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**READER AND AUDIENCE RESPONSE TO THE DEATH OF
SHERLOCK HOLMES: FROM MAGAZINE SHORT STORIES (1890s) TO
THE TV SERIES *SHERLOCK* (2010s)**

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Reader and audience response to the death of Sherlock Holmes: from magazine (short stories - 1890s) to the TV series *Sherlock* (2010s)

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Este trabalho é dedicado a Tarcísio, Rafael, Giana e Maria Teresa,
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RESUMO

O personagem Sherlock Holmes, criado por Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, tem muitos fãs desde suas primeiras aparições no romance *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), publicado de forma seriada na revista *Beeton's Christmas Annual* e é amplamente reconhecido tanto nos textos canônicos escritos por Doyle quanto em suas múltiplas adaptações, alusões e pastiches. A série televisiva *Sherlock* (2010-) produzida pela BBC, que adapta as narrativas do detetive para o contexto contemporâneo, é considerada inovadora pela crítica por se relacionar com a audiência e com os fãs, deixando indícios em sua narrativa de que a voz dos fãs é ouvida. O presente trabalho investiga a relação entre fãs, mídia e narrativas no período referente à suposta morte do personagem Sherlock Holmes, que corresponde aos contos “The Final Problem” (1893) e “The Empty House” (1903) e o período conhecido como “Grande Hiato” entre eles e os episódios televisivos “The Reichenbach Fall” (2012) e “The Empty Hearse” (2014), e o hiato entre eles, buscando compreender suas diferenças cronológicas e a influência da mediação da crítica contemporânea. Usando os conceitos de recepção desenvolvidos por Wolfgang Iser e Hans Robert Jauss, e as discussões sobre adaptação de vários teóricos como Linda Hutcheon e Thomas Leitch, a tese demonstra que não só os eventos narrativos e personagens criados por Doyle são adaptados para a série mas também as estratégias que geram engajamento e o relacionamento com os fãs. Com base nisso, propõe-se uma análise dos diferentes elementos envolvidos nessa relação: o texto em si (e como ele chama o público a uma interação), a recepção crítica (e a mediação nessa relação) e a representação dos fãs e de sua resposta nas narrativas. A análise do conto e do episódio em que o detetive morre mostra como o texto apresenta espaços para serem preenchidos pelo público, chamando-o a dar respostas específicas que são relacionadas tanto com as estratégias retóricas dos textos quanto das expectativas de gênero. A análise de resenhas e artigos publicados após a morte de Sherlock Holmes mostra como a mídia influencia a resposta de fãs e os representa. Enquanto no conto o retorno de Sherlock Holmes tem uma estrutura narrativa similar aos outros contos, na série seu retorno faz referência ao grande número de respostas publicadas no hiato entre as narrativas. Essas referências representam estereótipos de fãs e seu comportamento enquanto deixam implícito os limites esperados nesse comportamento. A diferença entre os meios, e nas expressões de fãs mostra que os contextos, das publicações literárias para nosso mundo midiático contemporâneo, influenciam no relacionamento entre a criação de um personagem e as expectativas de fãs.

Palavras-chave: Sherlock Holmes. Adaptação. Recepção. Fãs.

ABSTRACT

The character Sherlock Holmes, created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, has a large number of fans since its first narratives in *A Study in Scarlet*, published serially in *Beeton's Christmas Annual* (1887) and he is widely known either in the canonical texts written by Doyle and in its multiple adaptations, allusions, and pastiche. The TV series *Sherlock* produced by BBC (2010-), which adapts the detective to the contemporary context, is considered innovative by the critics as it shows the relationship with audience and fans, giving the impression that in its narrative fan voices are heard by the production team. This dissertation investigates the relationship between fans, media and narratives in the period encompassing the supposed death of the character Sherlock Holmes, which corresponds to the short stories "The Final Problem" (1893) and "The Empty House" (1903) and the period between them known as "The Great Hiatus" and the episodes "The Reichenbach Fall" (2012) and "The Empty Hearse" (2014) and the hiatus between them, aiming to understand the chronological differences in them and the influence of the mediation of contemporary criticism on the series. Using the concepts of reception theory developed by Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss, and the discussion about adaptation from several authors, among them Linda Hutcheon and Thomas Leitch, this dissertation demonstrates that not only the narrative events created by Doyle are adapted to the series but also the narrative strategies that promote engagement and a closer relationship with fans. This thesis proposes an analysis of the different elements in the relationship between the literary and TV texts (and how they call for audience interaction), the critical reception (and its mediation in the relationship), and the representation of fans and their responses in the two narratives. The analyses of the short story and the episode in which the detective dies show how the texts have blanks to be filled in by the audience, calling readers and spectators to specific responses that are both related to the rhetoric strategies of the texts and genre expectations. The analyses of reviews and articles published after the death of Sherlock Holmes show how media influences fan responses and represents them. Whereas in the short stories the return of Sherlock Holmes has a similar narrative structure to the other short stories, in the series his return refers to a large number of fans' responses publicized during the hiatus between narratives. Such references represent stereotypes of fans and fannish behavior while they imply the expected limits in fannish behavior. The differences between the media and the different fan expressions show that the different contexts, from the literary publications to our contemporary mediatized world, influence on this relationship between character creation and fans' expectations.

Keywords: Sherlock Holmes. Adaptation. Reception. Fans.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Shots in the title sequence indicating the context of the series.....	65
Figure 2 - Reference to the actors and producers in the title sequence	65
Figure 3 - Visual references to the episodes of the season in the title sequence	66
Figure 4 – Credit to Doyle in the title sequence	66
Figure 5 - Introduction of <i>The Strand</i>	73
Figure 6 - Portrait of Celebrities in <i>The Strand</i>	73
Figure 7 - Short story in <i>The Strand</i>	74
Figure 8 - Colour me Good – Benedict Cumberbatch.....	90
Figure 9 - Sherlock: The Mind Palace: A Coloring Book Adventure	90
Figure 10 - The press members receive an SMS message and the text appears onscreen	94
Figure 11 - Inspector Lestrade’s SMS message also displayed onscreen	94
Figure 12 - Shot of Holmes indicating that his perspective will follow.....	95
Figure 13 – Onscreen text indicating Holmes' conclusion	95
Figure 14 – Onscreen text indicating Holmes' observations	95
Figure 15 – Onscreen text indicating Holmes' conclusions.....	95
Figure 16 - Onscreen text shows what Sherlock is accessing on his mobile	95
Figure 17 - The Highlighted text indicates the link that was accessed by Holmes	95
Figure 18 - An extreme close-up shows that Sherlock's door is opened.....	100
Figure 19 - Shadows show someone unidentified entering.....	100
Figure 20 - The camera follows the person’s feet rather than his face.....	100
Figure 21 - Even when Moriarty walks in, he is blurred in the background.....	100
Figure 22 - Sherlock talks to Moriarty, but his face is still hidden	100
Figure 23 - When Moriarty answers to Sherlock, his face is revealed.....	100
Figure 24 - A long shot introduces the setting of the sequence.....	102
Figure 25 - The camera moves right, revealing Sherlock on the background.....	102
Figure 26 - Sherlock's perspective.....	102
Figure 27 - The camera follows Sherlock as he approaches Moriarty	102
Figure 28 - A low-angle camera shows how peasants would see Sherlock from the street...	103
Figure 29 - An extreme close-up shows Sherlock repeating Moriarty's code.....	103
Figure 30 - A flashback shows onscreen information interpreting Moriarty's code	103
Figure 31 - When Moriarty kills himself, Sherlock wonders what he should do.....	104

Figure 32 - A parallel montage shows the killers targeting John.....	104
Figure 33 - ... Miss Hudson	104
Figure 34 - ... and Lestrade.....	104
Figure 35 - Sherlock as he would be seen from the rooftop.....	105
Figure 36 - The fall from John's perspective	105
Figure 37 - A low-angle framing of the fall from the perspective of someone on the street .	106
Figure 38 - An out-of-focus body is seen in the ground right after the fall	106
Figure 39 - Watson tries to get close to Sherlock, but is hit by a bike	107
Figure 40 - At first, Watson only sees Sherlock's body behind a truck.....	107
Figure 41 - Shot of Watson when he hits his head on the ground.....	107
Figure 42 - A high-angle shot shows people getting close to the body.....	107
Figure 43 - Watson takes Sherlock's pulse, assuring that he is dead.....	107
Figure 44 - A high-angle camera shows the body being removed	107
Figure 45 - The sequence ends with the killer's target	108
Figure 46 - ... With the supposed suicide, he gets his weapon and walks away.	108
Figure 47 - Graphic representation of the timeline of "The Final Problem"	114
Figure 48 - Graphic representation of the timeline of "The Reichenbach Fall".....	116
Figure 49 - Close on Sherlock Holmes' grave recapping the last episode's plot.....	152
Figure 50 - Shots that remind the audience that Moriarty killed himself.....	153
Figure 51 - Watson's participation in the sequence	153
Figure 52 - New information added in the sequence.....	154
Figure 53 - Sherlock bungee jumping	155
Figure 54 - The second version of the fall begins with Watson's perspective	158
Figure 55: A mask and a coat give the impression that Sherlock is in the rooftop.....	158
Figure 56 - Sherlock and Moriarty are behind the figure	158
Figure 57 - Sherlock and Moriarty are together controlling the figure	158
Figure 58 - The two characters get closer to kiss... ..	158
Figure 59 - The sequence is interrupted by Anderson.....	158
Figure 60 - Meme created within the context of "The Empty Hearse"	161
Figure 61 - Fan production with a joke related to Sherlock's plot.....	161
Figure 62 - Third version of the fall implying that it is a video record.....	163
Figure 63 - The fall is narrated by Sherlock himself in the video record.....	163
Figure 64 - A text message would inform which plan would be followed	163
Figure 65 - An airbag is used to protect Sherlock from the fall	163

Figure 66 - The airbag being quickly removed	163
Figure 67 - Squash ball used under the armpit	163

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Setting up the “Mystery”	15
1 First Clues	23
1.1 Media Studies and Fandom	29
1.2 Reader-Response Criticism	36
1.3 Literary Magazines with serial publication	42
1.3.1 Detective Stories	45
1.4 Adaptation	52
1.5 Television	59
1.5.1 TV Series	63
2 First Evidence: Analysis of Doyle’s and Moffat and Gatiss’ Sherlock Holmes ..	68
2.1 The Game is afoot: Sherlock Holmes and his investigations	71
2.2 The Game is on: looking for clues in <i>Sherlock</i>	85
3 “Everyone is a Critic”: Analysis of the critical reception of “The Final Problem” and “The Reichenbach Falls”	110
3.1 Timeline of “The Final Problem” and “The Reichenbach Fall”	113
3.2 Responses related to the texts “The Final Problem” and “The Reichenbach Fall” ..	118
3.2.1 References to Intertextuality and Adaptation	121
3.3 Responses related to the author and the creators/producers	126
3.4 Responses related to the readers/audience and fans	129
3.5 Theories created by critics and fans	132
4 “It’s Good to See You Back in London, Sir”: Analysis of the return of the detective in “The Adventures of the Empty House” and “The Empty Hearse”	138
4.1 The Literary Return of Sherlock Holmes	141
4.1.1 “The Empty House”	142
4.1.2 Reception of the short story	148
4.2 The so-expected television return of Sherlock Holmes	152
4.2.1 The Empty Hearse	152

4.2.2	Reviews of “The Empty Hearse”	164
5	Conclusion	172
6	References	180

Introduction: Setting up the “Mystery”

“Sherlocked”, as defined by the Urban Dictionary, means “[T]o be a fan of the BBC 2010 Sherlock TV series created by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss” (“Sherlocked”, 2017) – a reference to the episode “A Scandal in Belgravia” (2012 season two, episode one). The secret password to Irene Adler’s locked cellphone¹ is used on Weblogs, Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, and other online social media by *Sherlock* fans to identify themselves. It can be seen in t-shirts, mugs, pencils, pins and it even names a conference dedicated to the fans of the series. The term “Sherlocked” reveals important aspects of *Sherlock*: fan engagement and the connection between narratives, fandom, and marketing strategies. The series, which has been nominated for BAFTAs, Emmy Awards, and a Golden Globe, reached an average of 12 million spectators in its third season. In a review of the beginning of the third season, Mollie Cahillane praises *Sherlock* for being a series in which “the writers actually do pay attention to fans’ thoughts and predictions” (2014 n.p.), as she notices that theories created by fans were used in the plot of the episode “The Empty Hearse”. Differently, after the launch of the fourth season, Zachary Landau points out that the series lost its innovative and provocative features after season two and now focuses on feeding obsessive behavior by fans.

Fan responses were also important in Sherlock Holmes’ canon² written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in the Victorian period and are expressed in fan letters sent to magazines and Doyle himself, in the collections of autographs and pictures, in the fan clubs dedicated to the character and in a large number of pastiches and other fan productions. Doyle, nowadays mostly known for the creation of Sherlock Holmes, was the prolific author of several literary pieces, among them the short stories and novels with the detective, historical novels as *The White Company* and *Sir Nigel*, plays as *Waterloo* and *The House of Temperley* and non-fiction as *The New Revelation*, *The Coming of Fairies* and *The Vital Message*. Even though he considered

¹ In this episode, Sherlock Holmes has to discover the password from Irene Adler’s locked cellphone, which contains intimate pictures that are being used to blackmail a member of the royal family. In the end, he finds out that the four blank spaces in the “locked” screen should be filled with the letters “s” “h” “e” “r”, forming the word “Sherlocked”.

² “Canon” is a word used among fans to refer to the source material, in this case, Doyle’s writings. It is opposed to fan creations used to complement the information in the canon called “fanon”.

Sherlock Holmes minor as compared to his other, “serious” works, the narratives featuring the detective are worldwide known and have been extensively adapted to several media.

As an adaptation of Sherlock Holmes’ canon, I argue that *Sherlock* not only adapts the narrative to contemporary times using contemporary narrative techniques but also adapts the relationships between author, narrative, medium, and readers/audiences to the contemporary context. With that, similarities between fannish behavior in the Victorian period and in contemporary times can be seen, showing that the affective bonds between characters and readers/audiences are expressed by media from the beginning of mass publication and that from this period, traces of participatory culture can be seen in their eagerness to engage with the narratives. At the same time, the differences in these fandoms reveal different understandings of media and narratives, highlight the main concerns of the context in which they are inserted in and raise important discussions on the depiction of the receivers of mediatic content.

In this context, considering both Doyle’s short stories and Moffat and Gatiss’ series, I question: Which strategies does the narrative use to call the readers to respond? How does the relationship between fans and narrative is portrayed in the media? What do the audience’s response and the discourse of the series reveal about the relationship between audiences/readers and the narratives? In which ways does the narrative show that producers pay attention to audience responses? From these questions, I propose an analysis of the narratives which are connected to the episode of the supposed death of the character Sherlock Holmes which is considered the one which had more responses both from Doyle’s readers and Moffat and Gatiss’ public (the short stories “The Adventure of the Final Problem” (1893) and “The Adventure of the Empty House” (1903) and the episodes “The Reichenbach Fall” (2012) and “The Empty Hearse” (2014) from the series and their responses in the articles published by contemporary media. The analysis of the narrative aspect that may lead to reader/audience responses sheds light on the understanding of how people relate to narratives, while the comparison between the responses in the Victorian Press and contemporary media gives a historical perspective on how people consume and interact with media and the role of criticism in the experience of narratives. As I propose an analysis of magazine and newspaper articles, I examine how media portrays fans, their behavior, and importance, while also analyzing how some aspects of media language influence our understanding of the connection between Sherlock Holmes’s and *Sherlock*’s fans.

Sherlock Holmes is a character that according to the Guinness World Records 2012, “has appeared on screen more than any other human literary character, surpassing even Hamlet by forty-eight portrayals” (POLASEK, 2013). Generally connected with a pipe, a deerstalker

hat, and the sentence “Elementary, dear Watson”, Holmes is known even by people who have never read one of Arthur Conan Doyle’s short stories or novels which include him as the main character. The number of adaptations of Holmes has such an impact that Ronald B. DeWaal wrote his *The Universal Sherlock Holmes* in 1995 in 5 volumes to cover all the material connected to the character – and the number increases daily. The aspects mentioned above and commonly related to the character (the hat, pipe, and expression) are not based on the canon, but on later adaptations.

The popularity and large array of terminology and iconography associated with Sherlock Holmes make him an interesting object of study, and the different adaptations shaped the image of the character, generating valuable perceptions to adaptation studies. Although Adaptation Studies disregard “fidelity” as a criterion for discussing adaptation, I demonstrate that fans have emotional bonds with the narratives, and thus “fidelity” is an important issue for them. A study of fans and adaptation brings new elements to such an important question, connecting academic discussion with the general audience’s understanding. Also, I discuss who is the “adapter” in a series such as *Sherlock*. Even if we say that the producers Gatiss and Moffat are the minds behind the adaptation, a larger team of directors, actors, scriptwriters, songwriters, etc, are also part of the process and influence in the production of the series. Specifically in *Sherlock*, I show that fans also influence the production, as it can be seen in the direct influence that fan-created theories had in the narrative of the episode “The Empty Hearse” (and that will be discussed in Chapter 4).

The character Sherlock Holmes, created by Doyle, first appeared in the novel “A Study in Scarlet”, published in *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, in 1887. Doyle published 4 novels and 56 short stories using the detective as the main character and the last short story published by him was “The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place”, in *The Strand Magazine* in April 1927 (which is now part of the collection *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes*). Holmes solves cases that are considered difficult or almost impossible by the police using reasonable thinking, what he calls “deduction” (that can be actually called “abduction”³). He hardly ever talks about his feelings

³ David Carson distinguishes “deduction”, “induction” and “abduction”, and argues that “His particular skills are said to have been in deduction. But that is false — (...) Holmes’ distinctive investigative skills involved abduction” (2009, p. 193). Based on his argument, I apply his term “abduction”, while I recognize that the critical debate over the terminology is not of importance for this dissertation as it does not interfere with readers’ engagement with the text.

or emotions and all his behavior is based on scientific investigation and logic. Holmes is addicted to his work and, when no cases involve him, he recurs to opium to keep his mind working. His roommate, John Watson, follows and narrates his adventures, always emphasizing the great mind of the detective. Even though Doyle published other books, like historical novels, horror short stories, and books about spiritualism, he is worldwide known as the man who created Sherlock Holmes.

The popularity of Holmes can be seen from its large number of fans who actually engage with the narratives after their publication. As an example, many letters arrived at the fictional address of Holmes (221B, Baker Street) asking for help to investigate true crimes. This is also expressed in a large number of fan clubs and literary societies dedicated to the character – *The Baker Street Irregulars*, founded in 1934, is one of the most famous and in a large number of academic, pseudo-academic and amateur productions by fans, together with the various fanfictions⁴ written based on the character. Some fans engage in the “Grand Game” – a narrative developed by fans based on the principle that Sherlock Holmes was a real person, and that Arthur Conan Doyle was his literary agent (POLASEK, 2012, p. 42). The Game’s origin is attributed to Ronald Knox’s satirical essay “Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes”, first delivered in 1911, in which he addresses the character as an actual person. According to Polasek, “The Game has become inextricably linked to fan engagement with Sherlock Holmes, and thus has largely come to define Sherlockian fan discourse” (2012, p. 43). Based on the “Grand Game”, fans and producers of fan-generated content discuss and learn what is “acceptable” in Holmesian adaptations and what is not.

One period in Holmes’ history which expresses a large number of fan reactions to the narrative and their contribution to the publication of the short stories is called “The Great Hiatus”, period which corresponds to the gap between the publication of “The Adventure of the Final Problem” (1893) and “The Adventure of the Empty House” (1903). Trying to dedicate himself to other literary productions, Doyle wrote a story in which Holmes, in a confrontation with his nemesis Moriarty, falls from a waterfall in Switzerland. After the publication of this narrative, S. Thompson describes the fan reaction pointing out that newspapers published articles expressing their indignation, Doyle was sent letters with threats, and even an old lady beat him on the street for killing Holmes (2014, p. 12). After all this reaction of the public, ten

⁴ Fanfictions, which can also be referred as “fics” (or fanfics, which is more common), are works of fiction produced by fans using the characters, settings or other narrative elements from the stories which they admire that are not their intellectual property.

years later (1903) he decided to write other stories, explaining how Holmes survived and pursued other cases.

Set in contemporary London, BBC's *Sherlock* (2010 -) presents a tech-savvy Sherlock Holmes⁵ (Benedict Cumberbatch), who uses technologies as SMS texting and the internet to solve mysteries. His cases are narrated by his friend John Watson (Martin Freeman) in the weblog <http://www.johnwatsonblog.co.uk/>, updated by the production team as a complement to the narratives on the television. Besides this website, four other characters have official weblogs connecting the show to the online content⁶. The series is produced by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss and it has four seasons so far (2010, 2012, 2014, 2017), each one with three 90-minute episodes, and one special episode released in 2016. Moffat and Gatiss present themselves as fans of Holmes, and a large number of references to Doyle's writings and Easter Eggs⁷ hidden in the narrative seem to confirm their status as fan-producers.

Sherlock is not the first adaptation of the character to bring him to contemporary times. From 1942 to 1947, a series of films starring Basil Rathbone as the main character modernized him to the context of World War II, including war problems in his investigations. The success of this series at the time has become "the living embodiment of the great detective for successive generations" (DAVIES; FORSHAW, 2015, p. 336). Besides this series, other films as those in which Eillie Norwood plays the main character (1921-1923) adapt the character to the period in which the adaptations were produced, and others take him to different settings as *O xangô de Baker Street* (2001), adapted from the book written by Jô Soares, in which the character solves a crime in Brazil. Nowadays, *Elementary* also modernizes Holmes to New York in the 21st Century, with a female Joane Watson (Lucy Liu) as Holmes' partner. In this process of modernization, adapters show that the famous detective still has appeal to a large public, and include several issues that were not present in Doyle's times. These previous adaptations –

⁵ In order to avoid confusion, from this point on the name "Holmes" is used to refer to Doyle's Sherlock Holmes and "Sherlock" to refer to the character in the series, following the pattern of the narratives.

⁶ The official character blogs are indicated in BBC's website: Sherlock's "Science of Deduction" (<http://thescienceofdeduction.co.uk>) Molly Hooper's blog (<http://www.mollyhooper.co.uk/>) and Connie Prince's blog (<http://www.connieprince.co.uk/>). Besides them, the character Irene Adler has a twitter account in which she interacted with fictional characters and with a fan.

⁷ "Easter eggs" are hidden messages, jokes or references hidden in films, DVDs, programs and online content. The name is a reference to the usual hunt for Easter Eggs, and may be related to the fact that most Easter eggs have surprises within them.

mainly the most famous ones – influence how the audience accepts and understands the character.

The series *Sherlock* is not the first British series with the detective Sherlock Holmes as the main character – and possibly the other series are part of the background of the British public. Richard Hewett (2015) names two productions from different periods: the shortlived 1951 series, featuring Alan Wheatley; and the 1965 and 1968 productions, starring first Douglas Wilmer and later Peter Cushing. The low number of adaptations to the British television is, according to Hewett, connected to a legal issue: the limitations imposed by Doyle state discouraged possible adapters. For them to get the rights for television, adaptations should be concerned with time accuracy and use the same words that were written by Doyle in the characters' dialogues.

As an adaptation, *Sherlock's* episodes are based on one story from the canon – however, it takes details from Doyle's narratives as a start, and mentions, inverts, and/or subverts them. One example is the first episode of the series, "A Study in Pink", which is a reference to Doyle's "A Study in Scarlet". In Doyle's narrative, the corpse of a man is found in a room in which the word "Rache" is written with blood – and even though the police think it is related to a woman named Rachel, Holmes concludes that it is a reference to the German word for revenge, and solves the case. In the series, the corpse of a woman is found with the word "Rache" written next to her with her own nails – and, opposed to Doyle's narrative, the inspector suggests that it is connected to revenge, but Sherlock dismisses him to conclude that it is the name "Rachel" that she could not complete. Later, Sherlock finds out that "Rachel" is the password to the woman's phone tracking system, which enables him to chase the murder and solve the crime. By playing with these signs, the series incites the audience to find information in the canon, shows self-awareness of its status as adaptation, and generates curiosity and surprise. For fans, the combination of the already known from the canon with the producer's new ideas generates curiosity about what comes next while it surprises with the new narrative developments.

At the end of the episode "The Reichenbach Falls", the last one from season two (2012), *Sherlock* presented a parallel narrative to Holmes' death in Switzerland. The series version presents a long dialogue between Sherlock and Moriarty, which includes Moriarty shooting himself and Sherlock jumping from the top of St Bartholomew's Hospital, which leads people to conclude that he also killed himself. However, in the last sequence of the episode, which shows Watson in the graveyard mourning his friend's death, the audience can see Sherlock

hiding behind some trees, showing that he mysteriously survived from the fall. The episode ends with no explanation of how it happens, and season two ends with an open question: “how did he survive?”. Right after the end of the episode, a large number of theories were published by fans online, and different magazines and newspapers engaged in the discussion related to this episode. The answer would be seen only two years later (2014), in the first episode of season three, “The Empty Hearse”. I call this period between seasons two and three “The Small Hiatus” as a reference to “The Great Hiatus” in the canon.

This thesis focuses on the narratives connected to “The Great Hiatus”, which is considered the period that had more responses both from Doyle’s readers and what I call “The Small Hiatus”, the parallel for Moffat and Gatiss’ public. The data collected in this thesis shows that the fannish behavior related to the canon of literature is different from the fannish behavior related to the television series *Sherlock*. Thus, one can ask if these differences in fannish behavior are due to the narratives themselves or to the use of different media, literary and televised narratives, and or to the historical/cultural/social contexts in which they are published. In the following chapter, I will review the literature related to the role of Media Studies, Fandom and Adaptation, major concepts of Reader-response criticism, and the main characteristics of serial literary publication, detective stories, television narratives, and series, encompassing the discussions that guide this research.

Chapter 2 presents a reader-response analysis of “The Adventure of the Final Problem” (1893), in which Doyle narrates the supposed death of Sherlock Holmes and *Sherlock*’s “The Reichenbach Fall”, released on January 2012. In this chapter, I explore the rhetorical strategies used to create reader/audience engagement with Doyle’s narratives. A closer look at the medium specificity debate and to the analyses proposed in this chapter helps to illustrate some of the ways in which media relationships have changed and the different experiences of fandom that follow them.

Chapter 3 analyzes the responses published in the articles written between 1893 and 1903 which were concerned with Sherlock Holmes, together with some personal remarks by Arthur Conan Doyle (i.e. his writings to his mother related to Sherlock Holmes, as she is known among Holmes’ fans for inspiring him mainly in the return of the character). Also in this chapter, I discuss readers’ responses to the TV series focusing on magazine publications between 2012 and 2014. In this way, the media reaction to the death of Sherlock Holmes

expresses both the affective reception of the event in the Victorian press and the fannish discussions in the contemporary period.

In relation to the methodology used in this research work I would like to clarify that I analyzed the critical reception of Doyle's short story in newspapers and magazines relying on Mattias Boström and Matt Laffey's detailed work *Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle in the Newspapers*, vol. 3 and 4. Based on extensive research in a large number of databases, the researchers published a large number of articles concerning Doyle, his personal life, literary career, and public figure. For my research, I selected the 91 articles that dealt directly with Sherlock Holmes' death. Concerning *Sherlock*, I researched on different newspaper and magazine databases the terms "Sherlock" "Cumberbatch" and "BBC" and collected all the articles from January 2012 to January 2014, the period between the two episodes proposed. From this search, which resulted in more than 150 webpages, those that were only informative about the schedule were discarded. After reading all the material, the texts were divided into themes, which correspond to the sub-sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 of this thesis, and the articles which were more relevant to understand the issues related to my research were chosen for analysis.

Chapter 4 presents an analysis of Doyle's "The Adventure of the Empty House" (1903) and *Sherlock's* "The Empty Hearse" (2014), in which Doyle presents the return of Holmes. The focus is on how readers' responses are reflected in the narratives, thus, investigating also the portrayal of fans. I argue that the differences in fans' reactions are connected to the mediatic context (including the technological development of media) and, more specifically, to the way that fans *experience* media. In this chapter, I quote some reviews published in Doyle's and in contemporary times. As Boström and Laffey's research has not included the publications in 1904 yet, I researched the terms "Sherlock" "Sherlock Holmes" and "The Empty Hearse" on *The British Newspaper Archive*⁸. From the results, I selected those that were more relevant to understand fans and fannish behavior. Contemporary reviews were collected in the same process used to collect the texts in Chapter 3. It is important to emphasize that in Doyle's period a large number of fan productions and pastiche were being published, but they are not included in the discussion of this dissertation as the focus is on how media portrays them, and not on fan production.

⁸ <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

1 First Clues

Studies related to Doyle and Sherlock Holmes abound, including different theoretical and analytical perspectives. A large number of analyses related to the detective's short stories were produced by fans to pay homage to Holmes or discuss details in the Canon, including a large number of bibliographic and encyclopedic publications. With the same purpose, a large number of articles inspired by Richard Knox's essay "Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes"⁹ develop a field of pseudoscholarship, which can be found in *The Baker Street Irregulars Journal*, for instance. Considering the scientific approach of this dissertation, these publications were used to look for specific information and data, but the main discussions and theoretical analyses were based on academic publications, which are lower in number. In this section, I focus on some articles and theses or dissertations that are more connected to the objectives of this dissertation, recognizing that some of these issues have already been thoroughly discussed in less academic publications.

