strength was associated with domesticity and femininity under influence of the feminization of domesticity, but Holmes' intellectual strength is intertwined with reason, fact, and science. Holmes' realisation of intellectual strength is a masculinised form. Holmes' creativity is further depicted in his violin playing, his connection to acting, and his deduction skills. All of these activities require a creative

base, and, therefore, strengthen Holmes' creative character. Holmes' passion for music and skills of deduction do not follow the hypothesised disconnection from Holmes because of the negative connotation attached to femininity and homosexuality. This could indicate that music and creativity were not as strongly associated with femininity as predicted. Acting does align with our hypothesis as the texts depicted an emotional performance by Holmes in *A Scandal in Bohemia*, published before the Wilde trials, and a performance rooted in fact and science in *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*, which was published after the trials. A reason for this could be the more outspoken relationship between emotion and acting, which has given acting a stronger connection to femininity. The combination of creativity and rationalism in a masculine character like Holmes could reflect a re-evaluation of rationality. Conan Doyle, then, seems to advocate for a combination of creativity and rationality in men. However, further research covering a larger portion of the Holmes canon needs to be done before this conclusion can be more clearly drawn.

In *Sherlock*, Holmes embodies many of the same characteristics that can be found in Conan Doyle's Holmes, but they have been adapted to a twenty-first century framework. He possesses great deduction skills, which depend on his factual knowledge and rationality. He plays the violin, which links him to creativity. Twenty-first-century masculinity connects creativity to masculinity rather than femininity, which contrasts the theoretical feminization of creativity in Conan Doyle's Holmes and the Victorian period. The feminine connotation of emotional expression dominant in the Victorian period has become blurred in twenty-first-century masculinity. The feminisation of emotional expression aligns with laddish manliness but simultaneously contradicts the New Man's notion of masculinity. *Sherlock's* Holmes is decidedly emotional as he has outbursts of agitation, and of glee. Unlike Conan Doyle's Holmes, *Sherlock's* Holmes seems unclear how to express and deal with emotions, which mirrors the inability to express emotions as a result of suppressive masculinity (or toxic masculinity) touched upon by The New Man.

Furthermore, the realisation of Holmes' heroism differs from Conan Doyle's Holmes. *Sherlock's* Holmes presents an ambiguous form of heroism, that questions the traditional idealistic version of heroism. He has elected to be a detective, as Conan Doyle's Holmes, but he also shows a near addiction to solving cases. This puts into question Holmes' motivation for crime solving, as his selflessness is more pronounced and his morality becomes uncertain. Conan Doyle's Holmes exhibits a selfless motive for his profession more clearly as he is also addicted to drugs but does not show the same addiction to puzzle solving. Conan Doyle's Holmes, then, does not demonstrate the same personal gain from crime solving as *Sherlock's*

Holmes. In addition, *Sherlock's* Holmes aligns most with asexuality rather than heterosexuality or homosexuality and celibacy. Whilst Conan Doyle's Holmes alludes to felling sexual desire, *Sherlock's* Holmes seems unaware of it. Holmes' asexuality supports the sexual ambiguity and acceptance voiced by the New Man. *Sherlock's* Holmes, then, seems to adopt Conan Doyle's masculine traits but reinvents them through a twenty-first century light, whilst remaining manly.

*Sherlock's* Holmes and Conan Doyle's Holmes both seem to be role-models. Conan Doyle's Holmes is a role-model for ideal Victorian masculinity as he is depicted as an admirable, enviable character. *Sherlock's* realisation of Holmes does not demonstrate the same enviable character as he is unlikable, unempathetic, and rude. *Sherlock's* Holmes mirrors the fragmentation of masculinity that occurred in the twenty-first century which eliminated a normative British masculinity. This is shown in the contradictory combination of Laddish and the New Man in Holmes. Moreover, *Sherlock's* Holmes connects to technological capitalism. Holmes's deduction skills get a new dimension in *Sherlock* as Holmes has developed his mind palace, which enables him to remember details and more information. He uses a mind map to attach locations to information which makes it possible to go back to that information. Capitalism saw the disconnection between truth and reality because reality could no longer be directly experienced. As a result, reality becomes subjective and unreliable. Holmes's mind mapping engages with this issue and gives a possible solution, namely, trusting in facts and memory. This reshaping of Conan Doyle's Holmes, then, has created a modern Holmes that does not seem to embody an ideal form of masculinity. *Sherlock's* Holmes embodies characteristics that question British social etiquette and social standards.

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