Considering specifically the connection between Doyle and the fans of Sherlock Holmes, Katherine Brombley's article *A case study of early British Sherlockian fandom* points out how the fan culture was present right at the moment that the stories were being published. This can be seen in the visible consequences of the popularity of Sherlock Holmes: the increase in the number of subscribers of *The Strand Magazine* with the publication of Doyle's narratives and later decrease when Holmes was killed, the demand of readers in libraries to stay open longer on publication days, writings about Holmes in newspapers and periodicals – with "fan letters to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Holmes, and Watson; 'interviews' with Sherlock Holmes, the first being in *The Observer* in 1892; and essays and letters critiquing the canon" (2017a, parag. 1.1). Pointing out that those fans "demonstrated a high level of emotional involvement in the text" (2017a, parag. 1.2), she analyses the search for autographs of Sherlock Holmes as a tool to understand the fan phenomena.

In the same sense, Brombley's dissertation *Possessions and Obsessions: Fandom and the Case of Arthur Conan Doyle* (2017b) analyzes different modes of fandom related to Doyle's Sherlock Holmes in its original context of publication. While fandom is often associated with

⁹ Knox's article, which is written in academic jargon and proposes an analysis of the narratives of Sherlock Holmes, is said to be the origin of the Grand Game as it refers to Holmes as a real person, not as a fictional character.

practices developed in later periods, Brombley points out fan practices that were being developed with the publication of Holmes' stories in the *Strand*¹⁰. Each chapter of her work focuses in one different instance: first, how *Tid-Bits*, another British magazine published by George Newnes, can be seen as the promoter of Holmes' stories and early forms of fanfiction, then on postcards and autographs, collections, and the fan clubs which began at the period.

Ed Wiltse's article "'So Constant an Expectation': Sherlock Holmes and Seriality" connects the fan culture surrounding Holmes' stories to their narrative structure, mainly the seriality which enables both fans and new readers to follow the stories and get attached to the character. In his perspective, "[t]heir particularity and endlessness, and above all their variability and plenitude, registering for addicts and casual fans alike not only the atomizing power of the detective's supervision but also the collective pleasure of a vision of 'queer things' going on under *every* roof." (1998, p. 119) The generic innovation of the series of short stories with a recurrent character proposed by Doyle is also seen in a large number of television series, like *Sherlock*. While scholars from Television Studies point out the seriality as a characteristic of TV series, this dissertation shows that this is an important characteristic of the short stories published by Doyle years before the popularity of television and that the fans are involved by the seriality not only of television series but also with the short stories that follow this structure, creating an emotional bond with the characters in them.

The connection between early fandom practices related to Sherlock Holmes and today's "participatory culture" (JENKINS, 2006b) is also established by Ann K. McClellan. In her article, "Tit-Bits, New Journalism, and early Sherlock Holmes fandom" she analyses the *Tid-bits* Magazine, which was highly influential to promote Sherlock Holmes's stories due to its New Journalist practices, such as publication of fan letters, contests and advice columns. She argues that "[t]o those familiar with contemporary fan studies, such descriptions of openness, interactivity, and discursivity sound surprisingly similar to recent descriptions of fandom and participatory culture" (2017b, parag. 3.5).

The importance of Sherlock Holmes to adaptation studies is highlighted in Ashley Polasek's dissertation *The Evolution of Sherlock Holmes: Adapting Character Across Time and Text*. In her work, Polasek shows how it is the character Sherlock Holmes, not the literary text that has been adapted, studying the screening process of adaptation with a consideration on how fans influence and shape these processes. According to Polasek, "A study of the evolution of

¹⁰ *The Strand Magazine* became popularly called *The Strand*. In this dissertation, I use both names indistinguishably.

Sherlock Holmes would be incomplete without full consideration of how the character changes through the various means of its reception and consumer remediation” (2014, parag. 251) due to the strong connection between fans and the evolution in the character. Polasek includes one chapter that focuses on *Sherlock*, indicating how fans adopt different practices in fanart and discussing issues like copyrights and authority over creative production.

Tuğçe Soygöl’s master thesis *The Evolution of the Character Sherlock Holmes Within the Fan Fiction Narratives and Discourse* “discusses the major shifts that the character has undergone both aesthetically and ideologically throughout its history in terms of its representation in the works of fan fictions” (2019, p. 2), focusing on Nicholas Meyer’s *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution: Being a Reprint from the Reminiscences of John H. Watson, M.D.* (1974), and Michael Chabon’s *The Final Solution* (2004). In her thesis, she analyses the changes in the understanding of the character that are present in fan production, specifically in those two fanfiction novels that were published in book format. Different from her, I propose an analysis of fan behavior as expressed in magazine and newspaper articles rather than in fan production.

A large number of adaptations of Sherlock Holmes have also been thoroughly studied, considering the different perspectives of adaptation studies. Academic studies such as Larissa Pena Ribeiro de Carvalho’s thesis is one of the examples: in her thesis, she discussed the TV series *Elementary* focusing on gender issues. While she defines television and literature as institutions that “are often seen as neutral” (2016, p. 111), her analysis discusses how they can be subversive mainly in the way that some of the characters were adapted.

Sherlock, specifically, has been one of the objects of analysis of Camila Augusta Pires de Figueiredo’s dissertation *Em busca da experiência expandida: revisitando a adaptação por meio da franquia transmidiática*. Her work discusses the process of adaptation in transmedia narratives focusing on *Watchmen* (2009), *Cheias de charme* (2012), and *Sherlock* (2010–) pointing out the importance of adopting an intermedial and transmedial approach to these narratives. The analytical chapter related to *Sherlock* includes an analysis of the transmedia content created by the BBC and some fandom activity. The definition of “migratory signs”, defined by her, is explored and discussed in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Mary Katherine Evans’ thesis “*I Believe in Sherlock Holmes*”: *Fans, Readers, and the Problem of Serial Character* analyses briefly four short stories and four series and their

connection with fans, also including a brief discussion about fanfiction. Agreeing with her conclusion that Sherlock Holmes “is timeless purely because of the response from fans; this character is not bound to the Victorian era, endlessly sipping his tea or taking his seven percent solution of drugs”(2018, p. 60), my dissertation proposes a deeper analysis of the strategies used in the narratives of the short stories and the series episodes to engage the readers and their presence in the critical material in the magazines and newspapers contemporary to the period. By focusing on media responses and representation of fans I discuss how different media represent and mediate the narratives, the role of the readers and fans, and how they affect (or not) the connections between fans and narratives.

A large number of articles were published concerning *Sherlock*, its relationship to contemporary media issues, and fandom. Two collections of articles were released in a small period related to *Sherlock: Sherlock Holmes and Transmedia Fandom: Essays on the BBC Series* (2012), edited by Louisa Ellen Stein and Kristina Busse and *Sherlock Holmes for the 21st Century: Essays on New Adaptations* (2012), edited by Lynnette Porter. The first, focusing on *Sherlock* and its transmedia universe, has several articles discussing the connection between the series and fandom. The second also includes articles concerned with other adaptations such as Guy Ritchie’s *Sherlock Holmes* (2009) and *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* (2011), Anthony Horowitz’s *The House of Silk* (2011) and Neil Gaiman’s “A Study in Emerald” (2004) and “The Case of Death and Honey” (2012). From these essays, I highlight four that are more closely connected to the issues discussed in this dissertation.

Matt Hills argues that fandom is an issue present diegetically in *Sherlock*, as it deals with questions of fan knowledge and access to information. Three major points emerge from his essay. First, Hills connects the fan and scholar-fan participation and engagement in discussions about the series to its epistemological value, as “[k]nowledge isn’t just one theme among others in *Sherlock* (...) it constitutes a privileged component within the series’ almost instantaneous cultification and fan embrace” (2012, p. 29). Secondly, he analyzes the paratextual information on the DVD extras of the series, focusing mainly on how it both addresses the fans and presents the producers Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat as fans of Sherlock Holmes. Last, he discusses the discourse of “heretic fidelity” of the show, as, by presenting themselves as fans of the detective, the producers rework the stories and cases but remain in their words “true to the spirit” of the detective. This expression, used by the producers, implies that there is an essence in the character that can be transposed to different narratives. In this case, they are “faithful” to what they consider as the “spirit” of the detective while they

change the setting and the development of the cases, an “heresy” that places the series as creative while maintaining some aspects that are important for fans. With these three different points, Hills concludes that the discourse of the show implies that fandom related to the show is dependent on the producers’ control, as they segregate diegetically and extra-diegetically the “fanboys” and their roles as fan-producers.

Considering another aspect of fandom, Ashley Polasek’s writing praises the BBC series for, in her words, “winning ‘The Grand Game’”. The Grand Game, for her, can be understood as rules “enforced through a system of praise and censure within the fan community” (2012, p. 42) – and she concludes that the series overcame these rules, becoming a success even with this code of rules and censure. From its creation in 1911 to present, the Game shapes fan discourses related to Holmes, either in pastiche or in pseudo-scholarship. For Polasek, “[t]he result is that instead of being judged on their inherent quality, adaptations are put on trial and often found guilty if criminal infraction against the canon, regardless of how entertaining or insightful they may be” (2012, p. 45). This characteristic shows how fandom may influence adaptation and its reception – as fidelity is a key issue for fans. *Sherlock*, in her perspective, is successful in “winning The Grand Game”, as it creates one world very different from Doyle’s, recontextualizing the character in a contemporary context with new methods and challenges, always referencing to Doyle’s text. From this perspective, “viewers are obliged to engage with *Sherlock* as though it were a primary text” (2012, p. 46). This new way to address *Sherlock* as an adaptation is reflected/shown in the large number of fanfiction published in the website fanfiction.net – in which the fanfictions about *Sherlock* in the “TV” category¹¹ became the biggest source of fanfiction related to Holmes (which correspond to nearly half of all the fanfics related to the character, considering the canon and all the adaptation). Polasek’s article enlightens the discussion on *Sherlock* and fandom both for pointing out how this adaptation has been used as the primary source for other adaptations and for discussing the importance of fidelity for fans, even though this is an issue sometimes overlooked by adaptation theory.

Balaka Basu reads the transmedia texts of Watson and Holmes’s blogs, and the comments written on them by Moriarty as an essay of the producers Gatiss and Moffat to control

¹¹ Fanfiction.net, considered the most active fanfiction website, is divided in different categories as “TV” and “literature”. Inside each category, fans can upload their fanfiction in the subcategory related to the specific narrative which originated their writings.

the narrative and resistance to the fandom that is not produced by them. For her, Moriarty presents diegetically a model of fandom, and “[t]his impression of authorial control, which undercuts and chokes off alternative readings with its universalizing discourse, does not lend itself to a post-modern authorial model of plurality” (2012, p. 209). In Chapter 4 of this thesis, I also analyze other characters who present models of fandom. Focusing on the opposition between past and present and on the discussions on post-modernity, Basu adds to the discussion that fandom reaffirms the centrality of the producers, which is one concern of this research.

Although many essays are concerned with *Sherlock* and fandom, only one openly uses reader-response criticism as the main theory to support its arguments. Nicolle Lamerichs’ article “Dutch Fans Interpret the Famous Detective” (2012) is an investigation of the responses given by seven Dutch fans about the series, who were selected from fan communities and social network services sites. In the interviews with the fans, issues such as transmediality, modernity, and Englishness are discussed. This article is focused on responses given by a small and local group of fans, pointing out different references and interpretations of some themes and issues in the series. She concludes that Dutch fans identify *Sherlock* as foreign content, showing how the experience of the series is different in different contexts. My thesis, besides analyzing the audiences’ responses to the show through media and online publication and comparing them to the responses given in Doyle’s own time also discusses the strategies in the text that call for their engagement. This approach enables one to understand the process of reading and responding in a broader sense, as it departs from the narratives to verify if and how they shape the readers/audience experience to later verify their responses, considering also if these responses are later incorporated in the narratives. Thus, reader-response criticism gives important contributions to the understanding of serial narratives and the context of the convergence culture.

Sherlock Holmes in Context, edited by Sam Naidu, includes four articles related to *Sherlock*. Benedick Turner’s article (2017) traces a comparison between female clients in Doyle’s *Sherlock Holmes* and *Sherlock*, also including professional women in *Sherlock* as a subject of analysis. Differently, Charlotte Beyer (2017) focuses on the character Mrs. Hudson, including discussions of femininity and aging. Benjamin Poore points out that disguises, that were so important in Holmes’ canon, are not so present in contemporary adaptations, arguing that nowadays it has become more acceptable to “present Sherlock Holmes as the member of several vulnerable identity groups” (2017, p. 97). From the four articles in the collection, Ann McClellan’s “All that Matters is the Work”: Text and Adaptation in *Sherlock*” is the one with

the subject closest to the analysis proposed in this dissertation: her analysis of onscreen text combines theories of adaptation, appropriation, and intertextuality, showing that “*Sherlock* plays with text in both a literal and metaphorical sense. *Sherlock*’s use of onscreen texts and SMS texts, in particular, creates a visual network of references and cross-references which highlight the show’s interconnectedness with previous Sherlock Holmes tales and adaptations” (2017a, p. 8). The network, metaphor identified in the series by the author, shows that the series is embedded in a “broader textual network of adaptations” (2017a, p. 34) while it also is part of a web of technological media, as the series is watched in different online services and has different fan production on the web. McClellan still concludes that “*Sherlock*’s interweaving of textual references, mobile texts, and technology provide audiences and critics with new ways to conceptualize and actualize contemporary theories of adaptation, appropriation, and remix culture” (2017a, p. 34).

Differently from the articles, thesis and dissertations here reviewed, this dissertation focuses on Doyle’s narrativization of Sherlock Holmes’s supposed death and return and *Sherlock*’s adaptation of the same events. Concerning the TV series, I will analyze how the contemporary media announces the narrative of Sherlock’s return while mediating the relationship between authors and receivers. This approach can help to give a historical overview of the relationship between writers/directors, media, and audiences, shedding light upon the understanding of how people interact with media and narratives.

1.1 Media Studies and Fandom

Before discussing adaptation and the comparison and contrasting of one television series episode and one detective short story, it is important to understand the differences between the media and the main contemporary issues related to these differences and similarities. Firstly, explaining what the term “media” refers to is necessary, as “the understanding of what a medium is and what intermedial relations actually consist of has vital implications for each and every inquiry in old and new fields of study concerning the arts and media” (ELLESTRÖM, 2010, p. 11). Lars Elleström presents a model divided into subcategories by which media can be understood: “basic media”, “qualified media” and “technical media”. All media, in the three categories, for Elleström, are related also to four

modalities: “material modality”, “sensorial modality”, “spatiotemporal modality” and “semiotic modality”, and “they are to be found on a scale ranging from the tangible to the perceptual and the conceptual” (2010, p. 15). The differences between subcategories and modalities can be better understood with the examples below. Each medium can be basically described by the four modalities and understanding the four is of major importance to grasp the medium in its totality. Based on this description of the modalities, they are classified in the subcategories explained by him.

Considering this definition, a television series, for instance, in its material modality “consists of a more or less flat surface of changing images (in a wide sense of the notion) combined with sound waves” (2010, p. 17). In its sensorial modality – defined as the “physical and mental acts of perceiving the present interface of the medium through the sense faculties” (2010, p. 17) – television series are majorly connected to hearing and seeing. The spatiotemporal, divided into width, height, depth, and time, in the series can be seen in its width, height, and time with fixed sequentially, also in the virtual depth created by the images. The semiotic modality, connected to meaning, “involves the creation of meaning in the spatiotemporally conceived medium by way of different sorts of thinking and sign interpretation” (2010, p. 22), which, in moving images, is normally dominated by iconic signs. Also, in television, as in animated movies, the “sound generally consists of voices, sound effects, and music: the musical sounds, but often also much of the voice qualities, are very much iconic, while the parts of the voices that can be discerned as language are mainly decoded as conventional signs.” (2010, p. 24)

Differently, the short stories can be defined in their material modality of a flat surface interface; in the sensorial modality in their use of the sight (either real sight related to the reading of the words or inner sight connected to creation and recollection of visual images) and inner hearing of the sound of the words; virtual spatiality and time can be created in the verbal narratives along with the width, height and fixed time of the written text and the “symbolic sign functions of the letters and words dominate the signification process” (2010, p. 23)

Elleström adds two different aspects that *qualify* media: the “contextual qualifying aspect”, related to the “origin, delimitation and use of media in specific historical, cultural and social circumstances” (2010, p. 24) and the “operational qualifying aspect”, related to “aesthetic and communicative characteristics” (2010, p. 25). Based on these definitions, he defines “basic media” those which are composed by the four modalities, and “qualified media” those whose definition relies heavily on the qualifying aspects related to the modalities. “Television series”

and detective “short stories”, in this sense, can only be understood in their meaning and aesthetics when they are understood in their context and thus are “qualified media”, as opposed to “visual text” or “moving images”, which are “basic media”.

Last, “technical media” is defined as “any object, physical phenomenon or body that mediates, in the sense that it ‘realizes’ and ‘displays’ basic and qualified media” (2010, p. 30). Neil Postman, using the terms “technology” and “medium”, illustrates this difference when he says that

[w]e might say that a technology is to a medium as the brain is to the mind. Like the brain, a technology is a physical apparatus. Like the mind, a medium is a use to which a physical apparatus is put. A technology becomes a medium as it employs a particular symbolic code, as it finds its place in a particular symbolic code, as it finds its place in a particular social setting, as it insinuates itself into economic and political contexts. A technology, in other words, is merely a machine. A medium is the social and intellectual environment a machine creates” (1985, p. 84).

This classification is of major importance for this thesis as the specificities of the media give a baseline to understand the process of adaptation from one medium to the other and give starting points to grasp the modes in which people interact with them. In Elleström’s words, “[t]here is no point in comparing different media if the media in question are described or defined on the basis of only a selection of modalities and qualifying aspects that are not properly related to each other.” (2010, p. 27) A deeper discussion about medium specificity related to the television series *Sherlock* and to the short stories with the character Sherlock Holmes is the subject of Chapter 5.

Also, another point that should be highlighted in this chapter is that the analysis of *Sherlock* proposed here is not made based on the original screening of the show through BBC’s network system in Britain, but it is using the online version available on Netflix. Even though the images used and the editing of the series is the same, the differences between watching it on a television set and a computer will also be considered, as “[t]he virtual space created by a computer is undoubtedly slightly different, since we can choose to a certain extent how to move within it” (ELLESTRÖM, 2010, p. 20). Even though I propose an analysis of the readers’ experiences and responses, I recognize that my own experience with the series is different from those who watched live on television broadcasting. Nowadays, most of the television content can also be watched online, showing that those narratives are not limited to one medium.

Indeed, the contemporary mediatic context in which *Sherlock* is inserted is defined by Henry Jenkins as *Convergence culture*. Convergence, in his conception, is “the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want (JENKINS, 2006a). These changes are not only technological and economical, thus influencing the production of content and enabling transmedia storytelling, but are also concerned with audience behavior and media consumption. *Sherlock*, for instance, cannot be seen as only a TV series to be watched on a TV set in the time scheduled by BBC. It can also be accessed through BBC online broadcasting system, Netflix, and other online platforms; the narratives are connected to the character’s websites that can be accessed online; information can be found on Facebook and other social media. Within this context, it is not possible to discuss the TV series *Sherlock* without problematizing the contemporary relationship between media producers and media consumers.

Jenkins draws the definition of the convergence culture based on three concepts: “media convergence”, “participatory culture” and “collective intelligence” (JENKINS, 2006a). By “media convergence”, he refers to the conversion of multiple media, which is both connected to the production of content and to how the public is encouraged to seek information in multiple dispersed media content. The “participatory culture” refers to the increasing participation of the public in this context, both by consuming media and by producing new content. For Jenkins, “[r]ather than talking about media producers and consumers as occupying separate roles, we might now see them as participants who interact with each other according to a new set of rules that none of us fully understands” (JENKINS, 2006a). “Collective intelligence”, a term which is related to Pierre Levy’s discussion of the contemporary scenario, implies shared knowledge derived from the contribution of various people. With these three concepts, cultural and media production is connected and concerned with its reception, thus, making the relationship between producers and audiences more central to TV series production.

Within the convergence culture, the audiences are also becoming producers, as there is an increase in the number of fan writing and recording their own amateur productions. Technological development has facilitated this process: now it is possible to record videos and produce material even with smartphones and publish them online to be seen by several people. Jenkins connect these changes to the fan-generated content: “fans of a popular television series may sample dialogue, summarize episodes, debate subtexts, create original fan fiction, record their own soundtracks, make their own movies – and distribute all of this world-wide via the

Internet” (JENKINS, 2006a, p. 16). Fans, now, in his words, are “socially connected”, “noisy” and “public”, demanding new modes of interaction between producers and them. Even with the low number of people actually creating the so-called user-generated content, Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green argue that “even those who are ‘just’ reading, listening, or watching do so differently in a world where they recognize their potential to contribute to broader conversations about that content than in a world where they are locked out of meaningful participation” (2013, p. 154). When the video content is online on YouTube or Vimeo, for instance, the number of people only “watching” the video influences the popularity and the spreadability of the content. These changes in the audience's behavior influence the narratives currently produced, as they are also called to consider audience behavior as meaningful.

However, the increase of audience participation should not be understood naively, as, for the companies, it has a commercial purpose. Jenkins, Ford, and Green present both positive and negative perspectives on the relationship between participatory culture and media industries. For them, at the same time that technology has allowed “a world where more media power rests in the hands of citizens and audience members, even if the mass media holds a privileged voice in the flow of information” (2013, p. 163), it is also true that “companies rarely embrace more participatory practices out of purely altruistic motives” (2013, p. 165). Engaged audiences are often loyal to the brands and companies, a fact that reveals the economic motives for media industries to invest in participatory practices. Moreover, the current media content is designed to be shared, relying on the audiences to expand and increase its audience. Paul Booth describes in a powerful way the complex relationship between audiences and media industries:

[a]s consumers of media, we play with the texts, meanings, and values created by media industries. But playing fandom isn't just what we do with our everyday media; it's also what our media do with us. As media producers ourselves, we are played by those same industries. Our creative work is used to sell products and services. Our clicks become capital. We are commoditized from and marketed to. (2015, p. 1)

Following this argument, in a TV series such as *Sherlock*, known for the huge audience interaction, the public engagement should not be seen only as a result of giving voice to the public, but also as a marketing strategy.

At the same time, Jenkins, Ford, and Green's concepts of public and audiences are helpful to understand how people react to media content. Audiences are defined by them as a

collectivity of individuals who receive media products (a plural word for spectator), while the publics are parts of the audiences that can be identified by a shared identity, sociability, and sense of identity (2013, p. 166). Following these definitions, while a TV show needs to have a large number of people as its audience, it is the public (the engaged part of the audience) who helps to spread the content and generate more profit. It is Sherlock's public who engages and responds to the series in a large number of forums, blogs, Tumblr, and fan clubs. The authors also distinguish the terms "fans", that refer to the individuals and "fandoms", "whose members consciously identify as part of a larger community to which they feel some degree of commitment and loyalty" (2013, p. 166).

Although Jenkins, Ford, and Green's concepts of "fans" and "fandom" are helpful, they do not encompass the main discussions related to fandom. In Fan Studies, scholars present different understanding of what a fan is – some argue that fandom should be studied regarding the identity of fans, while others argue that the real issue is not their identity, but their practices. Wayne Booth agrees with and quotes Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst's argument that fans are hybridized, as the term is seen "both as a practice of resistance to media hegemony and as an identity of consumer complicity within that same hegemonic state" (2015, p. 3). This argument enables us to broaden the understanding of fandom, as it encompasses different issues. According to Booth, "[a]lthough many specific fan practices can be resistant, transformative, and critical of media practices, the underlying affective connection between identity and activity masks fans in a liminal state between resistant and complicit in institutional context" (2015, p. 4).

One of the main characteristics of fandom is the importance of sharing information, as no individual can know everything about a TV series and their set of references. In the world of fandom, both "shared knowledge" and "collective intelligence" play an important role. While shared knowledge is "information known by all members of a community" (2006b, p. 139), collective intelligence is the "knowledge available to all members of a community" (2006b, p. 139), i.e., the gathering of individual knowledge that is available to all the other members which is certainly facilitated by the Web. Considering the huge number of Easter Eggs in *Sherlock*, for instance, it is very unlikely that one real person would grasp all the meaning of the show without discussing it with other fans. As collective intelligence is a reunion of information from different individuals, it is not dependent on the limitations of personal memory, and it helps to grasp all the hidden information in the narrative.

The technological development of the internet also opened an interesting space for fan communities: the availability of low-cost spaces for interaction, with the easy access and the increasing number of tools for an amateur production of videos, music, and images enabled a great development of existing fan communities and created new ones. Fans communicate through e-mail, e-mail groups social media, forums, websites dedicated to fandom activities, and other platforms (most of the time, for free if one has internet access). Also, the internet facilitated access to creators, actors, and the production team, giving the impression that all fans can meet and interact with those responsible for the narratives with which they are involved.

With *Sherlock*, a large number of Tumblr accounts and weblogs are specifically dedicated to the series. They not only present information and comments on important narrative events, but also quote impacting lines, reproduce frames and small videos of the episodes, link news related to the series and discuss its possible developments. Some of these weblogs include memes or jokes related to the narratives, presenting new readings of the narrative lines in different contextual elements. Fan production related to *Sherlock* can be seen in memes, pictures of amateur videos, a large number of short stories and novels using the series' characters, settings, and other narrative elements and can be found easily on the internet. These fanfictions are produced with no commercial purposes, expressing fans' opinions and imagination. Fanfiction.net, the largest website dedicated to the publication of fanfiction, has more than 60,100 fan writings inspired in the series. This number places *Sherlock* as the fourth among the television series, behind *Supernatural* (1st), *Glee* (2nd), and *Doctor Who* (3rd). Fan content, which was in earlier times produced to be shared among friends or groups of fans, now is distributed worldwide.

It is important to emphasize that fandom is not a practice that began with the Web, as that practice can be traced back to earlier contexts. Jenkins points out the example of the column of Hugo Gernsbeck in the *Astounding Stories* magazine that was directed to letters, which formed a postal network of fans of science fiction. This column published letters and also amateur publications, even when the Web was not available for a broader audience. Jenkins points out that “[m]any of the most significant science fiction writers emerged from fandom” (2006b, p. 138). This was later transferred to television, and currently to web content, and, now, the internet enables a faster sharing of information and opens more space for user-generated content.

This relationship between fans and media industries affects the latter, both in the way that content is produced and is advertised. Currently, Booth points out that “[m]ainstream media culture is taking notice of fandom, and media corporations are trying to harness the power of fans, including using fans to remix video to create advertisements or utilizing fans’ already-extant networks to create word-of-mouth publicity” (2015, p. 21). When TV series give space to fan production, or including discussions raised by fans in their narratives, what seems to be increasing participation of the audience in the narratives is actually used to promote the show. This discussion reinforces one of the problems discussed in this research: when *Sherlock* calls for audiences’ responses and uses them in the narrative, aren’t they reaffirming the centrality of the producers? To discuss this question, I rely on reader-response criticism to understand if and how the texts address the audience (or in Doyle’s case, readers).

1.2 Reader-Response Criticism

Reader-response is an umbrella term for all the criticism developed by scholars and critics who focus on the idea that the meaning of the text depends on its readers. The importance of the role of the reader in the meaning-making is understood as interpretation occurs in the moment of reading (not after that), and is connected to the experience of the reader in this process. Within this assumption, meaning derives from the readers’ reactions, as, in Wolfgang Iser’s words, “it does not exist per se” (1978b, p. 32). In this sense, the readers do not consume the meaning passively as it is presented by them, rather, they play an active role in the interpretative process drawing on their previous knowledge, assumptions, and expectations. One may argue that there are as many possible readings as the number of readers – but the possible interpretations may be limited by what Stanley Fish calls “interpretive community”, which is what shapes what is read (1986, p. 407). Following this critical approach, important scholars as Wolfgang Iser and Hans-Robert Jauss are concerned with the process of meaning-making as connected to the readers.

Iser returns to the discussion of the importance of the interaction between the reader and the text, which cannot be understood separately, as “[t]he convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence, and this convergence can never be precisely pinpointed, but must always remain virtual, as it is not to be identified either with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader” (1978b, p. 274). With the connection between reader and text as a major point in meaning-making, Iser argues for an active role of the reader

in this process, as “reading is only a pleasure when it is active and creative” (1978b, p. 275). Even though Iser is concerned with the readers’ experience, his main concern is not with actual readers and their historical responses, but with the textual elements that enable this relationship. In this active process, “the reader must accept the leadership of the text” (DOVE, 1997, p. 54), as the text is always giving new information and guiding the reader’s path. This imbalance between the reader and the text produces a state of indeterminacy. Considering this, Iser discusses and describes three types of indeterminacy in reading – blanks/gaps, negativity, and negation – which are used to engage the readers in meaning-making.

Independently from their genre, literary texts, in Iser’s theory, leave “gaps” (or blanks) that must be filled by the readers’ imagination to make sense of it. In Iser’s words, “The gaps, indeed, are those very points at which the reader can enter into the text, forming his own connections and conceptions and so creating the configurative meaning of what he is reading” (1978b, p. 40). They may correspond to the spaces between chapters and volumes, or the moments in which the narrative shifts its focus leaving some issues unclosed. In this process, the reader’s preconceptions and impressions play an important role, as each reader may try to fill the gaps differently. Even with modifications in the expectations and shifts in the narrative, the reader tries to find a pattern in the narrative by filling in these gaps. In most of the literary genres, these gaps are not so clearly marked in a way that the reader is guided by the text without feeling that “the author wants to lead him by the nose” (1978b, p. 37).

Differently from the “gaps”, which can be both structural and thematic, Iser proposes the concept of “negation”, which is specifically concerned with the diegesis. In the moment of reading, readers tend to fill in the blanks with their expectations – but the text might negate them by introducing new ideas. Thus, it stimulates the readers to distance from their previous knowledge and find out the freshness in the text. Negation makes the reader more active and productive, as, in Iser’s words,

[t]he old negated meaning returns to the conscious mind when a new one is superimposed onto it; this new meaning is unformulated, and for precisely this reason needs the old, as this has been changed by the negation back into material for interpretation, out of which the new meaning is to be fashioned (1978a, p. 217).

Following these ideas, it is through a process guided by blanks and negation that the readers access and interact with the text.

The third structure discussed by Iser is “negativity”. According to Iser,

[b]lanks and negations increase the density of fictional texts, for the omissions and cancellations indicate that practically all the formulations of the text refer to an unformulated background, and so the formulated text has a kind of unformulated double. This 'double' we shall call negativity, and its function deserves a few concluding remarks. Unlike negations, negativity is not formulated by the text, but forms the unwritten base; it does not negate the formulations of the text, but – via blanks and negations – conditions them. It enables the written words to transcend their literal meaning, to assume a multiple referentiality, and so to undergo the expansion necessary to transplant them as a new experience into the mind of the reader (1978a, p. 226).

Negativity is the space left by the gaps and negations to be filled by the readers, trying to complete a coherent whole with the information given (and with what is not given). Iser defines it as “a mediator between representation and reception: it initiates the constitutive acts necessary to actualize the unformulated conditions which have given rise to the deformations, and in this sense, it may be called the infrastructure of the literary text” (1978a, p. 228). Dove compares it with a blank sheet of paper in which the readers write their understanding of the story aiming to reach the meaning. With these three concepts – blanks/gaps, negation, and negativity, it is possible to understand the strategies used in the text to engage readers.

Even though Iser is focused on the text and its strategies, he does not exclude the role of the real readers in the process. Iser argues that

[t]he reader must be guided by rhetorical signposts, but which lead to a process that is not merely rhetorical. (...) The reader must be made to feel for himself the new meaning of the novel. To do this he must actively participate in bringing out the meaning and this participation is an essential precondition for communication between the author and the reader.” (1978b, p. 30)

Within this discussion, Iser develops the concept of the implied reader, which is related both to these rhetoric strategies and the experiences of real readers. The implied reader demonstrates that literary texts contain spaces that anticipate the presence of receivers – but without defining them, as they are “a network of response-inviting structures, which impel the reader to grasp the text” (1994, p. 142). The implied reader “incorporates both the prestructuring of the potential meaning by the text and the reader’s actualization of this potential through the reading process. It refers to the active nature of this process – which will vary historically from one age to another – and not to a typology of possible readers” (1978b, p. xii). The implied reader is the role offered to the reader to play within a narrative, but real readers may respond to those structures in different ways, depending on their previous experiences and preconceptions. Considering that, the process of meaning-making is not only dependent on the text’s structure but on *how* rhetoric tools guide the reader to *experience* literature and then make meaning.

Rhetoric, which comes from the ancient Greek art that gathered knowledge about public communication, has been studied from that period on to identify how one uses specific symbols and structures to persuade. By rhetoric, I mean the use of communication (either verbal or non-verbal) to achieve a certain specific goal. As this dissertation is related to fans and audience/readers engagement, I highlight the rhetoric strategies used to engage people through their emotions. As Kastely points out, “discourse [which] has the power to move people through its action on an audience’s emotion is an ancient and foundational insight for rhetoric” (2004, p. 222). In narratives, according to James Phelan, the study of the rhetoric of the text is based on the assumption that

texts are designed by authors in order to affect readers in particular ways, that those designs are conveyed through the words, techniques, structures, forms, and dialogic relations of texts as well as the genres and conventions readers use to understand them, and that reader responses are a function of and, thus, a guide to how designs are created through textual and intertextual phenomena. At the same time, reader responses are also a test of the efficacy of those designs (2004, p.341).

In order to understand the rhetoric of the text, I focus on the same rhetoric tools studied by Krystal A. Fogle and Toni Maisano (2013): narrative, visuals, and language, while I also include genre conventions and sound. Focusing on the portrayal of women in the series *Sherlock*, they point out that

Through strategic use of narrative, the unique way in which the plot is laid out; nonverbal communication, as seen through the use of visuals; narrative, which allows the story to be told in a relevant method while allowing the audience to see value systems in action; and paralanguage, the most vital aspect of verbal communication; the writers of *Sherlock* brilliantly provide audiences with a lesson on interactions between and underlying attitudes towards women and men (2013, p. 1).

Chapter 2 of this dissertation analyses *Sherlock* using the above-mentioned rhetoric tools to understand how the text directs the readers toward participation, inviting them to be part of the narrative universe. Also, it analyses the narrative and the language of the short stories written by Doyle, discussing if and how the same tools are used in them. All these instances in the text constitute the bigger figure of the implied reader proposed by Iser and defined above.

Caio Antônio Nóbrega and Genilda Azerêdo (2019) also connect the implied reader with strategies to make the reading activity more complex (in their case, with metafiction), highlighting an approximation between the figures of the detective and the reader in the novel *Sweet Tooth*, by Ian McEwan. I argue that the approximation between detective and reader described by them is reached through the rhetoric strategies and genre conventions in the short

stories written by Doyle and in *Sherlock*, as they invite the readers/audiences to investigate these elements in the process of reading.

Jauss also emphasizes the importance of the reader in the meaning-making as “[i]n the triangle of the author, work, and public the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history. The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees” (1982, p. 19). Based on this, the author proposes seven theses related to the role of the reader in literature, mainly concerned with the concept of “horizons of expectation”. This concept derives from the fact that

[a] literary work, even when it appears to be new, does not present itself as something absolutely new in an informational vacuum, but predisposes its audience to a very specific kind of reception by announcements, overt and covert signals, familiar characteristics, or implicit allusions. It awakens memories of that which was already read, brings the reader to a specific emotional attitude, and with its beginning arouses expectations for the "middle and end," which can then be maintained intact or altered, reoriented, or even fulfilled ironically in the course of the reading according to specific rules of the genre or type of text. (1982, p. 33)

Any reading is influenced by the readers’ previous experiences and expectations: when reading a detective story, readers are guided by their expectations related to the genre and author.

In detective stories, the readers and their experiences in the reading process have important characteristics. George N. Dove argues that “detective fiction shares many of the themes common to all popular fiction, but it has a unique structure in which (...) the reader is directly involved, and which cannot be adequately described without taking the reader into consideration” (1997, p. 1) In a similar understanding, the essayist and detective story writer G. K. Chesterton points out that “[i]n the detective novel the division of labor is sharply drawn between the reader and the novelist. Perhaps it may be pointedly answered that the heavier part of the labor falls on the reader” (1920, n.p.). Even with the importance of the reader in the genre, Dove points out that only a few papers were published concerning detective stories and reader-response criticism, and that “[t]here has been no full-length study of the *reading* of detective fiction” (1997, p. 13). Despite this low number of studies relating detective stories and their readers, reader-response provides an important theoretical background for the study of the genre.

Considering the main concepts and discussions in reader-response criticism, Dove argues that “[t]he special quality of the detective story, one that distinguishes it from all other fiction, is the fact that the blanks in the story are *programmed* by the genre; that is, the blanks themselves suggest methods of discovery” (1997, p. 22). The blanks, or gaps, are introduced in

the texts to give the readers “clues” on the mystery that is being solved so that the reader might have a chance to find the solution of the case before the detective does. Each reader may fill in these gaps differently and find different answers to the crime – and this whole process is part of the detection game proposed by detective stories. This justifies the importance of studying detective stories from the readers’ perspective, as it both follows the concepts of the gaps and presents a different approach to them. As the gaps are expected and programmed, the detective genre enables a discussion on the rhetoric strategies that call for the readers’ engagement.

Also, the conventions of the genre are important to raise preconceptions and expectations for the readers. Genre expectation is connected to the fact that “the reader approaches the narrative at the outset with much of the content already supplied; before turning to the first page, for example, the reader is already assured that this story will deal with a mystery that is not only deeply but doubly be solved by the detective-protagonist before the story ends” (DOVE, 1997, p. 23). Some elements of detective stories are connected to certain assumptions and developments on the narrative – like the fact that the first impression given by the police is always wrong –, providing information for the readers that are familiar with the genre and directing their expectations. Thus, an understanding of genre – along with an understanding of the specificities of the medium – is of major importance in the investigation of the readers’ horizon of expectation and in the way how people would receive those publications.

Even though reader-response criticism is focused on literature, its concepts have been applied to audiovisual media, such as television. Robert C. Allen applies reader-response criticism to Soap Operas, but some of his remarks can also be applied to television series. He argues, for instance, that the gaps described by Iser can be seen between episodes, seasons, and narrative events. On Soap Operas, Allen points out that “the time between the end of one soap opera episode and the beginning of the next constitutes an enforced gap between syntagmatic segments of the text” (1992, p. 83), which is also true to series such as *Sherlock*. These gaps are also important to give time to the audience to discuss the plot and even encourage new viewers to watch the show. Within the show, it is also possible to see these gaps to interrupt the show to present commercials. With *Sherlock*, as well as with some other series, there are also gaps between seasons, as in the two or three-year period between them a lot of theories and

discussions concerning the main questions raised by the show can be seen in online forums and social media.

Still concerning television and reader-oriented criticism, Allen distinguishes two modes in which television addresses the audience: the rhetorical and the cinematic. They are both connected to how the actors or show hosts interact with the audience by interacting with the camera. The first one is a reference to TV shows as news programs, variety shows, talk shows, etc., in which the audience is directly addressed. The second is a reference to the mode which can be seen in most Hollywoodian films, in which the characters do not interact or look at the camera to hide its operation. In this case, “[g]iven that the viewer’s knowledge of the world of the film comes through the camera, the viewer is quite literally positioned in some place relative to the action in every shot” (1992, p. 88). The addresses to the audience in *Sherlock* are discussed in Chapters 2 and 4 of this dissertation.

1.3 Literary Magazines with serial publication

Literary publications in newspapers and magazines were very common in Doyle’s time and in all the Victorian Age. Graham Law points out three conditions that were favorable to the insertion of literature in newspapers (that can be extended to magazines) at the beginning of the Victorian Age: the changes in British taxes, the influence of the *roman-feuilleton* from Paris (daily serial literary publications in newspapers) and the developments in serial publications in London by book publishers. He still points out that

[t]he later 1830s in Britain also witnessed a number of experiments in serial publication, these by the London book publishers, driven by the need to counterbalance the rigidity of the market for new work in volume form. This was increasingly dominated by lavish multi-volume editions, still sold at the inflationary prices scaled after the Napoleonic Wars, and aimed mainly at the circulating libraries (2005, p. 33).

The print culture in the Victorian period included a “sheer volume of newspapers, magazines, and journals produced during this period to satisfy the demands of the first mass reading public” (RUBERY, 2010, p. 291).

The *roman-feuilleton*, born in France, was conceived by Émile Girardin when *Lazarillo de Tormes* was published in daily parts in 1836 by *La Presse*. According to Graham Law, “[t]he success of this venture, which represented the first use of a fully capitalist mode of production in the French fiction industry, made it a model for all progressive dailies, so that, throughout the following decades, the Parisian press played host to Romantic chroniclers of the stature of

Balzac, Sue, and Dumas.” (2005, p. 32). The publications became a success and were spread to different countries. In Brazil, for example, a large number of romances of important writers were published originally in parts and are called *Folhetim*, derived from the *feuilleton*. One important aspect of the *Folhetim* is its influence from the public: the stories develop a narrative form directed to seduce the readers, as recapping the events from previous chapters, explaining the new characters, and simulating reader reactions (JÚNIOR, 2011, p. 114). Some of these characteristics can be seen now in television narratives, such as soap operas and series. Also, when readers sent letters to the newspapers related to the stories or showed their content or discontent with the stories, some authors would insert new characters, parallel stories, and change the narratives. With this, the stories would benefit the newspapers and the authors themselves, who were paid by publishing time (GONÇALVES, 2013, p. 9).

Even with the same origins, some differences between the French *feuilleton*, the Brazilian *folhetim*, and British publications such as *The Strand Magazine* can be perceived. This can be seen as “the French *feuilleton* was a feature of the metropolitan daily newspaper, whereas the London equivalent would be found overwhelmingly in the weekly press.”(LAW, 2005 p. 33) Issues of the day, which are the main subject of newspapers, were not the concern of literary magazines. Even though magazines would include references to the political and cultural context, they would publish journalistic articles about more general subjects, such as the London Fireman, and entertainment as pictures of famous people and puzzles.

A large number of literary pieces that were first published in literary magazines and newspapers were later transformed into books. Matthew Rubery points out the differences between reading them as serial publications and the reprinting in book collections, as “[t]he polyvocal and open-ended nature of periodical writing thus challenges many of our preconceptions about what constitutes a literary text” (2010, p. 292). Literary magazines and newspapers are composed not only by the literary pieces but also by illustrations, advertisements, and journalistic texts, different from the books that reprinted the same narratives. These different voices which compose them, for Rubery, are connected to the way that “[t]he boundary between news and novel, fact and fiction, and even truth and falsehood was not always clear during the preceding century in which fiction resembled journalism and journalism resembled fiction.” (RUBERY, 2010, p. 295) All these characteristics can be found in *Strand Magazine* which became famous with Sherlock Holmes’ short stories.

The *Strand Magazine*, founded in 1890, according to Chris Willis in “The Story of the *Strand*” “aimed at a mass market family readership. The content was a mixture of factual articles, short stories and serials most of which were illustrated to some extent”¹². Among its publications, writings from important names in short fiction like W. W. Jacobs, P.G. Wodehouse, H.G. Wells, and W. Somerset Maugham and more specifically from detective short stories writers Agatha Christie, Margery Allingham, E.C. Bentley, Edgar Wallace, Dorothy L. Sayers, and Georges Simenon can be found. Besides the original short stories, a large number of translated stories (mainly from France) were published in the magazine. The popularity of detective stories and the specificities of literary magazines are two important factors to be considered in the study of readers’ experience of Sherlock Holmes’ short stories at the time that they were published.

Arthur Conan Doyle, in *The Strand*, introduced a new feature for serial publication: while most of the narratives were following a macro narrative, which was divided in small micronarratives published periodically (as it happens in modern TV series), Doyle started to write narratives that were complete in themselves but using the same character Sherlock Holmes to generate identification by the public. Doyle himself describes his innovation in his *Memories and Adventures*:

A number of monthly magazines were coming out at that time, notable among which was the Strand, then, as now, under the editorship of Greenough Smith. Considering these various journals with their disconnected stories it had struck me that a single character running through a series, if it only engaged the attention of the reader, would bind that reader to that particular magazine. On the other hand, it had long seemed to me that the ordinary serial might be an impediment rather than a help to a magazine, since, sooner or later, one missed one number and afterwards it had lost all interest. Clearly the ideal compromise was a character which carried through, and yet installments which were each complete in themselves, so that the purchaser was always sure that he could relish the whole contents of the magazine. I believe that I was the first to realize this and the Strand Magazine the first to put it into practice. (1924, p. 90)

When discussing the importance of seriality in Sherlock Holmes’ stories, Ed Wiltse describes it as more than innovation for the contemporary press market, as it “was a watershed moment in the history of narrative, one with crucial implications for twentieth-century fiction, film, radio, and especially television” (1998, p. 106). Different from the serial publications at the time, “the Holmes stories, individual, self-contained ‘adventures’ within a continuous

¹² The article was first published in the first issue of *The Strand Magazine*, published in December 1998 and is quoted from the version published in *The Strand’s* website available at <<https://strandmag.com/the-magazine/history/>>. It is called the first issue as the magazine returned its serial publication after stop publishing in 1950.

diegetic frame, were potentially infinite” (1998, p. 106). The innovation proposed by Doyle was not only in the narrative structure and in the way that seriality was used to attract the readers, but also in the conventions of detective stories, which will be discussed below.

1.3.1 Detective Stories

The fascination with investigation and puzzles comes from ancient times, but it was only after the nineteenth century that crime was portrayed in the literary genre of Detective Novels. The first novel considered a Detective Novel is *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (first published in 1841), by Edgar Allan Poe. The technological and scientific developments of the nineteenth century as electricity, photography, and telegraph changed the role of the protector from the gentlemen to the policemen, detective, and scientist (FONTES, 2012, p. 128). The post-Darwinian content and the development of natural sciences as geology and paleontology contribute to the logic and scientific explanation present in most of the detective stories of the period. In this context, Arthur Conan Doyle gives life to Sherlock Holmes, a consultant detective with his assistant Dr. Watson. In time, the genre developed different characteristics (as the private-eye stories and the hard-boiled detective stories) and different understandings, and its importance is discussed in different ways.

The Detective Story genre is defined and studied by several authors, and although some elements in it changed over time, the definition and main characteristics remain the same. Van Dover defines the classic detective story as a “work of fiction defined by plot, in which the last section or last chapter explains all that has been experienced and misunderstood in the narrative. There is always misunderstanding in experience, and always understanding in the last chapter exposition” (2005, p. 120). Often readers try to solve the mystery before the detective does, and the solution of the crime proves to be simple and unexpected.

In detective stories, the crime is involved in mystery, and cannot be fully understood by the other characters. Based on the importance of mystery to these narratives, Luc Boltanski develops on its psychological and sociological understanding. A mystery, to Boltanski, is related to an abnormal singularity, an event which calls attention for being out of ordinary, so that it does not fit into ordinary reality. In his perspective, “The mystery (...) leaves a kind of scratch on the seamless fabric of reality” (2014, p. 3). When a mysterious crime occurs, the

characters face the unknown and have to admit that their knowledge is not sufficient to understand and explain what really happened. At this moment, the detective sheds light on what seemed random and restores the coherence of the diegetic world.

Van Dover points out that the role of the detective story is to be, in the scientific age, a figure that assures that someone can solve problems that seem like mystery following the path of reason. He exemplifies it by saying that questions around death, the end, and the reason for life present themselves as a mystery to many people, who are willing to find a logical answer to them. He sees it as a feature of the nineteenth and twentieth-century literature to express man's urge to find logic in what seems to be random. Van Dover argues that

[t]his uneasy sense that the membrane that separates civilized routine from barbaric chaos is thin indeed haunts popular literature in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and lies behind the appeal of the detective story, though the detective story concentrates upon domestic manifestations of the threat. (2005, p. 34)

In contrast, George N. Dove connects detective stories to a game, emphasizing the role of entertainment of these narratives. In the game described by him, the reader plays against the detective trying to find a solution to the crime before he or she does. As with games, detective stories and their readers must follow some rules or conventions:

[i]n the tale of detection, convention exerts an unusually heavy influence upon the playing of the game, as does the special drive of the plot toward the unveiling of the secret. During the reading of a detective story especially, the traditions of the genre place upon the reader the obligation not only to accomplish some objectives but to accomplish them into a certain way; one does not, for example, sneak a premature look at the solution (1997, p. 15)

Moreover, as he connects detective stories to entertainment, he argues that more serious issues are never the focus of detective stories. Aiming at keeping the game on and sell to the readers (which are guided by genre expectation) stories must follow the conventions. Thus, detective stories often present variations in their themes and characters, but not in their structure.

Trying to define the detective genre, Dove names four main characteristics of detective stories that are based on Poe's novel "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" which, in his perspective, can be found in all detective stories. These characteristics are described by him as: "the protagonist is a detective, detection is the main plot, the mystery is an inordinately difficult one, and it is always solved" (1997, p. 76). These four elements are considered by him imperatives of a detective story, even if they present variations in certain narratives: Chesterton's "The Blue Cross" emphasizes more the character of Valentin, the policeman, than the detective Father Brown; some narratives of Simenon's detective Maigret include his

personal experiences as part of the main plot, but the detection is still the main narrative event; Doyle's "A Study in Scarlet" presents a large narrative of the Mormon pilgrims in the American West in which neither Holmes nor Watson are present nor detection is related to it; the solution of the mystery, that is always present, may be clear only to the reader and not to the detective or the police.

Besides these "rules" or "imperatives", Dove discusses other "properties", conventions that describe the genre but are subject to variation or innovation. One is the idea that everything that is mentioned in the story must have an importance in the development of the plot, even if it seems to be insignificant. The second is the self-reflexivity, present in some of the stories that refer to other detectives or the conventions of the genre. The third is the unusual temporality, as it usually tells two different stories at the same time (the investigation and the crime). Besides that, some structures are recurrent in detective fiction: the death warrant (when a character offers to meet the detective to give important information and is found dead), the most likely suspect (who is never guilty) and the dying message (which is often complex and requires the whole narrative to be understood). Within these characteristics, readers follow a path of expectations and surprise, trying to find out the solution to the mystery before the end of the narrative. For Dove, the focus of the detective stories is not on the solution of the case, but on the reader's experience in this path:

One of the elements that make the reading of the detective story different from that of any other fiction is that the reader approaches the narrative at the outset with much of the content already supplied; before turning to the first page, for example, the reader is already assured that this story will deal with a mystery that is not only deeply but doubly be solved by the detective – protagonist before the story ends (1997, p. 23).

The first major element of the narrative named by Dove is the detective, who is the protagonist (but seldom the narrator). The detective is a character whose intelligence is in most cases beyond the average: while the police force sees a mystery, the detective looks for the logic hidden behind it. The relationship between the detective and the police is an issue in detective stories, as according to Boltanski, "[a]longside the policeman, a representative of the state, there is another character, the detective, who has no official mandate and who nonetheless bears the brunt of the inquiry" (2014, p. 31). By using conventional and unconventional methods, the detective goes where the policeman cannot go and, with his knowledge, finds the solution of the cases. Different detectives present different investigation methods – Holmes is very

different from Agatha Christie's Miss Marple or G. K. Chesterton's Father Brown, for instance. Despite the investigation method, the detective is always the first one to find a solution to the crime.

The second main element of the detective story is the detection, which is its main plot. Complex aspects of psychology, sociology, and politics are not the focus of the narratives, and the reader "must remember not to take the book with the wrong kind of seriousness" (2014, p. 28). This element was already discussed by Tzvetan Todorov, who defines detective stories by a duality: they present one narrative of a crime, which is often short, and one narrative of the investigation of this crime, which corresponds to most of the narrative. (2008, p. 96) While the first one is the reason for the second, it is the second narrative that involves the readers. Even if minor other narratives are inserted in the story, the process of investigation is always the main concern.

The crime committed in detective stories is always mysterious and involves elements that cannot be explicated until the end of the story. Boltanski connects the role of the detective to the reordering of the elements that seemed random, as "one of the principal operations performed by the detective (...) consists in translating the exposition of the facts into different terms, that is, in *re-qualifying* reality, so as to unveil what the subject was making an effort to keep hidden and which was nevertheless right there, within reach, so obvious" (2014, p. 55). Van Dover argues that detectives use their deductive methods to narrate what *really* happened, implying that there is always an objective truth that can be disclosed. By finding the one narrative that connects the causes and effects, the detective restores the normalcy of the story, even if the crime is a very difficult one.

The last characteristic, the certainty of the solution, is central to the reader's expectation. According to Dove,

[o]ne of the elements that make the reading of the detective story different from that of any other fiction is that the reader approaches the narrative at the outset with much of the content already supplied; before turning to the first page, for example, the reader is already assured that this story will deal with a mystery that is not only deeply but doubly wrapped and veiled and that it will be solved by the detective-protagonist before the story ends (1997, p. 23).

As all crimes in detective stories are solved by the detective, the reader may use different elements to anticipate the end of the narrative and reach the conclusion before he does. Knowing that the end of the narrative certainly presents a solution to the crime enables the reader to read all the gaps, all the elements of negation and negativity as clues to understanding the mystery.

Even with these characteristics mentioned above, Dove points out that the detective genre has changed and been adapted over the years. Taking Jauss' diachronic perspective of the understanding of a genre into account, Dove points out that the creativity of new authors who probe the limits of the genre causes "a continual founding and altering of horizons" (1997, p. 96) of expectation. As it has been already discussed above, detective stories rely on repetition of traditional elements known to readers with variations in plot, form, and context, always presenting new and creative elements to the expectations of the readers built based on their knowledge of the genre conventions. The changes in the genre are closely connected to readers' expectations and acceptance of new forms, as "[i]t is almost impossible to discuss the tension between invention and convention without reference to the pivotal position of the reader, whose acceptance or rejection largely determines the history of popular genres" (1997, p. 103).

The tradition of detective stories points out three important moments in the story of the genre: the Early Period, in which the genre emerged and established its main characteristics; its Golden Age, between the two great wars mainly in Britain; and the Hard-boiled tradition, mainly in the USA at the beginning of the 20th century. The first successful detective stories, including the ones in which Sherlock Holmes is the main character, reflect a large number of developments of the Victorian Age, such as industrialization, the popularization of mass magazines and newspapers, and the organization of institutional police. The Golden Age, including authors such as Agatha Christie, Dorothy Sayers, and Van Dime, is "loaded with more psychological layers than its predecessors" (CABRERA, 2018, p. 23). A change in form is related both to the context in which they were written – the traumatized post-war society – and the large influence of women in the writing of detective stories, as most of the British authors of the genre in the period were female. The Hard-Boiled detective stories, popular in the USA, is closely connected to the genre noir, and, "[i]nstead of the de deductive and logical 'Holmesian' detective, hard-boiled replaces it for a 'tough, insensitive, overtly masculine, and sexist detective who solves crimes with a pistol and his fists'" (SCAGGS apud CABRERA, 2018, p. 26). More contemporary stories include other political, cultural, and social issues and can be read by contemporary trends in criticism such as transnationalism, genre studies, post-colonialism, and post-modernism (PEARSON; SINGER, 2016). Within these changes, one can see that the differences in the genre follow generic conventions well known to the readers as

well as the context (literary, political, social, cultural, and mediatic) in which they were produced.

Besides the main characteristics proposed by Dove, some other characteristics might be found in a large number of detective stories. Some critics and writers also try to describe – and even impose – some rules to detective stories. S. S. Van Dime, for instance, established 20 rules for writers which include the simple “[a]ll clues must be plainly stated and described” and “[t]he detective novel must have a detective in it; and a detective is not a detective unless he detects” (2015, p. 1), but also include questionable rules such as “[s]ecret societies, camorras, mafias, et al., have no place in a detective story” and “[a] detective novel should contain no long descriptive passages” (2015, p. 2). Members of the Detection Club (as Christie, Chesterton, Ronald Knox, and Dorothy Sayers) also had their code of ethics related to some elements of their stories. The concern with “rules” or “principles” to detective stories demonstrates the recognition of the importance of genre expectations to both authors and readers, which is important to this research.

The police force is a recurrent element in detective stories and can be found in most of the Holmesian Stories. Van Dover highlights the importance of the police as it usually “represents the current state of society’s scientific knowledge; it commands all of the resources of the new technologies, and, when it really matters, it always gets things wrong” (2005, p. 123–4). When the police force, representing science, fails to understand extraordinary events, only a specialist in mystery can solve a case. Generally, in classic detective stories, there is a distinction between the intellectual work of the detective and the force of the police. Sherlock Holmes, as a private detective, is consulted by the police every time that a case is too difficult to conclude.

In most of the detective stories, the detective does not work alone, he has, in Van Dover’s term, a “baffled bystander” (2005, p. 121), who in Sherlock Holmes’s story is Dr. Watson. This character has two important attributes: “he perceives a confused world in which there seem to be no clear answers to the crucial questions, and no clear way to reach answers” (2005, p. 121) and “he is the narrator; his is the voice with which the reader is invited to identify” (2005, p. 121). The detective bystanders face an experience that challenges their knowledge of the world and are horrified by the scene, “because it is bloody, and because blood makes no sense” (2005, p. 122). The detective, however, sees it as a challenge and solves it. Aiming at generating identification, the bystander must be ordinary and at the same time intelligent. Watson, for instance, has a distinctive but ordinary career as a doctor, which

“warrants him as an exponent of normalcy; in accepting him as narrator, the reader accepts that the world with which the narrative begins is a normal world” (2005, p. 142).

The character Watson, however, has different narrative importance in Doyle’s and BBC’s narratives. While in Doyle’s narratives Watson is the narrator and the character that filters the information given to the readers as he describes the cases, in *Sherlock*, he just follows Sherlock, and the images present some of Sherlock’s thoughts. This narrative difference is reflected in the way that the public engages in the detecting game: while with the literary character, the readers have mediated access to the clues and the actions of the detective, only following him through Watson’s perspective; in the series, the audience has direct information about the case, and Watson is always one step behind the detective and the audience, who has access through Sherlock’s conclusions through onscreen text. This difference will be analyzed in more detail in Chapter 2.

Most of the detective stories genre codes are the same for literature and television (i.e. the presence of the detective as the main character and the focus of the narrative on the investigation of a mystery). Mareike Jenner, defining the detective TV series, points out that “[a]ll detective stories present a riddle – often unjust crimes, which are in need of a solution (however tenuous or unstable) – and the detective genre, with the investigation itself as defining factor, seems to have an inherent drive towards closure” (2016, p. 74–5). The overall structure of detective stories makes them fit for television schedule: the different steps of the investigation can be divided into small units in which breaks can be inserted without compromising the narrative. Moreover, the breaks in the narrative may increase the audience’s curiosity and continue to watch the television programme to see the conclusion of the case. Some series, as *Monk* (2002–9), present micronarratives in which the main character has to solve one crime during the episode, and one macronarrative that develops slowly with events spread in different episodes to be solved at the end of the series (in *Monk*’s case, the murder of his wife).

Jenner still argues that detective series are “shaped by political and industrial discourses in the countries of production” (2016, p. 3). Discussing American detective stories, he divides them into two sub-genres: the “genius” detective genre and the police procedural. In his perspective, they

are decidedly different from each other in terms of thematic emphasis, their relationships with government institutions, ‘stock’ characters, their roots in

literary history, and so on. Police procedurals feature teams of investigators who work within the legal system to provide enough evidence to prosecute suspects in a court of law. In order to do this, they have to follow a specific protocol that ensures due process and facilitates a fair trial. ‘Genius’ detective dramas feature one, often unofficial, agent who solves crimes and is accompanied by one or more sidekicks. ‘Genius’ detectives, who work independently from institutions, do not have to follow police procedure and often break the law in the course of the investigation (most commonly by breaking and entering or interviewing minors without a legal guardian), but are usually not prosecuted. (2016, p. 47)

These two sub-genres are not so clearly bounded as some series such as *The Mentalist*, (2006–14), *Castle* (2009–16) or *Elementary* (2012–) present ‘genius’ detectives working for a body of specialists. *Sherlock*, in this definition, is part of the ‘genius’ detective genre, with Sherlock conducting his investigation independent on the police and even breaking the law as on the episode “The Grand Game”, in which the detective breaks into Joe Harrison’s house to investigate the murder of Andrew West.

1.4 Adaptation

A large percentage of Academy Awards go annually to film adaptations – and the majority of the films on the highest-grossing list are adapted from literature, comics, parks, and other media. John Bryant demonstrates the relevance of adaptation to the mediatic context when he points out that

[a]daptation is not only inevitable; it is a form of retelling that is as inherently irresistible to human beings that it is an inalienable right. It is a remix; it is a mash-up. In this regard, adaptation may be seen as an epitome of multicultural democracy with its inescapable anxieties over the evolution of one’s ethnicity, the threat of assimilation, the forging of a new identity and the retention or forgetting of past identities (2013, p. 55)

A large number of films adapted from literature and other media from the beginning of cinema to the contemporary context show the importance of adaptation studies to understand our contemporary mediatic context. This is also true to television series, as many current titles are adaptations from different sources. As most of the theoretical discussions are concerned with novel-to-film adaptation, this review concentrates on the scholars which discuss adaptation focusing on them. In my dissertation, I apply most of the discussions raised in the novel-to-film debate to the specificities of a short story and a television series, highlighting the main aspects of adaptation and the specificities of the media.

One of the first and most discussed issues in Adaptation Studies is fidelity. Although it is important to fans, fidelity is connected to the idea of a hierarchy of arts, implying that there

is an “original” and a “copy”, dependent on the “original” and its “aura”. The old prejudice of film adaptation as “parasites” or “bad copies” of literary works related to the notion of fidelity became obsolete with important scholars as George Bluestone (1968), Brian McFarlane (1996), Robert Stam (2000) and Anelise Corseuil (2019) who focus on the relationship between novels and films dismissing the idea of fidelity. Currently, Jørgen Bruhn, Anne Gjelsvik, and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen (2013) divide Adaptation Studies into five different theoretical clusters: 1. the issue of fidelity, which is still present in studies of adaptation but revisited in the discussions of similarity and difference; 2. adaptation from a broader perspective of media relations, including other media beyond the relationship between the novel and the film (as TV series, videogames, paintings, music, graphic novels, etc.); 3. adaptation as multilevel rather than a one-to-one process (i.e. considering that an adaptation from novel to film includes the script and other levels of adaptation); 4. adaptation as a dialogic process; and 5. the global frameworks (in their example, intermediality and genetic criticism, but that can also include Feminism, Marxism, Psychoanalysis and other frameworks) in adaptation studies. These different clusters of theoretical discussions in adaptation help to understand and reflect upon larger issues, as adaptation studies “is a productive framework for analyzing central and complex contemporary cultural phenomena of our own period” (BRUHN; GJELSVIK; HANSSSEN, 2013, p. 12).

Robert Stam (2000) proposes an intertextual dialogical approach to film adaptations. In this sense, he is concerned not only on how films reflect a hypotext, but with their intersection, with the

infinite and open-ended possibilities generated by all the discursive practices of a culture, the entire matrix of communicative utterances within which the artistic text is situated, which reach the text not only through recognizable influences, but also through a subtle process of dissemination. (2000, p. 64)

Stam’s argument implies that the film adaptation of a novel is also a “whirl of intertextual reference and transformation” (2000, p. 66), and defines adaptation as a “kind of multileveled negotiation of intertexts” (2000, p. 67). With this discussion, the analysis of adaptations should not abstain from criticism, but be more contextual and intertextual, with discussing more complex issues than “fidelity”.

One important contribution of Stam to adaptation studies lies in his discussion of medium specificity. This discussion departs from Seymour Chatman’s famous essay “What novels can do that films can’t (and vice-versa)”, in which Chatman analyzes a novel and its filmic adaptation concerned with their narratological aspects. He concludes that “[e]ach

medium has its own properties, for better and worse usage, and intelligent film viewing and criticism, like intelligent reading, needs to understand and respect both the limitations these create and also the triumphs they invite” (1980, p. 140). Echoing Chatman, Stam calls for an understanding of the characteristics of the medium when analyzing adaptation. In his essay, he differs from Chatman in that instead of looking for an “essence” of each medium, Stam proposes the study of its specificity. Stam points out that “[a] more satisfying formulation would emphasize not ontological essence, but rather diacritical specificity. Each medium has its own specificity deriving from its respective materials of expression” (2000, p. 59).

With the understanding that cinema, literature, and television are narrative media, as they use different languages to narrate, Robert Stam argues that a methodology to study adaptation includes analyzing elements from narratology together with considerations from the context of production from both the hypotext and the hypertext¹³ (2006, p. 42). Anelise Reich Corseuil (2003), discussing film adaptation, emphasizes the importance of considering the elements of the film language, including montage, photography, sound, and mise-en-scene, as cinema might present intertextuality specific to the medium – when several films refer to the sequence of the stairs in *Battleship Potemkin*, for instance. (p. 296). Brunilda Reichmann (2013) shows the ambivalence of medium specificity, pointing out that the differences between the media languages should be both considered to understand the specificities and limitations and not considered, as there is no complete correspondence between them. Besides that, she classifies adaptations in two types: as “remissive”, in which the differences between the hypertext and the hypotext are only due to media differences and “digressive”, in which besides the difference between the media there are profound changes in the narratives (p. 131). Considering all the theoretical discussion above, a detailed study of the specificities of detective stories and television series is important to understand *Sherlock* in the contextual and intertextual analysis.

Linda Hutcheon’s *A Theory of Adaptation* presents new perspectives on adaptation studies as she proposes an understanding of the *engagement modes* of the public with the narratives rather than medium essence. She defines three modes of engagement: telling, showing, and interacting, including different media in each one of them. Concerning these three modes, Hutcheon explains that “[i]n the telling mode – in narrative literature, for example – our

13 Gerard Genette numbers five types of transtextual relationship: intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, hypertextuality and architextuality (GENETTE, Gerard, 1997). Hypertextuality and hypotextuality are bounded, as an hypertext is a text derived from a text anterior to it called hypotext.

engagement begins in the realm of imagination, which is simultaneously controlled by the selected, directing words of the text and liberated – that is, unconstrained by the limits of the visual or aural” (2006, p. 23). This is different from showing, in which Hutcheon includes the direct perception of visual, gestural, musical, and sensorial elements. As she explains, “[i]nteracting with a story is different again from being shown or told it—and not only because of the more immediate kind of immersion it allows. As in a play or film, in virtual reality or a videogame, language alone does not have to conjure up the world; that world is present before our eyes and ears” (2006, p. 25). Hutcheon argues for the use of modes instead of media as “[k]eeping these three modes of engagement—telling, showing, and interacting with stories—in the forefront can allow for certain precisions and distinctions that a focus on medium alone cannot” (2006, p. 28). This distinction, which might seem unimportant, changes the focus of the medium to a focus on the audience’s experience. In the series *Sherlock*, the transposition is from the telling to the showing mode, but it can include the interactive mode if the complexities of the character’s websites are included.

Hutcheon understands adaptations *as adaptations* – not as transpositions nor as secondary to a source, and even not as a work that exists completely independent. The critic highlights that the pleasure of adaptation comes “from repetition with variation, from the comfort of ritual combined with the piquancy of surprise” (2006, p. 4). An adapted work presents some elements (plot, characters, setting, etc.) that are known to the audiences as they are related to previous work – thus, repetition – but with a new perspective added by the adapter – variation. Accordingly, Hutcheon makes a very important remark about adaptation: it is not a one-to-one process, as “[o]ften, the audience will recognize that a work is an adaptation of more than one specific text” (2006, p. 21). This happens to Sherlock Holmes: adaptations of Holmes today are not only adaptations of Doyle’s short stories and novels but also adaptations of previous films that adapted Doyle’s narratives, TV series, and even paintings. The producers of *Sherlock*, for instance, declared in the DVD extras that they refer not only to the literary Holmes but also to the the filmic adaptations, as those played by Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce.

Considering the interconnection of media and adaptation studies, Anne Gjelsvik advocates for a return to the study of adaptation with a focus on how spectators/readers experience media in different ways (2013, p. 247). In this case, the focus is not on technical or

technological limitations or advantages of one medium over the other but on three different issues: the medium, the specific cases, and the audiences (with their responses and experiences). These three points encompass larger issues concerned about how we consume media and how different media provide different experiences concerning subjects such as violence and sexuality. While the author argues for a phenomenological reading of adaptation to encompass these three spheres, I propose a reader-response analysis of adaptation, aiming to include both the reader's experience and the rhetoric of the text that is capable of provoking different responses in the different media.

The specific context of adaptation of literature to the television medium is Sarah Cardwell's concern. She points out prejudice against television adaptations, as "television adaptations are often regarded as dull, formulaic products, further subsumed into categories with vaguely derogatory labels (heritage television, or costume drama, for example), rather than being regarded as potentially good, 'serious' drama" (2007, p. 189). Television has relied on adaptation since its beginning as a source of its narrative content. Cardwell sees a historical reason in that: enterprises such as BBC, which sees a social purpose on their productions based on Lord John Reith's ideals, rely on literature (mainly the English classics) to "inform, educate, and entertain" (194). This context

is too often overlooked when simplistic comparisons are made between cinema and television, and when television adaptations are accused of being more obsessed with fidelity and with a narrow range of British literature. Historically speaking, a television adaptation, unlike a film, cannot be regarded as mere entertainment. Its aim is not limited to being financially viable or even artistically successful; its accomplishments are also measured with reference to these broader conceptions of television's public role (2007, p. 195)

Cardwell names the distinctive features of television, mostly from its beginning, that makes it well suited to the adaptation of classic novels: the combination of relatively still cameras (as at the beginning of television cameras were heavy, and difficult to move), the little changes of mise-en-scene (as it was most entirely studio-based) and little editing which "led to an aesthetic that we would today consider staid and rigid, especially in contrast with contemporary cinema" (2007, p. 192). These features underwent through changes as series such as *Sherlock* approximate to cinematic productions, with different camera locations and movements, different indoor and outdoor settings, and huge investments in post-production editing. Also, "the medium has a potential for intimacy that arises from its domestic setting and its consequent role within our everyday lives. Secondly, in terms of adaptations, in particular, it has one significant advantage: the serial form" (2007, p. 193). Series have longer narratives

than films, enabling more slowly developed plots, with more time to explore and build characters, mood, atmosphere, and sustain multiple storylines. However, as they are longer than films, they need a commitment of the audience to follow a larger number of episodes to grasp the entire narrative. Also, when the series is followed on a television network in a regular schedule (weekly episodes, for instance), the time gap between the episodes can make the audience forget important aspects of the narrative, generating a necessity of repetition that is absent in films.

Richard Hewett discusses the television representations of Sherlock Holmes, pointing out that “screen versions of Sherlock Holmes have, since his cinematic debut accumulated a range of elements *not* deriving from Doyle’s original source material”¹⁴ (2015, p. 192). However, the adaptation to British television goes against this trend, aiming to have a “faithful” representation of Doyle’s texts. Hewett argues that “[w]hile permissions were freely granted for British feature films not deriving from Doyle tales, plus various one-off television comedy parodies, any potential series or serial adapters were (...) expected to pay close observance to the original texts” (2015, p. 192), showing that this discourse was a strategy to convince the copyright holders to allow television adapters to produce and broadcast their series. His main concern is the BBC’s 1951 and 1965-68 series, which focused on time accuracy, showing how they were well received, but presented a problem as many “Holmes stories are not ideally suited for television. Narratives frequently consist of *ex post* reported speech, and several tales are comprised entirely of conversations conducted in the Baker Street rooms” (2015, p. 196). *Sherlock* is different from its precedents in that it does not aim at time accuracy, as it transposes Sherlock to the contemporary London, and in its plots, as the cases and their solutions are different from the Canon.

Concerning the focus of my analysis, which is on the reader’s experience of the adaptation and the rhetoric of the text as capable of provoking responses, reader-response criticism is the methodological approach that will be used. Within this approach, the connection between adaptation studies and the readers (or audiences) can be discussed in two different senses. First, the adapters (directors, screenwriters, filmmakers, etc.) are already readers, who respond differently to the originary text. Bryant reminds that

¹⁴ His own stress.

[a]daptors are ‘revising readers’ who enact their interpretations, not through criticism, but by altering the material text itself through quotation, allusion and plagiarism, in what might be called ‘partial adaptation’ or ‘adaptive revision’ and in larger more comprehensive projects through announced adaptation (2013, p. 50)

Adaptation can be seen as a response of the adapters to a reading, which exposes their interpretation and reaction to the hypotext.

Second, the adapted texts are received by different readers and publics, generating different responses. As this research is concerned with the second instance, a more detailed discussion regarding the public reception shall be raised. Hutcheon highlights that “it is the audience who must experience the adaptation *as an adaptation*” (2006, p. 172¹⁵). It is only when the audience recognizes both the repetition and the variation from an adapted text that it approaches an adaptation *as an adaptation*, since without this recognition, the adapted text may be experienced as an autonomous work. Hutcheon adds that in the recognition of one text as an adaptation, “we inevitably fill in any gaps in the adaptation with information from the adapted text. Indeed, adapters rely on this ability to fill in the gaps when moving from the discursive expansion of telling to the performative time and space limitations of showing” (2006, p. 120). According to Hutcheon, “in these instances, we simply experience the work without the palimpsestic doubleness that comes with knowing. From one perspective, this is a loss. From another, it is simply experiencing the work for itself, and all agree that even adaptations must stand on their own” (2006, p. 127).

The reception of the adaptation by fans is a special instance in this discussion. As Hutcheon argues, “it is probably easier for an adapter to forge a relationship with an audience that is not overly burdened with affection or nostalgia for the adapted text” (2013, p. 121). Fans often judge an adaptation by its fidelity and often complain that the text is not a transposition of the original text to which they are (emotionally) attached, without considering it as a rereading, or as an *adaptation*. Considering the strong bonds that fans create with the texts that they admire, adapters have a hard (and almost impossible) work to do to both adapt a text to an autonomous work and please the fans of the originary text.

Hutcheon is not the first scholar to discuss the reception of adaptation. Joy Baldwin Goyum already proposes a reader-oriented analysis of adaptations when she refers to the “imaginative re-creation” (1985, p. 50) of those who read one book and watch its adaptation on screen. When proposing a connection between adaptation and translation studies, Patrick

¹⁵ Her own stress.

Cattrysse also addresses the reception of an adaptation. Cattrysse recognizes that “for the way film adaptations are perceived by the public and critics, this is not always a simple matter. It is not necessarily because the public or critics are aware of the existence of underlying literary source materials that a film adaptation functions as an adaptation” (1992, p. 58) To work as an adaptation, the public must recognize traits of the narrative, otherwise, it will be experienced as an independent film, not necessarily a literary adaptation.

Cattrysse analyzes *film noirs* from the 1940s and 1960s and calls attention to the fact that they were received differently in America and France. While French appreciated both *roman noirs* and *films noirs*, and the French critics often referred to them as adaptation, Americans ignored the genre of pulp literature, skipping the references to them. With this example, he demonstrates the importance of the reception of adaptations to study and understand them *as adaptations*, as the experience of reading/watching is different in both cases. When watching a film or reading a book for the first time, one is surprised by the plot development and has an emotional reaction (either positive or negative) based on the impressions of a new story. In an adaptation, the expectations generated by the knowledge of the narrative (or parts of the narrative when an adaptation has a large creative input) are different, and the audience’s experience is guided by the emotional responses related to the hypertext mixed with the new impressions given by the hypertext.

In my research, I propose an analysis of the series *Sherlock* and the short stories written by Doyle focusing on the readers and audience’s responses to them. As only a few studies of adaptation focus on the audience’s response or on the experience of the public with adaptation, this study is a contribution both to adaptation studies and reader-response criticism. It also connects adaptation studies and reader-response criticism to the contemporary discussions of fandom, presenting new discussions on contemporary media and the participatory culture.

1.5 Television

Considering the importance of medium specificity, a topic that has already been discussed, the study of *Sherlock* calls for a discussion on television. The characteristics of the literary Holmes and the genre of detective stories show the context in which Doyle produced the short stories centered on the character. This process enables us to understand the

characteristics of the hypotext. Its adaptation, *Sherlock*, is a television series, which is also transmitted online through the BBC online broadcasting system, Netflix, Amazon Videos, and iTunes. As it is produced to be broadcasted first in the television network BBC, the main characteristics of television as a medium must be considered. Television narrative shows share some elements with cinema, as camera movements, elements of editing, and mise-en-scene. In this study, the episodes were analyzed through the broadcast system Netflix – and a reflection on the differences of using the technical medium television to the computer will be presented in this dissertation.

Even though television studies seem similar to film studies, as they both deal with audiovisual content and share some technical aspects, some differences between them cannot be ignored. Both cinema and television series (TV series) are narrative media, thus bearing similarities with literature – however, as Robert Allen argues, “[i]f literature and cinema attempt to draw us out of our everyday worlds and into their make-believe universes, commercial television projects itself, its stories, its products into the everyday world of the viewer.” (77). With the increasing number of different technologies and machines, it is important to emphasize that “[a] television is not just a machine, but also the set of behaviors and practices associated with its use.” (LOTZ, 2007, p. 30). This definition given by Lotz expresses the difference between watching a DVD on a monitor or a film online and watching a film on a specific network. Even though the narratives might seem similar, television programs are part of a channel with a defined set of practices. In this perspective, the experiences associated with the act of viewing are different, influenced by the technological apparatus as a mediator. In this case, more important than the technology and the technical qualities of the medium are the practices, experiences, and expectations related to them. This can be seen when people watch series on their computers, for instance. Even though the technological medium is different, the expectations and behaviors are related to what would be a *television* series. Larissa Pena Ribeiro de Carvalho also illustrates the differences between watching a film on the movie theater and on television sets as “the movie watched on movie theaters uninterrupted will be aired on television sectioned into parts and if the audience wants to disclose the end of the film, it will invariably have to watch minutes and minutes of unsought advertising” (2016, p. 39). Carvalho emphasizes how advertising shapes television differently from cinema, as “television streams multifold and diverse programming continuously. Nonetheless, at the same time that this broadcasting is unceasing, it is also interrupted often” (2016, p. 39).

John Caughie still highlights the importance of television studies, as it “offers the opportunity to complicate some of the orthodoxies which have accumulated around television and cultural studies” (2000, p. 6). He names some of these theoretical discussions considered by him as ‘orthodoxies’: “the intellectual’s relationship to the popular, the nature of authorship and creativity, the place of the text and the possibility of a viewer who is neither distracted nor indifferent or even resistant, but is engaged in both active and affective ways” (2000, p. 6). Caughie’s work on television drama demonstrates its important place within British culture and that its criticism “gives a new and very important significance to the notion of public culture” (2000, p. 2).

In the current context, Amanda Lotz’ *Television Will Be Revolutionized* is concerned with the contemporary technologies that changed television, such as the internet. According to Lotz, these changes are not so difficult to perceive, and they modified the experience of watching TV. “Not so long ago, television use typically involved walking into a room, turning on the set, and either turning to specific content or channel surfing. Today, viewers with digital video recorders (DVRs) such as TiVo may elect to circumvent scheduling constraints and commercials” (2007, p. 2). Now the television experience is no longer a broad way to reach audiences – YouTube and social networks changed the audience interaction and the modes of viewing images. According to her, the contemporary trend of watching television both in big HD screens and small portable devices is changing the way television is produced. In this sense, technology is changing the way television programs are consumed and understood, calling for new discussions.

One classical concept discussed in the understanding of television as a medium, opposed to the cinema is the *flow*, defined by Raymond Williams and discussed by several scholars. Williams points out that television content is not offered in single programs but in chains of programs, which call the audience to watch the whole sequence instead of one individual program. Each program is interrupted in a certain number of times by advertisement. In this case, Williams argues that television does not offer

a programme of discrete units with particular insertions, but a planned flow, in which the true series is not the published sequence of programme items but this sequence transformed by the inclusion of another kind of sequence, so that these sequences together compose the real flow. (2003, p. 91)

According to Williams, most of the networks are aware of how the audiences experience the entire sequence of programs and advertisements and use the flow to build their broadcasting schedule.

Kristin Thompson revises Raymond Williams' concept to explain how it increased the number of studies concerned with television scheduling and reduced the study of individual television programs. Flow, as reviewed by Thompson, is described by Williams as both "the scheduling of programs and advertising breaks within and between them considered as a continuum" and "the experience of the viewer, who supposedly sees the breaks in the television schedule not as interruptions but as part of programs" (2003, p. 6) The problem with the concept of flow for Thompson is that it presumes a passive audience, while actually, audiences have access to remote control, and thus can easily move among channels. She argues that the term *flow* is misleading and that it should be understood as "the effect that TV executives *hope* will result from their scheduling" (2003, p. 12), emphasizing the more active role of the audience in television content. Against the idea that TV should be studied concerned with the flow, the large chain of programs and advertising, she proposes that "the individual program can be usefully studied as a self-contained unit, apart from the original schedule in which it might have appeared" (2003, p. 18). In this thesis, I propose an analysis of *Sherlock* as a self-contained unit, understanding that some parts of its narrative structure are thought to fit the schedule and include the commercial breaks, as the concept of flow implies.

Williams' idea of flow and Thompson's argument can be applied to open and network television. However, new forms of broadcasting and accessing television content demand new discussions on the effects of scheduling and advertising. New forms of television such as Netflix do not include advertising inside the episode narratives and have no fixed schedule, but according to Robyn Warhol, their interface produces an effect akin to the flow defined by Williams. According to the author,

Starting out as a menu requiring the user to select each individual episode for viewing, the user-interface for streaming TV shows on Netflix has evolved into the current screen that instantly starts a countdown as soon as one episode has ended: "next episode begins in 14, 13, 12, 11 seconds." (2014, p. 145)

This countdown gives the viewer time to choose to stop the video stream, but at the same time, it fosters the practice of binge-watching. As streaming services such as Netflix earn by the number of subscribers rather than by the marketing of advertising time, their strategy calls the audience to watch more episodes, seasons, and series at one time, changing both the viewing practice and the production of content. After all, there is a difference between the instant gratification of solving a cliffhanger 14 seconds after it is seen and waiting for its solution one

week or one year after it has been released. Contemporary series such as *Sherlock* have to deal with both: with the audience watching on BBC, who have to watch advertising breaks between the narrative slots and to wait between episodes to be broadcasted and with the audience binge-watching the series.

1.5.1 TV Series

The classic¹⁶ understanding of television relies on serial publications to attract audiences in weekly or daily periods. Television series, the most common form of a narrative program in television, is defined by Jeremy Butler as a “narrative form that presents weekly episodes with a defined set of recurring characters” (2012, p. 34). Television series are costlier than non-narrative programs as live shows and game shows and may be defined within different genres, like comedy, drama, romance, sci-fi, etc. Christopher Anderson defines the standard American hour-long episodic series as

organized around a set of recurring central characters who interact with one another and with occasional new characters in a recognizable, bounded social setting. (...) Each episode is designed to accommodate at least three interruptions for commercials and network promotions. Episodes may consist of self-contained plots, in which conflicts are raised and resolved within the episode, or serial plots, in which major conflicts are left unresolved and continue through subsequent episodes. (2005, p. 78)

Although his definition is concerned with the American series, it can be applied to most contemporary TV series.

Narrative television programs have one macro narrative in which the show is based and micro-narratives in each episode. Each episode in the narrative of the TV series is followed both by the audience who knows the entire story and by the general public who has never heard of it. Considering these differences in/to the public, most of the series have episodes that can be watched outside the sequence of the storyline as they have a complete narrative, but which are part as well of a larger story. This characteristic can be seen in *Sherlock*: the first season, for instance, presents a new case in each of its episodes, which is concluded by the end of the

¹⁶ By classic television watching I mean people watching television in a television set using a remote control. This definition might seem unnecessary, but the contemporary trend of watching online broadcasting or binge watching changed some of the behaviors associated with watching television. This will be explored throughout the dissertation.

narrative. The third and last episode, however, presents Moriarty as a character hidden behind the cases of the first and second episodes, showing a narrative chain that perpasses them. Redundancy is also a key point in television screenplay related to these two different kinds of audiences, as Kristin Thompson recalls that “a teleplay writer must assume that at any time someone might need information on past events, while others are thoroughly familiar with the show already” (2003, p. 64). Flashbacks and the retelling of past events are used as resources to assure this redundancy and supply the audience with all the information needed to follow the plot.

As an audiovisual medium, the use of sound is as important for the construction of meaning in a narrative of television series as the images. Carolyn Birdsall and Anthony Enns highlight that the classic understanding of television “appeals to the sense of hearing rather than the voyeuristic pleasures of the cinematic gaze.” As some people left the television on while they perform other activities, mostly housewives, they might listen to the television and watch it only when the sound has caught their attention. This understanding is changing as nowadays people watch television in two different situations in which sound has different qualities and meanings: on “home cinema”, with larger screens and better sound technology, which approximates television to cinema; or on portable devices, with smaller screens and lower sound quality. These recent changes in the technical media all for more research to understand the new practices of consuming television content. In TV series, sound also helps to set the mood and tone for the narrative, and the soundtrack¹⁷ is composed considering how the musical elements such as volume, loudness, pitch, and rhythm might influence the audience’s emotions. A study of the series soundtrack includes dialogues, sound effects, and soundtrack music, which can be diegetic or extradiegetic¹⁸.

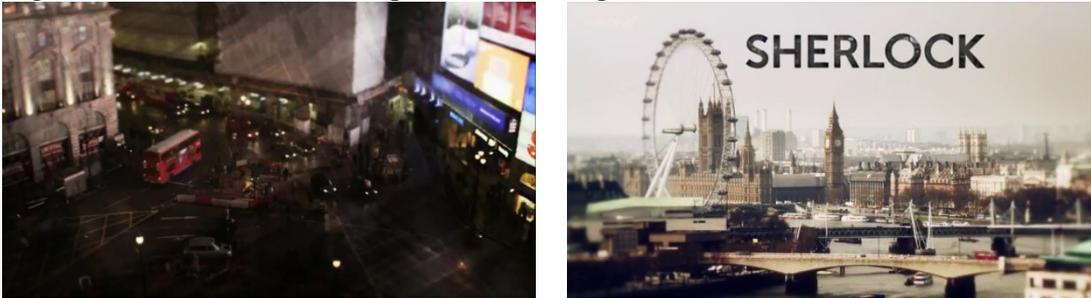
Title sequences, which are the sequences at the beginning of the series, are often composed of symbolic elements that are significant to the narrative and create affective reactions in the public. Monika Bednarek defines them as “a sequence of moving images at the beginning of a fictional television series, sometimes following a recap (...), an introductory

¹⁷ *Soundtrack*, according to Bernardo Marquez Alves, can be defined as everything that is audible. It is composed by voices, noises (i.e., sound effects), music and even silences.

¹⁸ According to Annette Kuhn e Guy Westwell, “The diegetic (or intradiegetic) level of a narrative is that of the story world, and the events that exist within it, while the extradiegetic or nondiegetic level stands outside these. (...) The term diegetic sound is in common use in the description and analysis of films, referencing any voice, music, or sound effect presented as having its source within the film’s fictional world. This is in contradistinction from nondiegetic or extradiegetic sound (such as background music, or underscoring, or voice over) that is represented as coming from a source outside the story world” (p. 117)

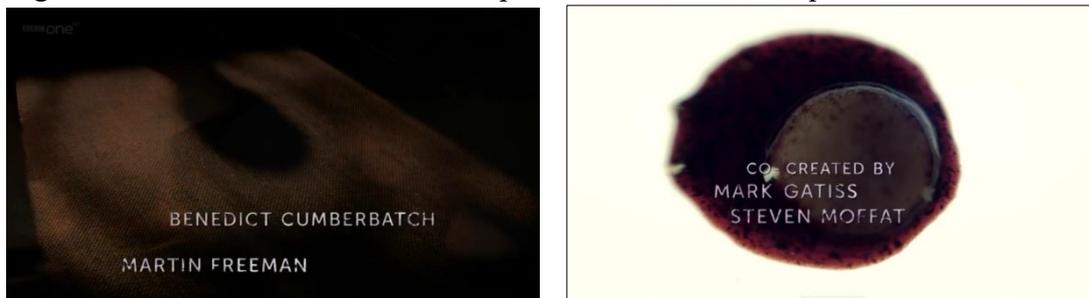
scene or both” (2014, p. 126). Bednarek, in a quantitative study of 50 American series and their title sequences, points out that their main functions are: to indicate the beginning of the show, to recap scenes from previous episodes and create continuity, to identify the series (and sometimes its main characters or context) and to establish its mood. Title sequences are also used to attract viewers, raise in them genre expectations, and create an aesthetics for the particular series. In *Sherlock*, the title sequence follows a small teaser sequence and has an overall structure that presents contemporary London as the setting of the show (Figure 1), presenting the main actors, directors, producers, and creators of the series (Figure 2). In each season, however, some rambling shots from the episodes are shown, anticipating fractions of the narratives that the public will know throughout the season and at the same time generating curiosity about when and how they will appear. One example is the title sequence of season 2, which presents a composition of small fragments of the first episode “A Scandal in Belgravia”, the second “The Hounds of the Baskerville” and the third “The Reichenbach Falls” (Figure 3 shows a juxtaposition of the first and third episodes and one image of the second). The title sequence also indicates that the series is an adaptation, crediting Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Figure 4).

Figure 1 - Shots in the title sequence indicating the context of the series



Source: *Sherlock* (2012)

Figure 2 - Reference to the actors and producers in the title sequence



Source: *Sherlock* (2012)

Figure 3 - Visual references to the episodes of the season in the title sequence



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 4 – Credit to Doyle in the title sequence



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Another characteristic discussed by Thompson is the use of multiple storylines, giving the impression of “lifelikeness”. According to her, as in life, series develop different stories to different characters, showing that even though the show may focus on one or more characters the others also have their independent lives. This allows the audience to follow different narratives in the same program. This is common in sitcoms, in which multiple characters develop different storylines. Each episode may focus on one or two characters, which may be less focused on the following episodes. As *Sherlock*’s narrative is concerned with the detective and his cases, this characteristic is not one of its features. The parallel plots, however, as Watson’s marriage, Molly Hopper’s attraction to Holmes and Lestrade’s personal life add the sense that life goes on while Sherlock is developing his cases.

Narrative television programs depend on cliffhangers, elements of surprise or an unsolved problem that works as a hook to raise the audience’s curiosity. They are common in the last scene before the break and in the very last scene of the episode to call the audience’s attention and assure that they will watch the next episode. *Sherlock* also has cliffhangers between its seasons, calling the audience to wait anxiously for the next sequence of episodes.

Even though the length of each episode of the series *Sherlock* (90 minutes) may give the impression that it is a film, the characteristics as the use of cliffhangers and the micro-narratives forming a larger narrative in subsequential episodes characterize it as a series. The long period between the seasons can be explained by the techniques used in the production and edition of the series, which is aesthetically comparable to films. Cliffhangers can be seen in *Sherlock*, mainly in the last episode of each season.

Considering the context and the questions which this research aims to investigate, the following chapter discusses and analyzes the short story "The Adventure of the Final Problem", written by Doyle and the episode "The Reichenbach Fall" from the BBC series focusing on the rhetorical and narrative strategies that guide the readers and audience experience. Concerning the rhetoric, I focus on the narrative structure, the language used, the sound and the visual, discussing the meanings conveyed by them, and how they direct the readers/audiences to specific responses. Also, I highlight the gaps and negations in them, tracing how an implied reader would experience the narratives.

2 First Evidence: Analysis of Doyle's and Moffat and Gatiss' Sherlock Holmes

In the current context of what Jenkins calls “participatory culture”, it is common that the broadcasting of new episodes of popular series is followed by comments on social media, the creation of a hashtag, or memes – even before the episode finishes. Even fans who follow a series from countries in which it is not aired search them online either on broadcasting systems or illegal download websites. Usually, there is a rush to watch them as soon as they are aired aiming to join the online discussions without getting spoilers¹⁹. In this context, audience participation enhances the show's popularity – depending, also, on how it is non-officially announced online. Considering this, some questions may arise: is there some narrative element that calls the participation of the audience? Do these narrative elements encourage certain kinds of responses?

In this chapter, I analyze sequences in the narratives of Arthur Conan Doyle's “The Final Problem” and Moffat and Gatiss' “The Reichbach Fall” that call for the audience's participation. The concepts of gaps, negation, and negativity, from Iser's study of reader responses, are helpful to understand the implied reader in the texts under scrutiny in this dissertation, as these tools clarify audiences' responses. In this chapter, I will analyze the conventions of the detective genre used in the short story and the rhetoric strategies of the narrative as a starting point to understand the responses to the short story and the series episode that are analyzed in chapter 3. The series, with the direct and indirect addresses, is also analyzed concerning its narrative, language, and visual aspects, showing how they lead to certain responses from the audience. According to Iser, any text's implied reader may be filled differently by actual readers considering their backgrounds and personal experiences. In this context, this chapter considers only the textual elements that may call for readers' participation as spaces for certain responses, not as how actual readers/audiences responded to them. In the understanding of the relationship between the narratives and the receivers, mediated by the media, this chapter shows how the production of the content directs certain responses and leads to certain behaviors.

One may understand that those narrative elements in contemporary television which call for participation are direct addresses, like shows as *Master Chef* do when they display a

¹⁹ Spoiler, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary online, means “information about the plot of a motion picture or TV program that can spoil a viewer's sense of surprise or suspense; *also*: a person who discloses such information”

telephone number and a website that the audience may use to call, send SMS or click to vote for their favorite chefs. However, Sharon Marie Ross describes three “invitational strategies” – strategies used by television to invite fans to interact, and that can be used individually or combined in a given show. The first one, “overt”, is easily identified in the text (i.e. *American Idol* that asks the Internet participation specifically by using direct appeal – “you vote”). The second style is called by Ross “organic”, in which “that tele-participation is an already occurring element of viewers’ ways of watching” (2009, p. 8). One example given by her is *Degrassi: The Next Generation* in which characters mimic Internet chat and cell texting in a way that it is clearly recognized by the audience. The last one is the “obscure”, in which the invitation to participate is “in the *narrative structure and content* of the show itself through a certain ‘messiness’ that demands viewer unraveling” (2009, p. 9). She uses *Lost* as an example of the last category as it presents clues to a puzzle that calls the audience to search meanings and predict elements by using Internet forums and websites.

Camila Figueiredo (2016) calls the strategies used to promote the interaction between audiences and media – in her case, specific audiences that are led to internet content, “migratory strategies”. In her analysis of *Sherlock*, she identifies in the plot migratory strategies calling the audience to interact with the character’s weblogs and official transmedia content, enhancing the relationship between the audience and the character when they turn off the television, as the direct references to the weblog content. These references are not explicit, indicating that the audience should be aware of the small details of the program. She also describes other transmedia instances as the game “Sherlock Holmes: the network” and the use of an actual hearse to promote the episode “The Empty Hearse”, already announce by Gatiss in his personal Twitter account.

Aiming to understand how they address the readers, including devices that invite for reader/audience participation or not, this chapter proposes an analysis of the short story “The Final Problem” and the episode “The Reichenbach Falls” (Season 2 episode 3). As reader-response criticism proposes that the meaning of a text is constructed in a combination of the text and the reader, some concepts and understandings of this theoretical perspective help to identify elements of narrative structure and content that stimulate participation. Also, this analysis helps to understand the similarities and differences in the way that the narratives

address their readers/audiences, revealing some aspects of the context in which they are produced and read.

Based on Jauss' seven theses on literary history, an analysis of a literary work must consider both its diachronic and synchronic contexts. Also, the pre-understanding of the genre, the forms, and themes from previous works, genre expectations, allusions, and references are important in the recognition of the context of the experience of literature. Considering this horizon of expectations, one agrees with the assumption that "[a] literary work is not an object that stands by itself and that offers the same view to each reader in each period" (JAUSS, 1982, p. 21) and understands the reception of the readers. As reader-response criticism is not concerned with the psychology of readers, but with the responses and horizons of expectations in a given period or place, a detailed analysis of the aforementioned elements related to the short stories and the series discussed here will follow.

Furthermore, the concepts of gaps and negation, as defined by Iser, help to understand how Doyle's "The Final Problem" and *Sherlock's* "The Reichenbach Falls" call the readers/audience to an active role in the meaning-making process and influence in their later responses. The gaps, which in detective stories are expected as part of the genre, invite the readers and audiences to investigate along with the detective, filling in the clues left by the narrative with their interpretation. This characteristic, which calls for individual responses in Doyle's texts, becomes instantaneous in the series, as from one sequence to the other the audience not only makes sense of the episode but also may comment on different social media platforms. When the narratives negate the readers/audiences anticipations, as when Sherlock Holmes discovers something different than his first assumptions or when he dismisses what seemed to be the right conclusion, the "negation" provided by the text increases the mystery and may work as a hook to increase the readers/audiences' curiosity. From these concepts and implications, an analysis of the narrative of the short story together with an analysis of sequences from the series shows how the narrative calls for certain responses, and illustrate how these specific narratives invite participation – either for commercial purposes or for participatory practice.

Besides the narrative aspects, medium specificity is also related to the way that narratives may direct the receivers' responses. While Seymour Chatman argues that the specific essential properties of the medium (in his case novel and film) direct and limit the narrative, implying an essence of the medium, Robert Stam argues that each medium "has its own specificity deriving from its respective materials of expression" (2000, p. 59), which is not

related to a fixed essence but to the practices related to the media. While the former implies a fixed set of properties, the latter considers how the medium is understood both by producers and receivers, considering also the contexts and historical changes involved in its understanding. Thomas Leitch still connects the specificity of media to “specific reading habits that are grounded in the history of fashion, taste, and analysis rather than in any specific technical properties of novels and film” (2003, p. 152), which includes an understanding of the media that goes beyond the technical aspects to include the context and the audience’s expectations. Agreeing with the definition of medium specificity in what Anne Gjelsvik (2013) would call “contemporary perspective”, which includes considering contextualized media specificities, with the medium characteristics and conventions, the experiences promoted by the medium and their impact on the audiences, this chapter proposes considering the connection between the specificities of literary magazines at the end of the 19th Century and television series at the beginning of the 21st Century. A discussion based on these aspects helps to reflect on the different relationships between media and the audiences considering both their historical contexts and the specificities of the media.

2.1 The Game is afoot: Sherlock Holmes and his investigations

Elleström’s definition of media and the four modalities proposed by him give a departing point for the analysis of medium specificity and its connection with the *experience* offered to readers. The short stories in literary magazines can be described as words (and images) in a flat paper that call for the use of sight to the reading process and use primarily symbols to create narratives. The inner hearing of the sound of words is also part of the experience of reading, and although the main form of interaction with the text is individual and silent; people may read them aloud. Time in short stories can be seen from two different aspects: the time that a person takes to read the entire narrative, that may change depending on the reader’s reading habits, and the story-time (as the story space), which depends on reader’s imagination through the descriptions and narrative of the text. Elleström’s understanding of time is connected to Gerard Genette’s (1987) definition of discourse-time and story-time – by the first one, Genette refers to the time that a person needs to follow the narrative and by the second one he refers to the time that the narrative encompasses in the diegesis. While Elleström

is concerned with how this difference between the discourse time and story-time to understand the relationship between different media, Genette is concerned with the influence that this difference has in the narratives. Together with this technical description of the media modalities, one should consider the historical aspect connected to them and the influence that they had on readers' reception of the narratives.

To understand reader and fan behavior in the 19th century connected to detective short stories, it is important to describe the context and how people had access to them. The end of the 18th and early 19th centuries are marked in England as a period of “mass literacy”, even though the reasons that cannot be easily described and the numbers related to that are imprecise (LEMIRE, 2013). The 19th century also was a period in which the taxes for printing newspapers and magazines decreased, generating lower cost printing material and thus increasing the access to journalistic material and literary publications. Cheaper than hardcover volumes, literary magazines enabled a larger number of readers to have access to different narratives and genres, to follow different plotlines, and establish a relationship with literary characters. This new public, which in earlier periods had no access to literature, could now find in literary pieces a new form of entertainment. Magazines were a popular form of individual distraction in the trains and buses and could be read in a family or a group of friends. The low cost of the publication and the mass production cannot be understood as low quality since canonical writers such as Charles Dickens, George Eliot and Joseph Conrad (to name a few) published short stories and serialized novels in this format.

A common literary magazine would include not only short stories but also critical articles, illustrations, news, advertising, and other cultural debates, forming a mix of different voices and subjects. The narratives published were a mix of different genres and were directed to different publics – *The Strand*, for instance, had both detective stories and children's fables, together with romantic narratives. Some magazines included illustrations, photographs, and puzzles. Often, critical pieces and comments on the short stories and the serialized novels were part of other magazines that published their narratives, creating space for cultural debates. Fictional texts shared the same technical medium as journalistic pieces, which, to the new reading public, may have blurred the borders between fact and fiction in some cases. The *Strand Magazine*, in which most of Doyle's short stories were published, had different sections: using the edition of January 1891 as an example, it began with an introduction, as it can be seen in Figure 5, and included journalistic texts such as a description of the London Fireman, a portrait of celebrities in earlier periods, which show already a beginning of fan cult as in Figure 6 and

original literary pieces, as it can be seen in Figure 7. Short stories were published both from English authors and translation of French short stories, and several narratives directed to children were also part of the same magazine.

Figure 5 - Introduction of *The Strand*



Source: *The Strand Magazine*, NEWNES, George (ed). London, 1891, vol III, Jan - June. p. 1. Available at: <<<https://archive.org/details/StrandMagazine1/page/n1/mode/2up>>>

Figure 6 - Portrait of Celebrities in *The Strand*



Source: *The Strand Magazine*, NEWNES, George (ed). London, 1891, vol III, Jan - June. p. 41. Available at: <<<https://archive.org/details/StrandMagazine1/page/n39/mode/2up>>>

Figure 7 - Short story in *The Strand*

Source: *The Strand Magazine*, NEWNES, George (ed). London, 1891, vol III, Jan - June. p. 14. Available at: <<
<https://archive.org/details/StrandMagazine1/page/n13/mode/2up>>>

Detective short stories in these magazines would follow the generic conventions that were thoroughly described in Chapter 1. They present one narrative in which a mystery should be solved, and through narrative elements invite the readers to follow the solution of the case while they try to reach the answer before the detective does. In literary magazines, these stories were published regularly, often with one detective investigating different cases in different volumes. This seriality helps the readers to know the investigative method of the characters, their main characteristics, and to establish some sort of relationship between them. People who got used to Holmesian stories and followed them periodically, for instance, would expect the detective to follow some steps in an investigation and to behave in certain ways – and would wait anxiously for the next publication.

In the specific case of *The Strand Magazine*, most of the short stories were illustrated, and the illustrations are important in the understanding of the phenomenon Sherlock Holmes. Sidney Paget, responsible for the first illustrations of the character, is responsible for providing details to the character that were not described by Doyle, and that today are part of how people understand him. The format of the deerstalker hat was Paget's choice and became characteristic

of the detective. Most of the later editions which provide a collection of short stories are not illustrated, providing a different narrative experience to the reader.

Besides this, Ann K. McClellan (MCCLELLAN, 2017b) highlights the importance of another magazine in the popularity of the character Sherlock Holmes, the *Tit-Bits* Magazine. *Tit-Bits*, a weekly publication edited by George Newnes (one of the editors of the *Strand*), did not publish Doyle's short stories, but it fostered the detective "particularly through its use of participatory practices, cross-promotion, and transmedia storytelling" (2017b, parag. 1.1) that can be seen as advertising for the stories published in *The Strand*. These practices, which are part of what was named New Journalism, can be associated with some mediatic strategies used by *Sherlock* to promote the series. While the *Strand* published the short stories and authorial content with no space for reader participation,

Tit-Bits' openness and pragmatism can be seen in its dependence on contests, prizes, and promotional schemes, as well as in correspondence and advice columns that encouraged readers to actively engage with the text and to actively contribute to the construction of the periodical itself. Readers were even encouraged to submit their own work for publication (2017b, parag. 3.4).

McClellan describes some of the practices used by Newnes to promote the character:

Newnes began promoting Sherlock Holmes (...) through three main New Journalistic participatory practices: inquiry columns, competitions, and Holmesian pastiches. The inquiry column published short questions sent in by readers with the answers following 2 weeks after. The magazine's cultural authority was partially grounded in its guarantee that every question would be considered with the utmost seriousness and answered with absolute accuracy (...) Newnes (...) uses the *Tit-Bits* inquiry column to cross-promote the *Strand* and to reinforce readers' fascination with the character and desire for even more details about his life and fictional world (2017b, parag. 3.5).

The competitions included quizzes with actual prizes – one of the competitions was even suggested by Doyle himself. Pastiches, which would also give financial return to the readers who were producing them, can be seen as a prototype of fanfiction which is so popular with contemporary series. This contextual understanding of how *Tit-Bits* used cross-promotion and other strategies to help Holmes' popularity shows that Holmes' fandom is not only generated by the narratives themselves but that it was probably influenced by the promotion strategies used by Newnes. By opening space in the magazine for fan inquires and fan production, Newnes already gave space to reader participation – in the same type of technical medium that the canon was being published.

Even though Arthur Conan Doyle is mostly known for the creation of Sherlock Holmes, Doyle considered his detective and the short stories as minor work²⁰ and made efforts to write historical novels and non-fiction related to spiritualism. His novels *Micah Clarke* (1889), *The White Company* (1891), *The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard* (1896), *Adventures of Gerard* (1903), among others reveal that Doyle was interested in a large number of topics and genres. His spiritual belief, spiritualism, lead him to write several books on the subject, as *The New Revelation* (1918), *The Coming of the Fairies* (1922), *The Edge of the Unknown* (1930) and to give a large number of lectures and conferences on the subject. Besides that, Doyle wrote some poems, plays, and adventures. Even though he wrote the Holmesian short-story “The Final Problem” as an attempt to stop writing about Holmes and dedicate himself to these other issues and genres, Doyle is mostly connected to detective stories than to spiritualism or historical novels.

With his “science of deduction”²¹, Sherlock Holmes defined a new style of detective fiction. Most of the previous detectives relied on elements as chance to find the solution to the mysteries that they were investigating – and writers could add elements in the narrative that were not previously mentioned as part of the solution to the mysteries. Inspired by his former medicine professor Joseph Bell, who called his students to find information about their clients by observation rather than by inquiring them, Doyle created Holmes as a character who relies on his power of observation and logic. This characteristic of Holmes enables the readers to follow him in his process of investigation, and even to try to solve the mystery before he does, as in a game-play between reader and detective.

The connection between readers and Holmes is related to how the narrative elements direct the reader, to the medium specificity which enables the long-term relationship between readers and the character and with the emotional bonds built between them. Holmes was a man of his time, walking in the same streets that most of the readers of *The Strand* would walk – seeing the same inventions being presented, the same social problems, and the cruelties that could be committed by other men. What, to contemporary readers, could seem inexplicable, hard to understand, and illogical such as a crime could be explained rationally by Holmes, following reasonable steps to find the truth hidden underneath the mystery. More than once

²⁰ In a letter to May Doyle, his mother, in November 1891, Doyle wrote about Sherlock Holmes: “He takes my mind from better things” (LELLENBERG; STASHOWER; FOLEY, 2007, p. 300)

²¹ The “Science of deduction” is a fictional article written by Sherlock Holmes in which he explains his methods of investigation and calls for the use of logics and the scientific method. It is possibly influenced by the current development of sciences at the time such as Paleontology, Criminalistic and Darwinism.

Doyle got involved in the solution of real crimes, and people would write to him often asking him to send a message to Holmes asking for his help. Doyle's records of the period show that people would go to his lectures on literature expecting to see Sherlock Holmes – again reinforcing the confusion between fact and fiction already promoted by the format of the magazine.

The two first novels in which Holmes appeared, “A Study in Scarlet” and “The Sign of Four”, were published in two different magazines, *Beeton's Christmas Annual* and *Lippincott's Magazine*, respectively. Doyle decided to invest in his protagonist and, changing to short stories, published “A Scandal in Bohemia” and “The Red-Headed League” in *The Strand Magazine*. Doyle argued that Holmes would be a great opportunity for the magazine, as he commented that “a single character running through a series, if it only engaged the attention of the reader, would bind that reader to that particular magazine” (LELLENBERG; STASHOWER; FOLEY, 2007, p. 293). By this argument, Doyle reveals that he was aware of the power of Sherlock Holmes to conquer fans and keep them interested in following his stories. Publishing Holmes' cases as a series of short stories increased the reader's connection with the character and raised the expectation from one case to the other.

One final point that should be discussed is the fact that Doyle's short stories were republished later in different formats (hardcover, paperback, pocketbooks, with different editions and volumes)²². This variation in the formats of publications reveals two important aspects: people's interest in Sherlock Holmes, which led him to be exhaustively republished either in English or translated to several languages, and the different reading experiences that contemporary readers have when reading one of these formats. A hardcover version in two or three volumes of the short stories gives a completely different experience than the serial publication in literary magazines, as the former includes an implicit statement of the importance of the narrative (and may also include additional information as introductions, critical pieces, and commentaries) while the latter may include contextual references and interconnection to the other texts published in the same magazine. The long period of contact between readers and the detective promoted by the seriality of the magazine publication also influences the relationship between readers and fiction, as readers would have to wait for the publication of a

²² The edition quoted here is a hardcover collection in one volume that includes all the sixty short stories and the four novels in which Sherlock Holmes appears.

new story – and the period between two short stories may be an invitation for imagining new possibilities, discussing case solutions and investigating deeper the details of the short story, actions that are now associated with fandom.

An example of a typical Sherlock Holmes story is “A Case of Identity”, published in 1891 in *The Strand Magazine*. This short story begins with a dialogue between Holmes and Watson about criminalistics and the media, with some comments about previous cases. They are interrupted by a client with a different case – in this short story, a woman whose husband has disappeared right after their marriage. Holmes draws a lot of conclusions on her personality and history by observing her (which happens in all the stories) and takes the case as it shows some points that raise his curiosity. After his investigation (that in this short story is conducted through a dialogue with the woman), he explains to Watson how he draws his conclusions, then he calls the suspect and gets a confession from him. Some of these elements – the conversation between Holmes’ methods, the conclusions based on observation, the acceptance of the case based on curiosity, and the explanation of the investigation process to Watson are common to most of the Holmesian stories, even if they present some variations.

Different from the previous short stories, “The Final Problem” has a different narrative structure, which does not correspond to genre expectations. As described in the previous chapter, Dove draws on the main characteristics of detective stories highlighting four elements: the detective as the main character; the mystery as the main plot; the difficulty of the solution, and the solution at the end of the narrative. Even though “The Final Problem” has Holmes as the main character, its plot is not focused on a mystery, but in persecution involving Holmes’ nemesis, Professor Moriarty. Watson narrates how Holmes involved him in a journey to Switzerland to escape from Moriarty and finally vanished in Reichenbach Falls where he left a farewell note. By the time it was published, the readers that followed the other narratives were familiar with the overall structure of Holmesian stories, as the previous 13 narratives followed a pattern. With a narrative of persecution rather than an investigation of a mystery, the narrative breaks with genre expectations.

As it was defined in Chapter 1, the analysis proposed here considers the rhetoric strategies of narrative and language. By “narrative” it is considered the narrative structure, including its narrator (whether it is a first-person or third-person narrator, and how this narrator influences in the narrative) and chronology; while “language” refers to specific words and expressions used in the narrative and the meanings produced by them. As the rhetoric strategies in the narrative and the language are closely connected, the analysis proposed here considers

how the two interact and form the narrative of “The Final Problem”. The narrative, with an analepsis, is narrated by Watson, who tells in flashbacks how Sherlock Holmes was declared dead. The language used by Watson leads the reader to the conclusion of Holmes’ death, raising their curiosity with Watson’s omissions and long pauses. Most of Holmes’ narratives are first-person narrated by Watson, except for “The Blanched Soldier” and “Lion’s Mane”, which are narrated by Holmes himself. Watson, besides narrating Holmes’ steps and investigations, acts as a filter for all the information in the narrative. The first-person narration has an important role in engaging the readers in the story, as

[w]ith Watson addressing the reader directly, the narrative becomes immediate and engaging. He explains what is going on and the reader identifies with him, following his ups and downs as he witnesses Holmes in action, and experiences bafflement and wonder. And since Holmes’s arrival at the truth generally takes Watson by surprise, the reader also feels the thrill of discovery when the time comes for Holmes to reveal it. (DAVIES; FORSHAW, 2015, p. 26)

As most of the short stories are part of Watson’s journal, they present his biased version of the mystery. Often, the narratives follow a similar narrative structure: they begin with Watson commenting on Holmes and praising him for some aspect of his personality, then presenting a case that highlights either for being difficult, odd, or new. From this point on, Watson begins a flashback in which he narrates the solution of the case, with frequent remarks on Holmes’ personality and methods. With this, from the beginning to the end of the narratives, Watson’s framing of the narratives influences the readers’ perceptions of the characters and events.

“The Final Problem” begins with the bold news given by Watson: “It is with a heavy heart that I take up my pen to write this the last words which I shall ever record the singular gifts by which my friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes was distinguished” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 438²³). After two years following almost monthly the investigations of Sherlock Holmes, this statement breaks readers’ expectations concerning the narrative. Watson continues his paragraph with emotional statements summarizing their adventures, which were known to a large portion of the readers:

²³ Although the short story was written in 1893, I make reference to a recent collection of Holmes’ stories entitled “The Complete Sherlock Holmes”, which is the material that I have access to. The narratives with Holmes as the main character were published in different dates and in magazines, but from now on I will make references to this volume so that I can give page numbers.

In an incoherent and, as I deeply feel, an entirely inadequate fashion, I have endeavored to give some account of my strange experiences in his company from the chance which first brought us together at the period of the "Study in Scarlet," up to the time of his interference in the matter of the "Naval Treaty" –an interference which had the unquestionable effect of preventing a serious international complication (DOYLE, 2009, p. 438).

The cases referred by him – “Study in Scarlet” and “Naval Treaty” – are important in the context of the short story. The former, a novel, was the first case investigated by Holmes. Even though it was not very successful considering the number of copies sold in the time it was published, it was very important in the introduction of the characters Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, their relationship, and the investigative process. The later is a short story that was published in the magazine before “The Final Problem”.

By the time that “The Final Problem” was published, Holmes was already a well-known character and had loyal readers and fans, eager to read about new cases and adventures. For these fans, this initial sequence would already be a bad surprise, an indication that they would read no more stories of the detective. Watson’s first sentence set a mood of mourning in the story, which follows to its conclusion when he narrates the last words from Holmes and ends the narrative saying that Holmes is the man “whom I shall ever regard as the best and the wisest man whom I have ever known” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 449). By telling the fall of Holmes as a flashback, Watson assures his death at the end of the narrative.

As the end of the narrative is known from the first sentence, the focus of the narrative turns to how Holmes died, rather than the result of an unknown mystery. In detective stories, it is common to know how it concludes: the case is solved by the detective. However, in this story, the narrative turns from a mysterious crime that should be investigated to the detective’s own death – changing the game offered to the reader from its beginning. The short story is still an investigation that the reader should go through to understand how Holmes passed out – but the events narrated are related to persecution rather than a true investigation.

From the beginning of the narrative, Watson mentions several newspapers and documents reporting Holmes’ decease, adding the idea of the veracity of his story. According to the character, he is narrating Holmes’ final problem as an attempt to tell what really happened between him and Professor Moriarty, as Moriarty’s brother was trying to defend the memory of the Professor. Watson mentions some publications that narrated some version of the story – “the Journal de Geneve on May 6th, 1891, the Reuter’s despatch in the English papers on May 7th, and finally the recent letters” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 439) written by Colonel James Moriarty. The resource of using documents shows that the narrative is not just an invention of Watson,

but that what he is narrating is true. In the context of the short story, it is another resource to assure the readers that Holmes is really dead. Considering that literary magazines and journals of the time would include not only fictional pieces but also journalistic reports, this resource also blurs the borders between fact and fiction, assuring the readers that the death of Holmes is a fact.

After the brief introduction about Holmes's decease, Watson begins his proper narration with the dialogue that began their adventure on April 24th 1891, when Holmes arrives at his house and asks him to close his shutters. Holmes is described as “paler and thinner than usual” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 439), showing that something different might have happened to him. The curiosity about what caused him that is raised as Holmes delays this information giving inconclusive answers to his questions. The dialogue follows:

“You are afraid of something?” I asked.

“Well, I am.”

“Of what?”

“Of air-guns.”

“My dear Holmes, what do you mean?” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 439)

From the beginning to the end of the dialogue, Holmes is mysterious about his fear and situation, increasing Watson’s curiosity about what happened. He refers continuously to some danger, unknown to Watson and to the reader, capable of leaving him paler and afraid. When asked, Holmes gives little information and changes the subject, apologizing for arriving late:

“I think that you know me well enough, Watson, to understand that I am by no means a nervous man. At the same time, it is stupidity rather than courage to refuse to recognize danger when it is close upon you. Might I trouble you for a match?” He drew in the smoke of his cigarette as if the soothing influence was grateful to him.

“I must apologize for calling so late,” said he, “and I must further beg you to be so unconventional as to allow me to leave your house presently by scrambling over your back garden wall.”

“But what does it all mean?” I asked. (DOYLE, 2009, p. 439)

Holmes’ weird behavior is highlighted when he asks to leave by the back garden. This demand reveals that he was running away from some eminent and grave danger – increasing continuously the impression of danger to the readers. As Watson, who does not know what Holmes mean with his actions, the reader is led to also question what is the meaning of the detective’s behavior, and try to guess as Watson is narrating their meeting. Holmes asks if Watson is alone, revealing that the subject is secret, and, only after that, explains the meaning of everything. Delaying the explanation of the reason to Holmes’ fear is used as a resource to

set the mood of the narrative, and to keep readers' attention to the development of the events as the readers have access to the story through Watson, who is a filter of all the events.

Watson as a narrator is very important in the experience of reading this short story. As he tells the events as he knew them in time with a large number of personal comments and remarks, the reader is directed by him in the understanding of the events. Also, since Watson is Holmes' best friend and has an affective connection with him, the readers are influenced by their friendship, almost always getting in touch with positive evaluations on Holmes' decisions and with a large number of compliments to his personality traits. While Watson praises the detective or shows concern about his appearance and curiosity about his actions, the reader is asked to follow him in a personal and emotional connection with the narrative.

Before telling the whole story and asking Watson to follow him in his adventure, Holmes asks if he is alone, and invites the doctor to follow him:

Is Mrs. Watson in?"

"She is away upon a visit."

"Indeed! You are alone?"

"Quite."

"Then it makes it the easier for me to propose that you should come away with me for a week to the Continent."

"Where?"

"Oh, anywhere. It's all the same to me." (DOYLE, 2009, p. 439)

Holmes' answer still leads to no conclusion and even increases the curiosity about what could have caused so much fear in such a rational man. Watson recognizes how strange Holmes' actions were, pointing out that

There was something very strange in all this. It was not Holmes's nature to take an aimless holiday, and something about his pale, worn face told me that his nerves were at their highest tension. He saw the question in my eyes, and, putting his finger-tips together and his elbows upon his knees, he explained the situation.

"You have probably never heard of Professor Moriarty?" said he.

"Never."(DOYLE, 2009, p. 440)

"The Final Problem" exposes Professor James Moriarty, Holmes' nemesis, seen as a man as intelligent as Holmes, but who uses his intelligence to criminal activities. When describing Moriarty, Holmes confesses that he "had at least met an antagonist who was my [Holmes'] intellectual equal" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 441). Moriarty is a professor of mathematics, described as the "Napoleon of Crime", as he is behind many different criminal activities but he cannot be traced by the police as the mind behind all of them. Although Moriarty became an important character in the world of Sherlock Holmes and fan discussions, he only appears directly in one narrative besides "The Final Problem", which is "The Valley of Fear" published later. His name is mentioned in other five short stories: "The Empty House", "The Norwood

Builder”, “The Missing Three-Quarter”, “His Last Bow” and “The Illustrious Client”. Diegetically, his action can be seen in the background of other stories, but his organization was so powerful that his name was never related to the crimes being investigated.

To answer Watson, Holmes explains:

“Aye, there's the genius and the wonder of the thing!” he cried. “The man pervades London, and no one has heard of him. That's what puts him on a pinnacle in the records of crime. I tell you, Watson, in all seriousness, that if I could beat that man, if I could free society of him, I should feel that my own career had reached its summit, and I should be prepared to turn to some more placid line in life. Between ourselves, the recent cases in which I have been of assistance to the royal family of Scandinavia, and to the French republic, have left me in such a position that I could continue to live in the quiet fashion which is most congenial to me, and to concentrate my attention upon my chemical researches. But I could not rest, Watson, I could not sit quiet in my chair, if I thought that such a man as Professor Moriarty were walking the streets of London unchallenged.” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 440)

In this explanation, Holmes not only explains his strange behavior but also introduces Moriarty. As Moriarty had not appeared in any of the other short stories before, defining him in the way that he can hide in London while he commits a large number of crimes adds to the veracity of the character. As Holmes had no declared nemesis (besides all the criminals who would hate him for discovering their crimes and presenting them to the police), the resource of beginning his description by praising the way he could hide in London justifies how the readers would never have heard of him. Also, the description gives the impression that Professor Moriarty might have been an actual person in London, unknown to the readers due to his ability to hide, which again blurs the borders between fact and fiction in the short story.

Holmes then explains that he had investigated Professor Moriarty for a long time, but that his criminal network worked in a very powerful way to keep him off all investigations. When demand for a crime appeared, Moriarty would hire one of his associates to do the dirty job, and, if he was caught, would pay his finance. By using this resource, a large number of crimes would remain without a proper solution – Holmes points out that when Moriarty would be revealed, at least 40 crimes not solved by the police would find their true solution. Holmes also tells that when he investigated Moriarty, the genius of crime would follow his steps, anticipating his actions:

Now, if I could have done this without the knowledge of Professor Moriarty, all would have been well. But he was too wily for that. He saw every step which I took to draw my toils round him. Again and again he strove to break away, but I as often headed him off. I tell you, my friend, that if a detailed

account of that silent contest could be written, it would take its place as the most brilliant bit of thrust-and-parry work in the history of detection. Never have I risen to such a height, and never have I been so hard pressed by an opponent. He cut deep, and yet I just undercut him. This morning the last steps were taken, and three days only were wanted to complete the business. I was sitting in my room thinking the matter over, when the door opened and Professor Moriarty stood before me. (DOYLE, 2009, p. 441)

In “The Final Problem”, Moriarty visited Holmes to ask him to drop his investigation into his criminal organization. The description of this conversation begins with a description of Moriarty, followed by his proposal and later threat. Moriarty’s intelligence and power of observation are revealed in his first lines, as he says “[i]t is a dangerous habit to finger loaded firearms in the pocket of one’s dressing-gown” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 441). By this sentence, he shows that even before Holmes greeted him, he already observed the detective and drew his conclusions. Moriarty takes his memorandum-book in which he wrote all the events in which Holmes spoiled his plans, showing that he was aware of all the movements made by the detective. By his final threat “[i]f you are clever enough to bring destruction upon me, rest assured that I shall do as much to you” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 442), the readers are introduced to the gravity of Moriarty’s persecution and learn why Holmes was so involved in this danger trying to stop him.

Throughout the narrative, more than once it is said that if Holmes could catch Moriarty, his death was not in vain. This can be seen in statements such as Holmes’ idea that “if I could beat that man, if I could free society of him, I should feel that my own career had reached its summit” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 440), Watson’s description that “[a]gain and again he recurred to the fact that if he could be assured that society was freed from Professor Moriarty he would cheerfully bring his own career to a conclusion” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 447) and in Holmes’ final note “my career had in any case reached its crisis, and that no possible conclusion to it could be more congenial to me than this” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 449). These sentences not only give a fair reason for Holmes’ death but also show the readers that it was his own will to stop investigating if he could catch Moriarty. Even though the readers would want him to continue his adventures and continue to read them in *The Strand*, catching Moriarty would be the apex of his career, and dying in this mission would be fair.

With this short analysis, it is possible to see that some of the narrative elements do provide a space for the readers to include their own perspectives and interact with the text, forming a relationship with the characters and the settings. The long delay between the beginning of the text and the narrative of the danger that Holmes was facing, for instance, increases the readers’ curiosity while invites them to investigate with Watson what caused so

much fear in Holmes. The dismissive responses given by the detective can also be seen as gaps to be filled by the readers with information coming from other parts of the text or their own imagination, while the short story confirms or deny these expectations.

Readers responded to the short story by canceling their signature of *The Strand*, and after the publication of “The Final Problem”, the magazine almost had to close. Magazine and journal articles published notes about the narrative, and Sherlockian scholars number some reactions as fans wearing black armbands as a reaction to it as Tuğçe Soygul (2019) reminds in her thesis. With the analysis proposed, it can be seen that the narrative involves the readers in Watson’s mourning, leaving no space for different conclusions. The description of Moriarty and his actions give a fair reason to Sherlock’s death, showing that was not a random decision and helping to prevent the character’s popularity loss.

2.2 The Game is on: looking for clues in *Sherlock*

To compare and contrast the literary magazines with the television, Elleström’s modalities (material, sensorial, spatiotemporal, and semiotic) also present an interesting departing point. Considering only the technical medium of television, in which people would watch the episodes of *Sherlock* for the first time in the United Kingdom, it can be seen as a set of moving images with audio in a flat surface, which calls for hearing and seeing for a complete experience of the series and which uses different iconic signs to convey meaning. As with the short stories, the TV series has two different time experiences: the time which takes to watch one episode (90 minutes) and the storytime and space, which is virtual and developed in the diegesis. Audio is a very important aspect of television “as television neatly adopted many of the social and cultural functions of radio and added pictures to correspond with the sounds of the previous medium” (LOTZ, 2007, p. 6). By this description, it can be seen that television engages the audience in more senses than the short stories: the moving images and the sound give a different sensorial and emotional experience to the audience.

Also, Kristin Thompson’s definition of the television style helps to understand the connection between medium specificity and the audience’s experience of television, more specifically to television series. Television relies on programs with limited time and recurrence of commercials, which influences the production of the narratives and the edition of the content.

The breaks, planned for the insertion of ads, are often designed to raise the audience's curiosity and expectation, calling them to return even if they leave the room while the ads are being displayed. The gap generated during this time slot, which may be filled by the audience's imagination, helps the audience's engagement with the narrative.

Television narratives, which are serial as the short stories in literary magazines, also use different techniques to attract the audience and call them to return to the following episodes. One of them is the use of cliffhangers, sequences at the end of the episode with no conclusion, which are only answered in the following episode or season. They provoke the audience to return to the following episode or season, increasing the audience's connection with the narrative and the public fidelity.

Series also rely on repetition and redundancy as tools to reach both the audience that is following all the different plots and episodes and the newcomers, who may start to follow the narrative from a random episode and need to have the chance to understand it independently from the earlier episodes. These tools not only inform the newcomers but also reinforce the information already presented to the loyal audience, strengthening the bonds between the audience and the narrative. All narrative elements common in television influence the expectation connected to the practice of watching television, but they are as well "subject to permanent alteration" (VOIGTS, 2018, p. 313). Networks are focusing even more on specific segments of the audience with the development of more specific genres and programs, changing some narrative formats and conventions.

The adaptation of Sherlock Holmes to the TV series *Sherlock* was envisioned by the producers Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat, who name themselves as fans of Sherlock Holmes. Gatiss is part of the comedy team *The League of Gentleman* and besides producing and writing in *Sherlock*, he is an actor, writer, and producer in other series, plays, and films. Moffat is a scriptwriter and television producer who wrote several scripts as *Press Gang*, *Joking Apart*, *Chalk and Coupling*, together with some of the most remarkable episodes of *Doctor Who* (STAFFORD, 2015, p. 2). Gatiss and Moffat worked together in some episodes of the series *Doctor Who*, in BBC's studio in Cardiff when they had an idea of modernizing Holmes, as it was made in Basil Rathbone's films which were released between 1942 and 1947. From these initial discussions, they proposed a series of six 60-minutes episodes to BBC, which was later transformed into three 90-minutes episodes.

In the DVDs Extras, Steven Moffat comments that the modernization of Sherlock Holmes provided by the series "allows you to see the original stories the way the original reader

would have read them: as sort of, you know, exciting, cutting-edge, contemporary stories as opposed to these relics that they've become" (MOFFAT; GATISS, 2010). Different from some previous adaptations, which aim at time accuracy and focus on elements such as the fog, the gaslight lamps, and the Victorian atmosphere, *Sherlock* focuses on the relationship between Sherlock and John Watson, and their adventures. Nikki Stafford points out that this is the trademark of the show: "stay loyal to the source material, but give the longtime Holmes fans something new" (2015, p. 51) When the references to the source material described by Stafford are seen in Easter Eggs, they direct the audiences to the short stories and novels which compose the Canon, showing how an adaptation also changes the way that the hypertext is read.

One important element in *Sherlock* is the fast-paced rhythm. The title sequence, which, among a large number of shots, depicts London with a high-speed camera, introduces the setting of the series giving the impression that it is a computer-generated image, which shows the chaotic environment of the city while introducing the technological aspect of *Sherlock*. The state of agitation created by the rhythm is described by Joseph Pearse as "Our eyes are not allowed to rest on any image for more than a second or two, allowing the restless profusion of images to feed our frenzied addiction to incessant distraction and our disordered craving for attention-deficiency." (2017, n.p.) This rhythm is produced, among others, by the high-speed camera used in a large number of sequences throughout the series, most of the time to depict Sherlock's process of investigation implying his intelligence and capacity of quickly solving difficult cases. The fast-paced dialogues, usually including Sherlock, also highlight the detective's power of investigation.

Considering the importance of Sherlock Holmes to the detective genre, it can be said that most of the television crime series has in a certain way been influenced by his narratives, and present transtextual connection to his narratives, either as allusion, parody or modernization of the character or to his investigation method. Television crime series are popular in US and UK television, and each new series present new elements to the genre. Among them, some are adaptations of famous detectives, as *Miss Marple* (1984-1992), *Poirot* (1989-2013), *Father Brown* (2012-), *Murdoch Mysteries* (2008-), among others; some based on detective stories with new characters and settings, as *Monk* (2002-2009), *The Mentalist* (2008-2015), and some are police procedurals, like *CSI* (2000-2015). Some other series still use the main characteristics of detective stories applied in different genres, like *House* (2004-2012), which is a medical

series, in which the main character House uses investigation processes similar to Holmes in his practice²⁴. *Sherlock* is part of the context in which these series are popular and influence the horizon of expectations of the audience.

Sherlock, as a BBC series, presents several characteristics that are common to BBC series. BBC, the British Broadcasting Corporation, is a public institution founded in 1927. John Reith, subsequently Lord Reith, its first Director-General, set many guidelines for the company that are still present in today's productions. *Sherlock* is an original production of BBC One, which, according to its own Licence fee "is to be the BBC's most popular mixed-genre television service across the UK, offering a wide range of high quality programmes"(2016, p. 1). BBC One also intends to "broadcast programmes of large scale and ambition and should encourage innovation delivered in a way that appeals to a broad audience, taking creative risks and regularly experimenting with new talent and ideas" (2016, p. 2). *Sherlock* was originally aired on television on Sunday evening, and its narrative and aesthetics correspond to BBC One's main characteristics.

An adaptation of Sherlock Holmes also brings about expectations related both to the canonical text and to other adaptations, as it was already discussed in Chapter 1. *Sherlock*, specifically, as a series produced by two fans of Sherlock Holmes (who describe themselves as fans in the DVD extras) recognizes some of these expectations, referencing them in the series narratives. As fans, Gatiss and Moffat recognize and express some of the features that called them for this engagement with the detective, adding elements from their own contemporary context to the story and in the narrative and visual structure.

Differently from the short stories written by Doyle in which Watson narrates and directs the narrative, in *Sherlock* the audience has access to Sherlock's process of investigation through the on-screen text, camera angles, fast and slow camera movements, and voice-over narration. The "mind palace" – Sherlock's mind as he calls him – can be to some degree accessed by the audience, generating the impression of a relationship between the character and the audience. In *Sherlock*, the audience also has a chance to investigate the case with Sherlock and Watson – but different from the short stories in which Watson and the readers are always

²⁴ Polasek discusses the similarities between Holmes and House arguing that "[t]he construction of House M.D. is much closer to the mystery genre than to the medical genre, with each episode posing a diagnostic mystery and evidence that leads to the solution of the problem. However, it is the character of House—the name itself a sly tribute to Holmes—that actually draws from the Sherlock Holmes mythos." (386). It is also said that Sherlock Holmes was inspired in Doyle's professor Joseph Bell, a doctor, who used the evidences on his patients' bodies to imply their personal information and diagnose them before actually examining them.

one step behind the detective, in the series the audience is often seeing the clues with Sherlock and following all the information that he has to connect the dots.

In narratives, the engagement with the character is one of the ways in which the affective bond between the fan and the narrative is clearer. Talking specifically about television series, Jason Mittel points out that “one of the primary ways that viewers engage with programming is to develop long-term relationships with characters” (2012, p. 108), and this can be easily understood when considering the time one spends following the actions of a particular character when watching a television show or reading a series of short stories. Mittel still highlights that “[f]ans will frequently develop sincere emotional attachments to characters, designating particular figures as their “TV boyfriends/girlfriends” or cultivating hateful (but often pleasurable) antipathy toward a character” (2012, p. 108) – which can be seen in the context of *Sherlock* in the fans reactions posted on social media.

The relationship established between fans and the characters they admire is called in psychology “parasocial relationship”, a term coined by Donald Horton and Richard Wohl in the 1950s. Parasocial relationship, which is always one-directional, in which “the amount of information, whether factual or fictional, about the figures, have left in people’s minds an impression they somehow *know* the figure, just as they know individuals in their immediate social circles” (GILES, 2010, p. 443). The term is limited, as David Giles points out, since a proper relationship by its definition needs *reciprocity* – but it is helpful to understand fannish behavior other than a disturb. Parasocial relationships may happen with real personalities, real actors, fictional human characters or animated characters, and is expressed in different fan activities.

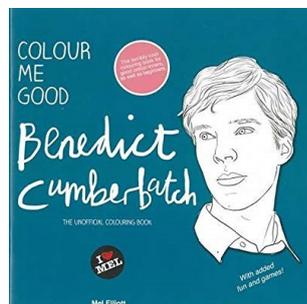
When discussing the role of the stars in films, Richard Dyer points out that “the pleasures of the human body—speaking, moving, placed on display—are what consciously draw viewers to film [...] as much as genre does, and much more than editing, camera position and lighting might” (2007, p. 50). In this sense, it can be seen that the acting of Cumberbatch is also responsible for the emotional bonds created by the fans – not only through his performance, and the lines spoke by him, but also his appearance, both physical features, and gestures associated with him.

Cumberbatch performed a few roles before *Sherlock*, but he undoubtedly became famous after playing the detective in *Sherlock*. Some marked characteristics of Sherlock – as

his intelligence, fast-speed dialogues, and anti-social behavior – can also be seen in characters performed by him as Khan in *Star Trek: Into Darkness* (2013), Alan Turing in *The Imitation Game* (2014), Stephen Strange in *Dr. Strange* (2016), and even the dragon Smaug in *The Hobbit* (2012, 2014, 2016) Trilogy (Cumberbatch’s movements were captured to create the dragon and his voice was recorded). All these films are associated with nerd culture and have fandoms of their own. As this dissertation is concerned with responses and reactions, it is important to consider that fan reactions are also related to how the audience builds a connection with the actor playing Sherlock – as, “[t]he 'truth' about a character's personality and the feelings which it evokes may be determined by what the reader takes to be the truth about the person of the star playing the part” (2007, p. 125).

In the television series, the parasocial relationship established with the actor Cumberbatch as Sherlock can be seen in the large group of female fans who call themselves “Cumberbitches” as a reference to Cumberbatch’s last name, for instance. Also, after Cumberbatch’s success in *Sherlock*, an unofficial coloring book with images of Cumberbatch called *Colour Me Good Benedict Cumberbatch* was published (Figure 8), making some references to his character in Sherlock. Next, it was published the *Mind Palace*, an official coloring book with images taken from the series (Figure 9) which presents different drawings of the character Sherlock. Even if the former refers to the actor and the later to the character, the physical appearance is the same, showing that the parasocial relationship may be both with the character and the actor playing it.

Figure 8 - Colour me Good – Benedict Cumberbatch



Source: Mel Elliott (ELLIOTT, 2014)

Figure 9 - Sherlock: The Mind Palace: A Coloring Book Adventure



Source: Amazon.com (2020)

Another official product developed to engage the fans and more enthusiastic members of the series is the game “The Game is Now”. In the game, the participants are involved in the

universe of the series, interacting with video recordings of the characters and having the opportunity to “step into the shoes of the legendary detective”, as the official website (<http://www.thegameisnow.com>) describes. Different from the other official products, “The Game is Now” gives an opportunity of a live immersion in settings related to the show while the participants engage in a new narrative in which they are part of the world of *Sherlock*.

In this description of the medium television, I considered only the offline experience of television and the experience proposed to the audience when only watching it independently. However, I recognize that only a small number of people watch the series on the television as a single experience – the experience is often related to the experiences lived on the internet and other media, either in reading news related to the series, watching extra material, discussing it online or engaging in fandom activities. The importance of the internet for the experience of *Sherlock* and its fandom is so marked that it needs a deeper description. Today, people not only watch television in their television sets relying on the schedule proposed by the networks (actually a smaller part of the audience of television series does that) – but they watch TV in different devices, like computers and cellphones, which provide a completely different experience of the narrative; or they watch them in online broadcasting systems. The use of these different devices enables the audience to use the internet and share information on social media while watching the show, interacting with the technical medium at the same time that the narrative is being displayed²⁵.

Also, online watching does not have the same structure of the commercial breaks, enabling the users to watch the entire content without external interruption, while they can pause the video to return later if they have to. When watching *Sherlock* on Netflix, for instance, one can perceive some sequences that were intended to work as cliffhangers inside the episode in the television broadcasting, leaving the audience curious to return after the commercial break and with some minutes to fill in the blanks with their expectation. As there are no commercial breaks on Netflix, the responses to the cliffhanger are immediate, providing a different narrative

²⁵ *Sherlock* is broadcasted to England and other countries through Netflix, which enables the user to change the language, pause the episode to return later and to watch one episode right after the other. In this sense, online broadcasting systems such as *Amazon Prime* also offer the information of the actor’s names and a link to the information of the series posted on the website IMDB while the narrative is developing. In this case, the audience not only follows the narrative but also the technical and critical information connected to it, interacting with the media while the story is being told and shown.

experience (even if the images and the audio are the same). This also happens when people watch recorded series on DVDs. Although they can use the same technical medium as the broadcasted series, the experience of watching them is different.

Moreover, online watching or the use of DVD recordings enables binge-watching, the practice of watching a succession of episodes following one another. This practice has influenced the way some series are produced and structured, mainly those produced by the online broadcasting systems themselves. On one hand, when binge-watching, the repetition and redundancy of the network series are not necessary anymore, as the audience would have the previous information fresh in their memories. On the other hand, as people follow the entire season or series in a shorter period, with less repetition and recurrence, the attachment to the narrative, mainly to the characters, is decreasing. When following a series in a television set, the audience has to wait for one week (sometimes more) to watch a new episode and a longer period for a new season. Often, networks would present again previous episodes when new ones are not available, allowing the audience to create a long-term relationship with the narratives.

In the analysis of the series episode, the elements of narrative, language, visuals, and sound are studied. The narrative of the series has significant use of flashbacks, often showing how the events developed before the investigation that constitutes the main plot of the episode. The visuals and the language invite the audience to play detection together with Sherlock, giving visual and textual clues to the conclusions of the crimes. The editing of the series with the use of resources such as high-speed camera and onscreen text present Sherlock's process of investigation and some of his inner thoughts, allowing the audience to follow him in his mental processes, while the other characters have no access to this information. The sound, either in the dialogues, diegetic sounds or in the extradiegetic music, produces meanings and influences the understanding of the narrative.

In the same manner that Doyle's stories begin with the first meeting between Holmes and Watson, *Sherlock's* first episode "A Study in Pink" narrates the beginning of Sherlock and Watson's partnership. This first episode is important to understand the series as it not only introduces the main characters and the show, but also the setting, the aesthetics, its concept and set the tone for the other narratives. The first sequence of the episode introduces John Watson, his blog, and his difficulty to adapt to civilian life after some years fighting in the Afghan War. The sequence is composed of three different moments: the first shots, with soldiers in a battle, in a realistic shooting; Watson waking up in his bedroom, working in his blog; and a therapy

section, in which the therapist encourages Watson to keep a blog as a way to return to ordinary life. The elements of the *mise-en-scène* (Watson's mug, with the Royal Army Medical's insignia, his gun, his laptop, and telephone) introduce the diegetic context of the narrative: the contemporary London. At the end of the sequence, Watson's complaint to his therapist, "nothing interesting happens to me" suggests that the series will present adventures that will be his inspiration to write. The first sequence of each episode is thrilling anticipation of the mystery analyzed in the narrative, teasing the audience to follow the entire plot.

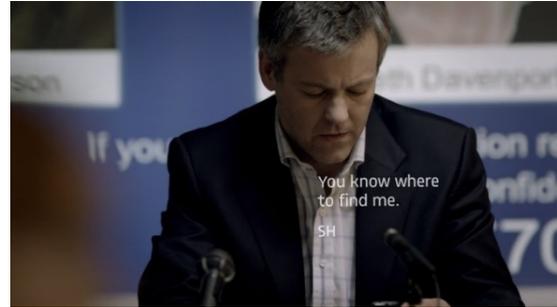
After the title sequence, other important narrative elements are introduced: the characters Lestrade and the police members, the personality of Sherlock Holmes, and the mystery that should be investigated in this specific episode. Besides, specific elements of editing are introduced, as the use of text onscreen to imply what the characters are reading or typing. In this episode, three suicides are committed in a little interval for three people that were not related, in circumstances that seemed to have no connection to them. After the third suicide, which was committed by a minister, inspector Lestrade gives a press conference about the weird circumstances of them, implying that there might be a connection between them. When he finishes his sentence, all the press members receive an SMS saying "wrong!", which is displayed on the screen as they read it (Figure 10). When the interview continues, two other questions and answers are followed by the same text messages to the press, which appear onscreen to the audience. The last one, different from the previous, is followed by a personal message to Lestrade: "You know where to find me. SH" (Figure 11), revealing the authorship of the previous one and expressing how Sherlock Holmes is ahead of the police investigation. SMS texting is recurrent in the series, as an update of the telegrams sent by Holmes. The strategy of showing the text messages on screen is used in different contexts in the entire, enabling the audience to follow the events as people receive and send messages.

Figure 10 - The press members receive an SMS message and the text appears onscreen



Source: Sherlock (2010)

Figure 11 - Inspector Lestrade's SMS message also displayed onscreen



Source: Sherlock (2010)

Onscreen text is also used to enable the audience to follow Sherlock's process of investigation. In "A Study in Pink", for instance, the first sequence in which Holmes investigates a crime is related to the fourth supposed suicide of a woman. The sequence demonstrates which details Holmes use to make his conclusions on her personality and career, giving the audience the elements to follow his investigation and draw their own conclusions. This sequence shows the woman's body from different focalizers: Sherlock, Watson, and Lestrade. The investigation begins with a close shot of Holmes, indicating that it is his perspective that will follow (Figure 12). Seen from Holmes' perspective, the extreme close-up of her nails (Figure 13), clothes (Figure 14), and ring (Figure 15) are details that reveal aspects of her personality. A text with Holmes' conclusions on his investigations floats onscreen, describing visually his thoughts and conclusions. Even when he relies on online research to find the weather forecast his research terms and the results appear as text (Figure 16 and Figure 17) to explain his later conclusion. When Watson, or Lestrade, focalizes the body, no text or reference appears onscreen, showing that they are unable to see the same details as Sherlock (and the audience).

Figure 12 - Shot of Holmes indicating that his perspective will follow



Source: Sherlock (2010)

Figure 13 – Onscreen text indicating Holmes' conclusion



Source: Sherlock (2010)

Figure 14 – Onscreen text indicating Holmes' observations



Source: Sherlock (2010)

Figure 15 – Onscreen text indicating Holmes' conclusions



Source: Sherlock (2010)

Figure 16 - Onscreen text shows what Sherlock is accessing on his mobile



Source: Sherlock (2010)

Figure 17 - The Highlighted text indicates the link that was accessed by Holmes



Source: Sherlock (2010)

This pattern of texts revealing the information typed on mobile or notebooks continues in the subsequent episodes, as well as the texts revealing Sherlock's process of investigation. Although this information could have been displayed showing the SMSs in the characters' phones, for instance, the onscreen text enables the audience to see the characters and their reactions while they receive messages and use their devices. In a context in which people are used to seeing people using so many different screens without learning what they are doing, enabling the audience to learn their content approximates them to the narrative characters.

Another cinematic resource used in the series to reveal Sherlock's process of investigation is the use of a high-speed camera when he is narrating his perspective of the events. In "A Study in Pink", the high-speed camera slows the character's actions in the sequence in which Sherlock, in the cab, explains how he identified some of John Watson's characteristics. While he points out the details that led him to his conclusions, the same sequence of their first meeting is presented but this time with a different speed, focusing and emphasizing the aspects pinpointed by Sherlock in a voice-over narration. Besides the change in speed, the camera turns around the characters and zooms in and out, showing different angles that were not seen in the sequence of their meeting. With the use of the cinematic resources described above, the audience not only listens to Sherlock explaining his conclusion but also have access to each step that led him to his conclusions.

Television programs such as *Sherlock* use narratives to engage the audiences not only to watch the show but also to get involved in internet discussions. Sharon Marie Ross, researching on the audience of the series *Lost*, found out a "perception among my sci-fi/fantasy fan respondents that the relationship between this genre and its success on the Internet involved a complicated narrative requiring attentive viewing, and a continued stigmatization of the genre that breeds fierce loyalty and a need to find fellow 'geeks and outcasts'" (2008, p. 181). By conducting the audience in Sherlock's investigation and posing different puzzles that can be discussed and solved by a community of fans, *Sherlock* also points out to internet forums, blogs, and websites. When *Sherlock* engages the audience in Sherlock's process of investigation, the narrative resembles a 'game', played by the audience and the characters in the series, in which they must solve first the mystery and find the hidden meanings.

Sherlock Holmes and the other characters created by Doyle are known by so many people that adaptations need to address the audience's expectations, either to confirm or to negate them. As people would expect Holmes' companion to be a doctor, his brother Mycroft to be involved in the British government and his nemesis, Moriarty, to be a criminal version of

himself, an adaptation as *Sherlock* cannot be understood without considering these expectations. Aware of that, the narrative of *Sherlock* plays with the audience's expectation by using gaps and negation, as described by Iser. One example is seen in "A Study in Pink" when Watson meets Mycroft for the first time. At first, Watson is conducted to a conversation with someone whose name is not mentioned, who described himself as someone Sherlock considers as an "enemy" and who offers him money to give information about the detective. As the audience has not yet been introduced to all the characters in the series, and with the content of their conversation, one may conclude that it is Moriarty who is talking to him. Only at the end of the episode, Sherlock presents the same man as his brother Mycroft, negating this possible interpretation.

For a public that already knows Sherlock Holmes from Doyle's short stories, finding out that the man who was talking to Watson is Mycroft rather than Moriarty raises the expectation of the appearance of Holmes' nemesis. The name Moriarty is first mentioned in the first episode of the series, when a taxi driver, found guilty of many crimes, says that Moriarty is financing his crimes. The instigation continues at the end of the second episode, "The Blind Banker" when Shan, the criminal behind the murders under investigation talks online with "M" (that we know it is Moriarty based on his characteristics). In the third episode, Sherlock and Moriarty finally meet. Moriarty plays a very important role in the series – he is mentioned in each episode from season one and in two episodes from season two, returning in some episodes in the last two seasons.

Throughout the series, it can be seen that Moriarty knows a lot about Sherlock, and follows his steps (as a fan would do). According to Ellen Burton Harrington, "[b]y making Moriarty both an admiring playful fan author and the series' terrorist-villain, Moffat and Gatiss highlight his ambiguity; the crimes that Moriarty scripts fascinate Sherlock, but the gleeful violence he perpetrates alludes to the human toll of uncontrolled terror" (2012, p. 73). As in Doyle's narratives he appears only twice, it can be seen that *Sherlock* used an expansion (2007, p. 99) adding other narratives in which the character is inserted. According to Leitch, this adaptation technique is very common in series but not so common in the film adaptation (as films have less narrative time and usually have to compress information, and Leitch is concerned mainly with cinema). A TV series gives room to this technique as it presents narratives that evolve in a larger number of episodes, enabling new micro narratives to be

inserted in. As it is also, in Leitch's term, an "updating" (99), the themes and issues that accompany the character are different from Doyle's text.

"The Reichenbach Falls" is narrated through flashbacks, using the same narrative resource as Doyle in "The Final Problem". As it happens with the other episodes, the first sequence before the title sequence introduces the theme and the mood of the narrative. It begins with a close-up of John Watson, presenting him as the focalizer of the story. With a long shot, it can be seen that he is in a therapy session, on a rainy day. The dialogue indicated that he has suffered some loss recently, and refuses to vocalize what happened. When questioned, Watson asks the therapist if she has seen the news, and if she knows what happened. When Watson begins to tell in a paused manner that his "best friend, Sherlock Holmes is dead", a sad and emotional extradiegetic music sets a sad mood to the scene. When he finishes his line, the show opening song starts to play, indicating that the episode will narrate how that happened.

In "The Final Problem", Sherlock's popularity is highlighted by a large number of references to the news related to him in the newspapers. The news shows his extraordinary intelligence and his ability to solve different crimes while it exposes the character's lack of social tact (as he complains about the gifts he gets for solving the crimes). Also, they mirror the increasing popularity of the character (and the show) in current news and online publications. References to newspapers and publications are also present in the short story "The Final Problem", which was previously discussed. Besides that, these references remind the importance of newspapers to Sherlock Holmes, as the stories of the canon were published in magazines and the detective popularity increased aided by the newspaper articles.

In this episode, Moriarty tries to ruin Sherlock's reputation with a complex plan, which is defined by him as "The Final Problem". At the beginning of the episode, Moriarty gets the Crown and the Royal Jewelry at the Tower of London at the same time that he opens the safe of the Bank of England and the cells of Pentonville Press with his cellphone, indicating that he has the power to break in everywhere he wants. He walks free from his trial and visits Sherlock to announce his revenge. After solving a complex kidnapping case orchestrated by Moriarty, the police force starts to wonder if Sherlock was not the mind behind the crimes, and question him, believing that he is a fraud. The episode's plot is different from the short story's narrative: while both show Moriarty persecuting Sherlock Holmes to as he tries to catch his crime network, in the short story this persecution is surrounded by guns and tracks, with Moriarty chasing Holmes through Europe to kill him whereas in the series Moriarty uses media to ruin Sherlock's reputation to finally threaten him to kill himself to prove that he was a fraud. This

difference is very important as it shows how one's image in the media is so important in the current context that Moriarty finds more relevant to ruin Sherlock's reputation than killing him.

After his trial, Moriarty goes to 221B to expose his aim of destroying Sherlock Holmes' reputation. A conversation between Moriarty and Sherlock Holmes in Holmes' apartment also happens in the short story "The Final Problem". In both, the conversation reveals Moriarty's intelligence and discontent with Sherlock Holmes' investigation and marks the beginning of the detective scape from the criminal's revenge. In the series, when Watson announces that he was considered not guilty, Sherlock predicts Moriarty's visit and makes tea to wait for him. In this sequence, after boiling the water, Sherlock starts to play his violin. The shadow of Moriarty in his door appears (Figure 18 and Figure 19) while the violin continues to play, and an extreme close up of Moriarty's feet shows him going up in the stairs (Figure 20). In this first moment, Moriarty's face is not seen, indicating his ability to remain hidden, as well as mirroring his plan to expose Sherlock as a fraud while he remains in the shadows. Moriarty enters when a close up of Sherlock's face indicates that he is the one focalizing the sequence, while Moriarty is blurred on the background (Figure 22). Only when he answers Sherlock, his face is revealed (Figure 23), indicating his power to remain in the shadows when he wants to. The dialogue follows, when Moriarty gets an apple and, with a knife, seems to peel it (at the end of the sequence he reveals that he was written in it the letters "I" "O" "U", meaning "I owe you", the reason given by him to persecute Sherlock). They talk while have their teas, revealing how the jury was threatened and Moriarty implies that he has a code that can open all doors and safes. This sequence can be paralleled with a game of chess in which one player makes a move, leaves the turn to the other, and waits for the defense/attack.

Figure 18 - An extreme close-up shows that Sherlock's door is opened



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 19 - Shadows show someone unidentified entering



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 20 - The camera follows the person's feet rather than his face



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 21 - Even when Moriarty walks in, he is blurred in the background



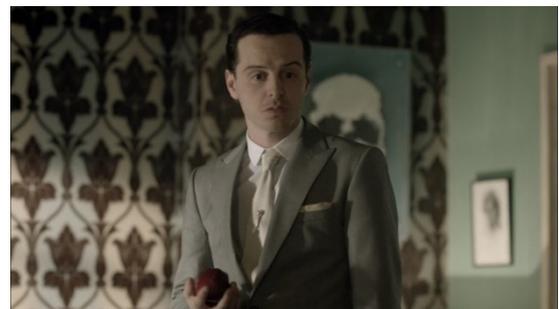
Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 22 - Sherlock talks to Moriarty, but his face is still hidden



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 23 - When Moriarty answers to Sherlock, his face is revealed



Source: Sherlock (2012)

In a composition of thrilling sequences, the narrative of the final conversation between Sherlock and Moriarty at the top of the building is full of references to earlier episodes. For instance, when Sherlock arrives, Moriarty is listening to “Staying Alive”, the song recorded by The Bee Gees, which is also played in the first episode of the season, “A Scandal in Belgravia”.

In the first moment, which is the first encounter between them, Sherlock is pointing a gun at Moriarty, when he is interrupted by the music, which is Moriarty's income call song. In the rooftop, the song is a reference to the relationship between them, marked by investigations and threats – a reminder to the audience of the events that happened between the characters. Moriarty even uses the lyrics to talk about the reason why they were there, as Sherlock would be asked to commit suicide while Moriarty threatens to kill Ms. Hudson, Watson, and Lestrade.

While Sherlock and Moriarty discuss, with Moriarty exposing his plans and threatening Sherlock, the detective goes to the edge of the building. In a close-up shot, his expression turns from anxious to thoughtful, and he starts to laugh. Moriarty asks what he is laughing at and he answers "I don't have to die ... if I've got you", implying that he has a plan to save his friends without killing himself. Moriarty pretends that Sherlock has won, and, when they shake hands, he shoots himself, showing how far he could get to destroy Sherlock. With Moriarty's suicide, Sherlock realizes that he has to jump to save his friends as Moriarty could not call the killers to cancel their plan. At this moment, Watson arrives in a cab and sees Sherlock at the top of the building. The detective calls him, says goodbye, explains that this is his suicide note and jumps. The body reaches the ground, and Watson tries to focus on Sherlock and gets close to him. Sherlock has disappeared at the end of the fall from Watson's sight as there was a building between them. When Watson tries to get closer, a man on a bicycle hits him, and his head hits the floor. Some doctors reach Sherlock's body and prevent people from getting closer.

In this sequence that lasts fifteen minutes, the cinematic elements such as camera angles and movements are part of the clues of what happened to Sherlock. The sequence begins with a long shot with Jim Moriarty in the center of the frame, surrounded by a blue sky and the city landscape (Figure 24). With the sound of the song "Staying Alive", the camera moves right to reveal Sherlock in the right corner opening the door and entering the sequence, introducing the setting (Figure 25). A camera behind Sherlock focuses on Moriarty in the background, listening to the song on his cell phone (Figure 26). The dialogue begins and the camera follows Sherlock, showing his perspective of the events (Figure 27).

Figure 24 - A long shot introduces the setting of the sequence



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 25 - The camera moves right, revealing Sherlock on the background



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 26 - Sherlock's perspective



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 27 - The camera follows Sherlock as he approaches Moriarty



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Throughout the sequence, multiple perspectives and angles are adopted, revealing details of their positions and gestures. A low-angle framing, for instance, shows how Sherlock would be probably seen from the street. This shot is important as it represents how people would see him and what they could not see, giving another important information to understand how he survived. One of these people is John Watson, who should believe in his suicide so that the killer hired by Moriarty would not kill him. In the supposed suicide call, Sherlock insists that John Watson should remain exactly where he was, revealing that the place from which he watches the fall is important.

Figure 28 - A low-angle camera shows how peasants would see Sherlock from the street



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Another important element in this conversation is the use of parallel montage, which clarifies what happened in earlier sequences or gives information about what is happening while the characters are talking. For instance, an extreme close-up in Sherlock's hands (Figure 29) shows that he is imitating the same rhythm that Moriarty played with his hands in their conversation in 221B Baker Street. With a flashback, this fragment of the sequence is repeated but with the numbers "0" and "1" in the screen as Moriarty beats him or rests, interpreting the information that was visually giving (Figure 30). This leads to a shot-reverse-shot conversation about the code, with Moriarty affirming that there is no code, only the rhythm of Bach's Partita no 1. Moriarty reveals that he used some other people to conduct his daylight robbery, and some shots show members of the security team working for him.

Figure 29 - An extreme close-up shows Sherlock repeating Moriarty's code



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 30 - A flashback shows onscreen information interpreting Moriarty's code



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Another example is a parallel montage that shows Watson, Lestrade, and Miss Hudson and their actions while the conversation between Moriarty and Sherlock on the rooftop continues. With Sherlock's reluctance on jumping off the building, and Sherlock's threat to push him from the building, Moriarty threatens to kill them, and it can be seen the killers next to them ready to follow Moriarty's orders. When the conversation continues and Sherlock concludes that there is a call-off to his plan, which involves Moriarty's order, Moriarty gets a revolver and shoots himself to prevent Sherlock to pause his plan (Figure 31). Shots from the killers surrounding Watson (Figure 32), Miss Hudson (Figure 33), and Lestrade (Figure 34) are shown in a subsection of parallel montage, increasing the tension of the sequence. The music is also an important element, as it expresses the danger that is increasing. As Moriarty killed himself, Sherlock can only save his friends if he jumps from the building.

Figure 31 - When Moriarty kills himself, Sherlock wonders what he should do



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 32 - A parallel montage shows the killers targeting John...



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 33 - ... Miss Hudson ...



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 34 - ... and Lestrade



Source: Sherlock (2012)

The music plays an important role in the rooftop sequence, changing the tone of the narrative, and influencing the effects of the narrative. The dialogue begins only with contextual

noise, as distant cars and the city noises. When Sherlock starts to expose his theories of the code, extradiegetic grave music starts to introduce a dramatic tone to the conversation. The parallel montages are framed by the song that is used in most of the sequences with adventure and persecution, implying danger and showing that something might really happen. When Sherlock laughs and says that he believes that Moriarty has a call-off, the song changes from a dramatic violin song to the theme song, which is often played when the character solves a case. A sad violin plays when Sherlock approaches the ledge and jumps.

The fall properly takes less than ten seconds and is followed by the recognition of the body. First, a shot shows Sherlock jumping from behind, indicating how he would be seen if someone (or a camera) were watching him from the rooftop (Figure 35). After this, the fall is seen only as it would be seen from the street, both in John's perspective (Figure 36) and from the perspective of someone who would be closer to the building (Figure 37). Right after that, a body is seen hitting the ground, but it is out of focus, with no clear identification (Figure 38). Watson is tricked to believe that Sherlock jumped and died, and the audience, who follows his sight of the scene, is led to the same conclusion.

Figure 35 - Sherlock as he would be seen from the rooftop Figure 36 - The fall from John's perspective



Source: Sherlock (2012)



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 37 - A low-angle framing of the fall from the perspective of someone on the street



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 38 - An out-of-focus body is seen in the ground right after the fall



Source: Sherlock (2012)

When the body falls, Watson cannot see it because of his location. He tries to get closer (Figure 39), but he is hit by a bicycle, and falls, hitting his head. Before being hit, he only gets a glimpse of the body, and the body cannot be identified as it is behind a truck (Figure 40). When Watson falls, the sounds and the blurred camera indicate that he is not fully aware, as his head hits the ground (Figure 41). A high-angle shot shows the body and people getting close to it, with two nurses trying to contain them (Figure 42). Watson sees from the ground their actions and gets up to get close to him. The blurred images, the distorted sound, and the unconventional camera movements reveal that he has not recovered completely from the fall. Parts of Sherlock's body are shown, but with the images, there can be no conclusion about what happened to him. As Watson approaches the body, the scene gets out of focus, and the music gets more emotional. He takes Sherlock's pulse, assuring that he is dead (Figure 43). Another high-angle shot shows the body being removed from the ground (Figure 44). With Sherlock's supposed suicide, the killer targeting Watson (Figure 45) removes his gun from the window and walks away (Figure 46).

Figure 39 - Watson tries to get close to Sherlock, but is hit by a bike



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 40 - At first, Watson only sees Sherlock's body behind a truck



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 41 - Shot of Watson when he hits his head on the ground



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 42 - A high-angle shot shows people getting close to the body



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 43 - Watson takes Sherlock's pulse, assuring that he is dead



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 44 - A high-angle camera shows the body being removed



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 45 - The sequence ends with the killer's target ...



Source: Sherlock (2012)

Figure 46 - ... With the supposed suicide, he gets his weapon and walks away.



Source: Sherlock (2012)

With the sequence of Watson's actions (trying to get closer, measuring the body's pulse, etc.), it is possible to conclude that Sherlock is dead. However, the last sequence of the episode assures that it is not so, negating the probable conclusion of the fall from the building. It presents Ms. Hudson and Watson at the cemetery saying goodbye to the detective, possibly after his funeral. Mrs. Hudson leaves Watson alone to say his last words and, after an emotional speech he asks Sherlock to be alive. When he leaves the grave, a camera movement reveals Sherlock, who is hidden behind a tree, looking at him. The episode (and the season) ends with no explanation of how Sherlock survived, leaving this question open to the audience.

The analysis of the narratives, language, and, in the series, the visual and sound elements used in the episode of the supposed death of Sherlock Holmes show how these narrative elements lead the receivers to certain reactions. While Watson's narrative in the short story sets a tone of mourning from its first words, it also encourages the readers to follow the narrative by enhancing their curiosity with a delay in the narration of the proper events. The references to publications in newspapers and the description of Moriarty justify and state that Holmes' death was real, giving no room for speculation, despite the possible reaction of the readers. The series also enhances the audience's curiosity by leaving different visual and verbal clues about Sherlock's survival – gaps (as defined by Iser) that are not filled by textual elements in this episode. The lack of an explanation or conclusion leaves the task of creating a reasonable explanation to the audience, working as a gap and a hook to the following season. “The Reichenbach Falls”, different from “The Final Problem” includes some investigations made by Sherlock, allowing the audience to solve the mysteries with the detective and narrative elements of the series, such as the texts revealing the clues that Sherlock is investigating, shows that the

audience is invited to follow the process of investigation as it happens. Some narrative events can be seen as “negation”, as defined by Iser, directing the readers to certain responses and strengthening the bonds between the readers/audience and the fictional world. Thus, one can see that the texts themselves call for certain responses, showing how the author and the producers influence the receivers’ responses and behaviors related to the texts.

Aiming to investigate the mediation of reviewers and journalists in this process, the following chapter analyzes different reviews, articles, and notes published both in Doyle’s and in Moffat and Gatiss’ time related to the supposed death of Sherlock Holmes. As some of them show the journalists also as fans, they illustrate how these spaces offered to the readers in the short story and to the audience in the series are filled by actual receivers.

3 “Everyone is a Critic”: Analysis of the critical reception of “The Final Problem” and “The Reichenbach Falls”

In “The Empty Hearse”, Sherlock tells Anderson not only about his fall and survival in St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, but also the incredulity and criticism with which his story was received. Sherlock’s answer to Anderson’s reaction – “Everyone is a critic!” (*Sherlock* 2014) – is a mirror of all sorts of criticism published either online or in print in different newspapers and magazines, which often gives evaluation focused on narrative content that can be based on technical criteria or personal opinions by various reviewers. More than that, the critical responses published by the media not only show different aspects of the narrative but also reveal important contextual issues and how media portrays and mediates the relationship with fans. Considering the large number of comments, editorials, letters, news, reviews and reactions to both narratives – the short story and the episode discussed in the previous chapter –, this chapter focuses on the responses to them published in newspapers and magazines, both contemporary to the publication of the short story and to the series.

As articles, reviews and interviews not only respond to the narrative content but also reveal how newspapers and magazines mediate the relationship between narrative production and reception, by analyzing the responses to both Doyle’s “The Final Problem” and Gatiss and Moffatt’s “The Reichenbach Fall”, this chapter highlights the associations between media producers, media critics, and reception. The critical pieces chosen for analysis – a sample of the discussions which surround Doyle’s writings and Gatiss and Moffatt’s production – point out similarities and differences between their respective responses in Victorian times and our contemporary time. The comparison between audiences’ responses in these two different historical moments gives a perspective on how people consume and interact with media in different historical periods. Considering the focus of this dissertation, the portrayal of fans and fan activity regarding Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes and Gatiss and Moffatt’s adaptation, this study will highlight the importance of the media on the connection between the literary and TV narratives and their respective fans.

When analyzing the reception of the television series *Sherlock* published in different newspapers, Paul Rixon points out the importance of critics to understand the broader cultural context of media production. In his perspective, “by analyzing television reviews and associated critical articles, we can gain an insight into how a society values, reflects on and struggles over the meaning of television as a cultural medium, and how this relates to wider ideological,

cultural, and social questions.” (2012, p. 166) The main themes pointed out by critics and their judgment on a series cannot be considered only a question of personal taste as they are also related to those other questions pointed out by Rixon. What he sees as a feature of television reception is also relevant for the magazine articles in Doyle’s time: the analysis of the literary criticism presented in Victorian newspapers is also relevant for understanding wider cultural and social questions at the time.

As in contemporary media, in which newspapers and magazines follow and promote cultural conversations, in Doyle’s context newspapers already formed “a sort of debate forum” (KLIMCHYNSKAYA, 2017, p. xv). This mediatic debate was so important that Klimchynskaya points out that “[i]t is newspapers – the mass media of the Victorian period – that allowed for Sherlock Holmes’ rise in popularity; without them, he likely would not have become the phenomenon that he is” (2017, p. vii). Studying newspaper and magazine publications of the period, thus, according to her, is

revelatory of his significance to Victorian culture (...) since Holmes was a sort of Victorian Internet phenomenon, the newspapers offered a perfect starting point to explore both the nature of this phenomenon and Holmes’ cultural significance, made visible by the public’s response when he was killed (2017, p. xv).

Klimchynskaya also argues that the connection between the press in Doyle’s time and today’s media context is not only related to the debates in them. She points out a connection in today’s fiction with newspapers, as she reminds us that “Nineteenth century newspapers were a primary medium for fiction, and these fictions often relied on eliciting emotion in the reader to keep them coming back for more issues. In fact, many of the tricks of film and television today (...) can be attributed to nineteenth century serialized fiction” (2017, p. ix). Comparing and contrasting these Victorian publications with contemporary criticism enlightens the understanding of the relationship between media production, consumption, and reception.

In this dissertation, publications of the Victorian Period and in contemporary newspapers and magazines concerning the great and the small hiatus were analyzed comparatively. Concerning “The Final Problem”, 90 notes, articles, reviews, and editorials from September 30, 1893, to March 21, 1894, were considered. All these publications are included in Mattias Boström and Matt Laffey’s *Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle in the*

*Newspapers*²⁶ volumes 3 (July-December 1983 published in 2017) and volume 4 (January-June 1894 published in 2019), which present a collection of the articles found in newspapers of several English speaking countries contemporary to Doyle’s publications. The articles, notes, and reviews were selected based on their specific references to Sherlock Holmes’s death. Some of them were published in one newspaper and reprinted in another – as the “Literary Notes”, which was first published in the *New York Tribune* on October 15, 1893, and later published in *The Daily Picayune* on October 24, 1893, as well as in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, on November 5, 1893. In this case, only the first publication is considered, and the other publications which replicate the same content are not included in the number of articles above mentioned. Concerning *Sherlock*, 69 articles, reviews, interviews, and notes from different magazines and newspapers which were published or republished online were considered for analysis, based on a search in newspaper search engines. These different publications include only online magazines and newspapers, as the inclusion of other materials such as fan sites or offline content would be a large selection far beyond the scope of this dissertation. The articles, reviews, and interviews were published from January 12, 2012, to January 1, 2014, when “The Empty Hearse” was released. The reviews published after that date are discussed in chapter 4.

Considering the importance of the mediatic debate in the understanding of media production and consumption, this chapter is divided into five main sub-sections. The first one presents an overview of the events related to the publication of the short story “The Final Problem” and the beginning of the period known as the great hiatus, followed by an overview of the period between the broadcasting of “The Reichenbach Fall” and “The Empty Hearse”, giving a contextualization to the debates that are present in the different articles, interviews, and reviews. This overview includes a summary of the strategies used by the production team of *Sherlock* to promote the series. Then, the mediatic responses are discussed comparatively, divided into other three sub-sections: one focuses on the criticism related to the narratives themselves, one on the author/producers and how the media responds and addresses them, and other on the reception, including the understanding of the role of fans and their behavior. Comparing and contrasting them in the Victorian period and in contemporary times enables one to see how they changed and these changes help to reveal the importance of media consumption. The final sub-section focuses on the theories created both in the Victorian press and in the contemporary moment concerning the detective’s death. This analysis reveals different aspects

²⁶ In this chapter, the page numbers related to the publications in the newspapers are references to their publication in *Sherlock Holmes in the Newspapers vol 3* (2017) and *vol 4* (2019).

of the relationship between author, receiver, and media and how they help to build the universe of Sherlock Holmes and of *Sherlock*.

3.1 Timeline of “The Final Problem” and “The Reichenbach Fall”

In 1893, when “The Final Problem” was published, Doyle was an important and famous figure in literary circles in London. Besides the monthly contributions to *The Strand* of his famous detective short stories, he also published two novels – *The Gully of Bluemansdyke* and *The Refugees: A Tale of Two Continents*; his play, *Jane Annie or the Good Conduct Prize*, written with J. M. Barrie, was onstage; and he was lecturing about contemporary English literature to different publics. Publications in newspapers at the time not only informed and evaluated his literary achievements but also gossiped about his sister’s marriage or his defense of prize-ring²⁷, showing that he was some kind of celebrity whose personal life and opinions were published in mass media. Some articles praised Doyle for his detective stories while others defined them as minor works as compared to his other literary achievements. In this context, Doyle decided to publish “The Final Problem” as a way to stop writing detective stories²⁸.

Before the publication of “The Final Problem”, some newspapers and magazines published notes or included some sentences in their articles announcing Doyle’s decision. The first publication identified in this research that anticipates the death of the character was in the column “Literary Notes”, from *The Pall Mall Gazette* on September 30. In this period, other short stories with the detective were being published: the September issue of *The Strand* included the short story “The Greek Interpreter”, the October issue published the short story

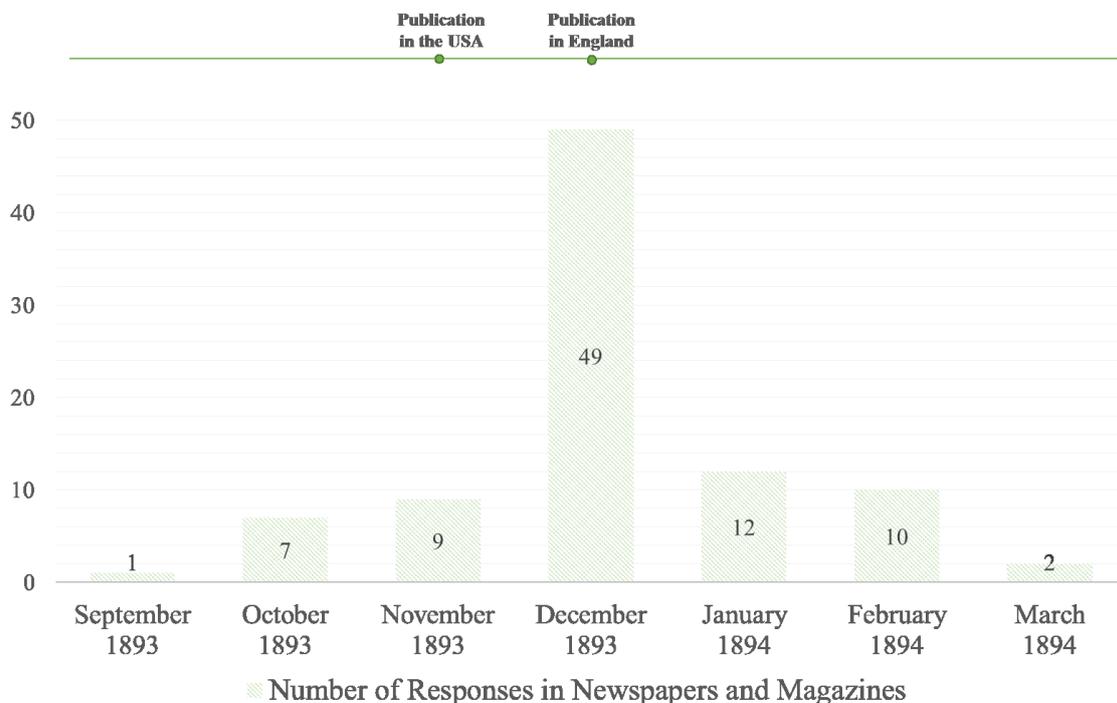
²⁷ From this on, references to the newspapers will be given to the volumes 3 and 4 of Mattias Boström and Matt Laffey’s collection, which encompasses July – December 1893 and January – June 1894 as a recognition to the importance of their work in Holmesian Studies. About his sister’s marriage, they include the “Literary Gossip” in *The Sydney Morning Herald* in September 23, 1893, the column “Our London Correspondence” in *The Glasgow Herald*, “Here and There” in *South Wales Echo*, both in September 28, 1893, “People and Things” in *The Lincolnshire Echo* in September 29, 1893 among others. The marriage was reported probably because she was Doyle’s sister, as it had no apparent other important or unusual feature to be discussed by newspapers. The polemic about prize-ring is discussed in “Conan Doyle Defends Prize Fighting”, in *The Chicago Daily Tribune* in December 10 and “The Prize Ring”, published in *The Derby Daily Telegraph* in December 13, 1893, quoting Doyle in his praise for prize-ring as an ancient and heroic institution as a response given in an article published in the “Chronicle” that said that “the prize ring never produced heroic qualities” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 158).

²⁸ In a letter addressed to Mary Doyle, his mother, on April 6, 1893, Arthur Conan Doyle wrote: “I am in the middle of the last Holmes story, after which the gentleman vanishes, never never to reappear. I am weary of his name” (LELLENBERG; STASHOWER; FOLEY, 2007, p. 319).

“The Naval Treaty” and only on the December issue, “The Final Problem” was published. The fifteen publications studied in this dissertation that anticipate the plot of Holmes’ decease show that even in the Victorian period readers had access to spoilers – and that even knowing in advance that the detective would probably die did not prevent them from reading the story.

“The Final Problem” was first published in the USA, and only in December it was published in London. As it is described in details in the previous chapter, it narrates how Sherlock Holmes is persecuted by Professor James Moriarty, a great criminal mind and ends with Watson assuming that the detective fell from a waterfall in Reichenbach, as the footsteps in the way indicated two men going to the edge of the fall and none returning. In the period between November and December 1893, five North American newspapers reviewed the short story, which corresponds to a period before the publication of “The Final Problem” in London. The differences in the nationalities of the newspapers and magazines are connected to the different themes present in them, as is discussed below. The publication in London was followed by a publication in other English speaking countries such as Australia and New Zealand. The timeline below illustrates how the publications followed in the period.

Figure 47 - Graphic representation of the timeline of "The Final Problem"



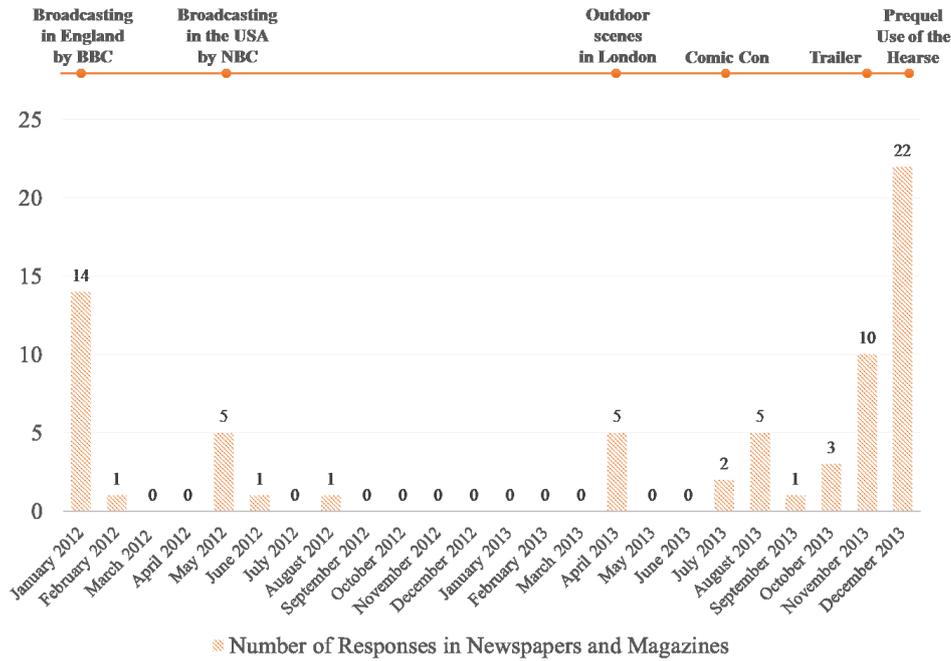
“The Reichenbach Fall” was broadcasted by BBC on January 15, 2012. When the episode was aired, there was no certainty if the series would have the following season. On

January 16, 2012, one day after the final episode of season two, BBC News published an article informing that the series would return. The return of the series was also confirmed by Moffat in his personal twitter account, which was reported by Liz Thomas (2012) for the *Daily Mail*. In July 2013, a panel in Comic-Con²⁹ was dedicated to *Sherlock*. In this panel, the creators Moffat and Gatiss talked about the cliffhanger and presented a video in which Martin Freeman (Watson) apologizes for not being there and Benedict Cumberbatch (Sherlock) plays a joke saying that he will reveal what happened, but the video has some technical problems when he is explaining it. In April 2013, some sequences were produced in outdoor settings, which was reported by some publications while including comments on fan participation of the shootings. In August 2013, one trailer of the third season was released, reactivating the debates about the cliffhanger. On Christmas, a video was entitled “Many Happy Returns”, which is a prequel³⁰ to “The Empty Hearse”, was released, presenting Inspector Lestrade getting to know that some cases were solved by a mysterious man, and shows the investigator Anderson pointing out that the man should be Sherlock. According to him, this indicates that he is getting closer to London. Another marketing strategy was the use of an actual hearse that was driven in some shooting locations on December 29, the same date that the following episode was announced in the media. The hearse had flowers forming the date of the release of the episode. As it is entitled “The Empty Hearse”, the use of this strategy surprised and shocked the audience, generating curiosity about its narrative. The episode “The Empty Hearse” was broadcasted by BBC on January 1, 2014, two years after “The Reichenbach Fall”.

²⁹ Comic-con refers to San Diego Comic-Con, which is an annual entertainment and comic convention which gathers fans of comics and other kinds of entertainment as series and games. After the San Diego Comic-Con, other places began their own conventions, as São Paulo, which in 2018 held his 4th edition of the Comic-Con Experience.

³⁰ A prequel is a narrative which tells a story which happened before the other. In this case, “Many Happy Returns” narrates events that happened right before “The Empty Hearse”. Prequels are very common in cinema – one example is “Red Dragon” (2002) which is a prequel (a story that happened earlier than) “The Silence of the Lambs” (1991).

Figure 48 - Graphic representation of the timeline of “The Reichenbach Fall”



As it was analyzed in the previous chapter, in both “The Final Problem” and “The Reichenbach Fall” the detective pursues his enemy in an attempt to unmask his criminal network, but in the former, they meet at a Swiss waterfall and Watson believes that they both died whereas, in the latter, Moriarty succeeds in turning the public opinion against Sherlock and leads him to jump out of St. Bartholomeu’s Hospital in front of Watson. The publication of the short story “The Final Problem” generated emotional responses either agreeing or disagreeing with Doyle’s decision to kill the character Sherlock Holmes; differently, the narrative of the episode “The Reichenbach Fall” clearly shows that Sherlock has not died in his final confrontation with Moriarty, which in the literary realm would be only revealed ten years after the publishing of “The Final Problem”. The question of how he survived was highly disputed, generating a long list of theories to explain the survival before the broadcasting of the following episode. While Doyle wrote “The Final Problem” to actually kill Holmes but then had to find a way of bringing him back later when he changed his decision, the survival of Sherlock in the series was expected and announced, and the curiosity related to the way he survived was generated through the development of the series narrative. The certainty of his survival works as a cliffhanger, generating curiosity to attract people to the following season.

A cliffhanger, as a narrative device as the one used in *Sherlock*, works to raise the audience’s expectations. By using a cliffhanger, the series incites the audience to watch the following episodes to find how the narrative continues. For the narrative, it includes a larger

gap to be filled with the receivers' expectations, which can be confirmed or negated according to Iser's concepts of "blanks" and "negation" that define the reading process. For a fan, it expands time imagining new possibilities and creating new narratives – that can be only in their own imagination or that can be shared with friends or online, boosting fan discussion and the creation of fan fiction. For the production company, this also has financial purposes: a cliffhanger leads to a quest for the following season/episode, increases audience rates – what values advertising in the program breaks - and may include audiences' buying other related content. With this specific cliffhanger, people would watch the episode for a second or third time, to see all the clues and try to solve the mystery as they wait for the release of the following episode. In order to do this, they need to find resources to watch it again – and, legally, this includes hiring streaming services or buying the DVD.

The episode's plot and the cliffhanger had an instant reaction among fans in their social networks and fan-based websites. Ashley Polasek describes some of the fan reactions on the internet based on the specific analysis of a Tumblr message posted by Mika Hallor the day after the episode aired. Hallor, as a fan, writes as if immersed in the narrative world and asks other fans to do the same, calling them to act:

“Imagine being a Sherlock fan in the show universe. (...) What do you do? Some would believe the papers, but not everyone would buy it. And they would do what they could to clear his name... This is my take on what I would like to propose as a tribute campaign, to show our love and support. Yes, in real life. We put ourselves in the mindset of the in-show fans.” (HALLOR in POLASEK, 2017, parag. 4.12).

The hashtag “#BELIEVEINSHERLOCK” proposed by Hallor went viral, and, “[w]ithin two weeks, the campaign had been reported widely across social media and in the mainstream UK news; soon after, the BBC appropriated it to promote the show. An interactive Google map maintained by the ‘Believe in Sherlock’ Tumblr reports campaign activity as far afield as Canada, Brazil, India, Japan, Israel, and South Africa.” (POLASEK, 2017, parag. 4.14) According to Polasek, this is “marked by the same interplay between passionate dedication to craft and studious engagement with a fictional space uncomplicated by contemporary world issues” (2017, parag. 4.15). In this chapter, I propose an analysis of the relationship between fans and industries by investigating how magazines and journals represent these same issues, showing how the fannish behavior is incorporated, mentioned, or fostered by them.

3.2 Responses related to the texts “The Final Problem” and “The Reichenbach Fall”

There are some overall differences in the reviews of the short story and the series episode, which reveal how critics work differently in different contexts. In the criticism of Doyle’s short story, most reviewers focus on their opinions, emphasizing their own judgment of the quality of the text. In the newspapers and magazines studied, no narrative aspects are used as objective parameters in the evaluation, and when the plot is addressed, it is normally as a summary indicating what the readers would find in the text. Differently, critics of *Sherlock* often rely on technical criteria such as the cinematic aspects of the series or the actor’s performances to express their opinions, avoiding detailed plot summaries as a way to avoid spoiling the audience’s surprise with the narrative. With the use of more technical terms and discussions in their criticism, contemporary critics detach themselves from fans writing in online forums, implicitly showing that their judgment is qualified and worth reading. As in Doyle’s time, contemporary critics sometimes express their personal opinions in a very emotional manner – which sometimes reveals that they can also be seen as fans.

The publications that follow Sherlock Holmes’ death in “The Final Problem” show an emotional tone. Some of the articles express grieving and mourning, while some emphasize the qualities of the detective and how readers will miss him. One example is the article “A Great Detective”, published by *The Leeds Times* on December 16, in which the critic, using the first person to show how he personally feels about the short story, narrates that

[i]t is with infinite regret I learn, through the pages of *The Strand Magazine*, that the most famous detective probably of any age or any country is dead. There were no adequate reasons why he should die; there were many good reasons why he should live (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 173).

Other expressions such as “he dies with his name ringing in men’s ears” (2017, p. 166), “the otherwise festive *Strand Magazine* will carry a pang of regret to many thousand hearts” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 171) and “[i]n the mimic world of fiction that will be a blank for many a day – a loved figure missing from the inhabitants of that shadowy sphere” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 172) show that the responses given in these publications are not related to the literary quality of Doyle’s text but they are mainly related to the affective connection between the critics and the character. These expressions of mourning, which could be attributed to someone dear and are being used to describe a literary character, show the popularity of Sherlock Holmes in the Victorian Press, and reflect how readers can build affective connections with fictional characters.

In the articles studied, some approve Doyle's decision, while others disapproved, showing no consensus on the critical acceptance of Sherlock Holmes and Doyle's detective stories. The approval/disapproval of Doyle's decision range from the objective "I think he has done well to kill him" (2017, p. 169) to more explicative sentences such as "Sherlock Holmes (...) has been a very entertaining personage, but his adventures might easily grow tiresome if prolonged". (2017, p. 92) Most of the articles that disapprove of Doyle's decision do so based on the emotional bonds created with the character, arguing that the readers would miss following the monthly cases published in the *Strand*. Only one of the articles mentions that Doyle only continued to write the stories because of financial reasons due to the popularity of Holmes and his capacity to sell a large number of magazines.

In the Victorian Press, Doyle's decision to stop writing detective stories was only described in literary terms when related to the status given to this literary genre and his decision of writing "serious" literary texts. This can be seen when *The Pall Mall Gazette*, in its "Literary Notes" from September 30, 1983, argues that "[h]e can do far better work" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 79) Most of the publications that agree with his decision argue that leaving aside Sherlock Holmes would leave Doyle free to dedicate himself to other writings, like historical novels. Considering this, it can be seen that in the context in which the stories were published, Holmesian short stories and other detective stories were seen as minor, while historical novels were seen as literature that was worth writing/reading, from a hierarchical perspective of genres based on their prestige. Even those who see detective stories as worth reading point out a hierarchy of texts within the genre, as the *Abilene Daily Reflector*, when they define Holmesian stories and "good detective stories that are genuine literature" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 120), implying that only some detective stories are "genuine" literature. Even with this distinction between serious literature worth reading and that which is not, the articles present no argument to classify one text in one or another category. This shows the influence of literary criticism on the problematic definition of what is a literary text and which texts become popular.

In the criticism produced on *Sherlock*, the technical and cinematic aspects of the series are highlighted, showing more technical criteria in the judgment of its quality than in the reviews on the short stories at Doyle's time. In the review of "The Reichenbach Fall", Louisa Mellor, for instance, highlights the acting of Benedict Cumberbatch, Martin Freeman, and

Andrew Scott, emphasizing Toby Hayne’s choices of still high-angles. She says, the “characteristic text-on-screen storytelling, to the time-lapse cityscapes and the cool fashion ad pan across Moriarty on the rooftop” (MELLOR, 2012 n.p.). Chris Tilly also highlights cinematic aspects of the episode and makes several compliments on the performances of the three main actors: “[s]hot with a sophisticated cinematic sheen by director Toby Haynes, their roof-top face-off was simply stunning, while the moment that Sherlock understood his fate was a genuine show-stopper” (TILLY, 2012 n.p.). By using technical criteria rather than personal opinion, these critics detach themselves from fannish behavior, which is seen as purely emotional.

As concerned with the extradiegetic influence of the detective, “This Morning’s News”, from *The Daily News* on December 13, 1893, points out that the “police of the world are left with their inferior resources to deal with crime as of old” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 166). Other publications refer to the extradiegetic world, revealing how the literary character influenced the actual real world as with the new investigation method being used by the police at Doyle’s time. This blurring of fact and fiction – as Doyle was not an actual detective and created his stories for their literary purposes rather than as a method of investigation – is also seen in fannish behavior. Although this note is not precise about which police and how they used Holmesian resources, the *New York Tribune* in the December 3, 1893 issue details one instance in which the literary Holmes actually influenced the police: “[a] presiding justice in Natal was heard, not long ago, to advise the police in the courtroom to study the art of detection in the Sherlock Holmes stories” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 153). This blurring of fact and fiction can be linked to the origins of The Great Game and to the fannish instances that rely on the assumption that Holmes was an actual person.

The connection of Sherlock Holmes with the actual police and criminals is also seen in the way critics read political issues of the time enlightened by fiction. On February 7, 1894, *The Argus* from Australia published an article entitled “Professor Moriarty and the Possibilities of Modern Crime”. After announcing and narrating how Sherlock Holmes died after being persecuted by Moriarty, the article argues that Doyle “gives incidentally a very suggestive hint as to the possibilities of modern crime” (BOSTRÖM et al., 2019, p. 35). Based on Moriarty’s crime network, the author of the article raises the possibility of an international network of criminals and anarchists under a Black Pope and discusses how the police authorities of Europe were discussing such possibilities. The author of the article questions:

Do the dynamite explosions of the past few months in Spain, in France, in Holland, in Germany and in the United States represent a mere epidemic of

crime, a sullen and murderous discontent with society, appearing simultaneously at various points but without concert? (BOSTRÖM et al., 2019, p. 35)

Besides showing that fiction is connected to actual events, this article shows how it may influence the reading of these different events – and in this case, even help the authorities to build ways to deal with contemporary problems.

Extradiegetic references in the criticism of *Sherlock* are mostly concerned with the series production, as the shooting of new sequences for marketing strategies. In this case, the material produced by the BBC is analyzed in the way that it influences the audience and fans, keeping the material officially produced as the center of the discussions. There are no references to the influence of the series on the extradiegetic world that is not connected with fandom, showing that this is not an important issue for the critics. This corroborates with Neil Postman's emphasis on the television as entertainment, as most people only watch it because of the sensorial and emotional input that it may generate.

3.2.1 References to Intertextuality and Adaptation

A significant number of articles, notes, and reviews make explicit references to intertextuality and adaptation. These references are present both in the criticism related to Doyle's short story and in the criticism of the series, but while the contemporary texts relate the series to the previous adaptations and the canon, Victorian newspapers make references to possible adaptations and fan writings, in an early version of fanfiction. In this sense, *The St. James Gazette*, in the column "The Literary World" published on December 16, 1893, includes "An Involuntary Elegy", with 7 stanzas with 4 rhymed verses each which both refer to Holmes' death and pay homage to him. The elegy can be considered a fan production that includes a description of Holmes,

Who solved with monthly stratagems,
To win imaginary thanks,
Mysteries of pilfered diadems,
And gunshot wounds and plundered banks (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 176)

The elegy shows how Holmes was dear to his readers as it establishes emotional bonds between the character and the fans. The last stanza, for instance, points out that the character would not be forgotten, as he lives in the memories of his admirers:

Yet, when we grapple with such tomes,
 In leisure hours on sunny lawns,
 Perchance your memory, Sherlock Holmes,
 May lend a fervor our yawns. (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 176)

One intertextual reference found in more than one publication is William Shakespeare's character Falstaff. John Falstaff, a well-known character in English Literature, is a character in four different plays, and he is mentioned in a few others. Literary history says that after *Henry V*, when Shakespeare decided to kill the character, Queen Elisabeth manifested how she liked him, showing disagreement with his decision. Shakespeare then wrote *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, a comedy in which Falstaff is the main character. A clear connection between Holmes and Falstaff can be seen in the sense that their authors decided to kill them, but made them return due to the responses and pledges of their readers. The reference is both used to express that Sherlock Holmes's death was sad, as the "Editorial Points" of *The Boston Daily Globe* on November 27, 1893: "Some one has said that the saddest thing in history is the death of Falstaff. Perhaps the saddest thing in contemporary history is the death of Sherlock Holmes" (2017, p. 137) and to express approval of his death, hoping that the character would not return – as in the "Notes" in *The St. James's Gazette* "We can only hope that the protests of still unsatisfied readers will not compel Dr. Doyle to dig up Sherlock Holmes again, as Shakespeare had to disinter Falstaff, alter he had died babbling of green fields, to oblige Queen Elisabeth" (2017, p. 168). North American newspapers cite English literary characters – Falstaff and Trollope's Ms. Proadie – thus emphasizing how Holmes is connected to Englishness.

Other publications make references to beloved literary characters that died in their fictional universe and caused a great commotion among their reading public, from different writers and nationalities. Two different publications cite Charles Dickens' novel "The Old Curiosity Shop", in which the character Nell dies. In "A Great Detective", published by *The Leeds Times* on December 16, 1893, Sherlock Holmes's short story is seen as opposed Dickens' story, as, according to the article, one that reads about Nell's death "for the first time must feel something of a pang in parting with little Nell" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017 n. p.). Differently, Sherlock Holmes "is an old friend, and it is not without a touch of sorrow that we leave him at the bottom of the chasm at Reichenbach" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017 n. p.). Besides citing Dickens, *The Tasmanian News* from February 2 mentions Thackeray, who, together with Dickens, "reluctantly parted with many of his inimitable characters" (BOSTRÖM et al., 2019, p. 33). Another character is cited in the publications analyzed is Anthony Trollope's Proadie, as "[t]he death of no character in fiction since Mrs. Proadie calls for more sincere regret from the reading public" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 178). Mattias Boström and Matt Laffey

point out that this reference is related both to the death of the character and to the author's regret at his decision, which might be an expectation that Doyle would also regret the death of Holmes.

Other detective stories writers are mentioned in the articles – mainly those who were popular before the creation of Sherlock Holmes: Edgar Allan Poe, Fortune du Boisgobey, and Emile Gaboriau. Poe is the first writer of the genre and responsible for introducing a large number of conventions that would be followed by other writers of detective stories. Gaboriau introduced the idea of an amateur detective. His main character is Monsieur Lecoq. Du Boisgobey, one of the Gaboriau's followers, had a high circulation in Doyle's time, and most of his stories were translated into English. The three authors are mentioned mainly to emphasize Doyle's quality, as, according to *The Argus* on February 7, 1984, "all the detectives of fiction, from Edgar Allan Poe's hero down to the creations of Fortune du Boisgobey and Emile Gaboriau, are poor creatures compared with the Sherlock Holmes of Dr. Conan Doyle" (BOSTRÖM et al., 2019, p. 34). Even though he did not write detective stories, Lord Byron is also mentioned as a reference to his instant popularity. Like Byron, who "went to bed one night unknown and in the morning awoke to find himself famous" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 173), Doyle became quickly a celebrity.

Besides references to other characters that died and caused a commotion among the readers and other writers of the same genre, intertextual references in the publications analyzed also make connections with fan productions. In this sense, the names of Don Quixote, Roger de Coverley, and Fenimore Cooper are mentioned concerning how Sherlock Holmes could be used as a source of parodies and pastiche (considered as fan productions). The first is mentioned as a non-official continuation of the novel *Don Quixote* was published before Miguel de Cervantes decided to publish his own, fact which motivated Miguel de Cervantes to write his version of the story. The second, Roger de Coverley, is a fictional character who wrote papers and letters that were published in *The Spectator*. *The Guardian* from January 3, 1894, speculates that "Dr. Doyle is either weary of his amateur detective or fears that, like Sir Roger de Coverley and Don Quixote, he may become the subject of literary frauds" (BOSTRÖM et al., 2019, p. 1). The last one, Fenimore Cooper, according to the anonymous article published in *The Argus* on February 7, 1894, "took the trouble to invent an epitaph which solemnly warned off all literary poachers

from making any illegitimate use of this particular hero” (BOSTRÖM et al., 2019, p. 34)³¹. These articles show that, even though magazines were publishing fan productions and the adaptation of Sherlock Holmes to the theater was becoming famous, the idea of using Doyle’s detective in other fan writings is not seen as positive. This is also seen in contemporary discussions of fan fiction in which issues of authorship, adaptation, and creative freedom are discussed.

As concerned with the series, only one explicit mention of an intertextual story different from the Holmesian canon was found. Meredith Blake’s “Sherlock: ‘The Reichenbach Fall’”(2012) published in *Av/TV*, connects the series with the tale “Hansel and Gretel” from the oral tradition written by Brothers Grimm (which is mentioned in the episode’s plot). According to her, it is “a cautionary tale about the danger of following the breadcrumbs too closely. If you’re not careful, you might just end up in the wrong place” (2012 n. p.) This reference may also be cautious about the way that the fans are expected to act about the cliffhanger and the series. By reminding the audience of the danger faced by Hansel and Gretel in the Brothers Grimm’s tale, the series asks fans to be careful when following the episode’s clues too closely – as excessive fannish behavior may lead people to “wrong places”. A discussion of other narrative instances which reflect and limit fannish behavior is discussed in the following chapter of this dissertation in which the episode “The Empty Hearse” is analyzed.

A significant number of articles refer to the status of *Sherlock* as an adaptation of Doyle’s detective short stories. Sarah Crompton, for instance, points out that “[o]ne of the great joys of this super-cool reboot, masterminded by Steven Moffatt and Mark Gatiss, has been the way in which it pays homage to the original stories while twisting their plots into smart, up-to-date thrillers” (CROMPTON, 2012 n. p.). In the same sense, Meredith Blake’s review of the episode “The Reichbach Falls” highlights how the creators of the series “are able to provoke such breathless speculation over a story that’s been re-imagined so many times—to take something old and familiar and make it just as electrifying as the original. And therein lies the particular genius of *Sherlock*, a show which is able to rearrange, and in some cases completely alter, the details of its source material, while keeping its spirit firmly intact” (BLAKE, 2012 n. p.). In their review of the series, Crompton and Blake echo Linda Hutcheon’s discussion on the pleasure of adaptation, relating it to the mixture of what can be recognized from the adapted

³¹ Fenimore Cooper wrote an epigraph to the character Natty Bumppo, hero of “The Leatherstocking Tales” which says “May no wanton hand ever disturb his remains”. In the newspaper’s opinion, in the same manner, Holmes’ death works as “precaution against anyone exhuming him for literary purposes” (BOSTRÖM et al., 2019, p. 34)

material with the new. In Hutcheon's words, this pleasure comes "from the comfort of ritual combined with the piquancy of surprise. Recognition and remembrance are part of the pleasure (and risk) of experiencing an adaptation; so too is change" (2006, p. 4). This aspect of the series may be related to the "heretical fidelity" described by Matt Hills and discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, which explains in a certain perspective how the series conquered so many fans among those who believe that "fidelity" to Doyle's text is important.

Another publication reveals an important aspect of *Sherlock* as an adaptation: the series not only adapts the narrative aspects of the hypotext but also "adapts" the relationship with the narrative receivers. As in Doyle's period, when a mass reaction to the detective's death showed a large number of fans and how they influenced Doyle's decision, the series *Sherlock* has a large number of fans eager to influence in the series narrative. Sam Leith's article for *The Daily Mail*, on January 19 points out that after the publication of the *Strand* magazine with the short story, "The reaction to the great detective's death was extreme. The Strand Magazine lost 20,000 subscribers — and fans of Holmes took to the streets wearing black armbands" (2012 n. p.). Differently, "[i]nstead of breaking out the black armbands this time, the online world and the water coolers of offices are fizzing with elaborate and ingenious theories as to how he survived" (2012 n. p.). The article concludes that "[t]he guessing games (...) will continue for months as we bide away the agonizing wait for the next series" (2012 n. p.). The same emotional tone present in some reactions to "The Final Problem" is seen in articles like this one, in which the author highlights the "agonizing wait" for a solution to the mystery.

With the intertextual references and references to adaptation, it can be seen that the concern of the media changes from Victorian times to our contemporary world. While the Victorian press connected Sherlock Holmes with great literary characters, whose names were important for the reading public and thus authorize Doyle's contribution to the literature production of the period, contemporary criticism, by focusing on adaptation and the references to Doyle and to other adaptation of Holmesian stories rather than to other characters, highlights the creative input of the series. Thus, novelty is emphasized as an important aspect of the show, either in the "contemporary" setting and production aspects or in the new plot developments created by Moffat and Gatiss.

3.3 Responses related to the author and the creators/producers

Most of the publications concerned with “The Final Problem” cite Doyle to express approval or disapproval with his plot, giving no further information about the author and his other productions. However, some of the articles, such as “Touch-and-Go” published in *The Echo* from October 6, 1893, connect Holmes’s decease with Doyle’s motives: “[h]is creator, Dr. Conan Doyle, has long grown quite weary of him, and only continued the last series of detective stories because offered unusually high terms” (2017, p. 85). As discussed earlier in this chapter, Doyle is a few times connected with his other literary works, considered “serious” literature.

Some of the articles which express a more emotional tone, a lament over Holmes’ death, address Doyle directly. One example is “A Great Detective”, from *The Leeds Times* from December 16, 1893, in which the journalist expresses his own opinion: “I respectfully decline to believe that Sherlock Holmes died by any such means as he has invented, and I would pray him, before he gives the last volume of the adventures of this undoubted genius to the world, that he will wholly rewrite ‘The Adventure of the Final Problem’” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 175). The “Notes and Notions” from *The Derby Daily Telegraph* published on December 22, 1893, also uses a direct address to ask for more Holmesian stories: “Stay! Can it be that we are troubled merely by a passing cloud in Sherlock Holmes eventful life?” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 185). These direct addresses show how newspapers were a place of debate, in which publications were followed by responses that could even engage other responses. These direct addresses indicate that the newspaper writers believed in the possibility that Doyle would read their columns – which is similar to the debates in contemporary online newspapers and magazines.

The public pressure on Doyle as well as the pressure on the producers of *Sherlock* is mentioned in one of the publications here analyzed, thus, showing that the responses of the media are aware of their role in the relationship between authors and receivers. In his review, Sam Wollaston compares and contrasts the episode of the series *Sherlock* with the short story, reminding that “[i]n the original there were footprints – two sets going, none coming back – and signs of a struggle. It wasn't hard for Conan Doyle to bring his hero back from that one when public pressure made it impossible for him not to” (2012 n. p.). Differently, in the series, “[i]t's clearly not the end of him after all. It may be due to public pressure, it's more likely to be the eight-and-a-half million viewers, but the BBC isn't going to go walking away from that just

yet” (2012 n. p.). In this quote, Wollaston recognizes that readers and audiences influence the author/producers’ decisions – either by personal reasons or by the selling capacity of the narratives. The audience’s expectations are so important and influential that Wollaston argues that, in the solution of the puzzle proposed by the cliffhanger, “[i]t's going to be harder for Steven Moffat and co to do it convincingly” (2012 n. p.). In this sense, the cliffhanger presents its two faces: it both generates curiosity but also raises the audience’s expectations, turning the following episode a hard task to accomplish.

Interviews and comments on the producers’ comments on social media show how the newspapers also give space for the producers’ voices. Stuart Jeffries interviews Steven Moffat for *The Guardian* on January 20, commenting on the main aspects of *Sherlock* and how contemporary audiences relate to media exposing his difficulties with them. Moffat declares that “[m]y problem is that the audience is more fiction-literate than ever. In Shakespeare's day, you probably expected to see a play once or twice in your life; today you experience four or five different kinds of fiction every day. So staying ahead of the audience is impossible” (2012 n. p.). This interview reveals that the co-creator is aware of the audience’s expectation and that it influences the production of new narratives. On December 6, the *Independent* published Gerald Gilbert’s “Sherlock series 3: Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman provide teasers for the biggest comeback in British television” (2013). With an interview with the actors Cumberbatch and Freeman and the producers Moffat and Gatiss, Gilbert resumes the speculation about the fall and tries to obtain information from them. While the four give no new information, Gilbert reports that “Freeman reckons not unreasonably that most viewers actually prefer surprises to spoilers” (GILBERT, 2013 n. p.). This statement reveals the contemporary context in which people are both curious about the plots they want to watch but at the same time, they want to be surprised by the show. Also commenting on how the audiences react to Moffat and Gatiss’ work, Gilbert reminds that “[w]hatever they produce, the new series is being almost obsessively anticipated by its fans, some of whom are outside the London hotel where these interviews were taking place” (2013 n. p.). Considering the popularity of the series and the frenzy generated among fans about the cliffhanger, the production of new content is often associated with its reception.

The production of new episodes and the marketing strategies related to the series was the concern of some of the publications analyzed. Even when reporting the production of the

series, these articles make references to the fans and their expectations. Among the information given about the shooting of outdoor sequences in April 2013, details that would be found in the following episode are described: an anonymous *Daily Mail* reporter published some pictures, highlighting the use of a deerstalker hat (DAILYMAILREPORTER, 2013); Hanna Flint (2013b, a) describes how Cumberbatch has shooting the fall again with a blue inflatable and how he interacted with a stuntman; Emma Gritt (2013) reports the presence of the illusionist Derren Brown, connecting him to the explanation of the fall. These details are seen as clues to what the audience should expect from the solution of the mystery proposed by the series, as Gritt reminds that “[s]ince the airing of the last episode in January 2012, people have been looking for clues about what happened to Holmes and how he pulled off his greatest scheme yet” (2013 n. p.). Besides that, all this information about the shooting and the gossip related to that would help to raise the audience's expectation related to the following episode. As fans and reporters could see the scenes being shot but had no access to the lines or the script, they could imagine different interpretations to how they fit the narrative of the series. The number of possible interpretations increased, fostering the speculation related to the plot of the first episode of season three. In these articles, it can be seen that even when the media is reporting the production of new content, they do so by focusing on the audience, in order to strength the bounds between the series and the audiences.

The report of the use of the actual Hearse to promote the series is explicitly connected by Nancy Tartaglione to the relationship between producers and fans. Tartaglione points out that the “vehicle made the rounds of some *Sherlock* shooting locations in the British capital, sending Twitter wild – and bringing confirmation of the news from the show’s producers” (2013 n. p.) The use of an offline strategy was brought to online discussion and newspapers reported the close connection between the two. The production team, in this sense, gave content to fan appreciation and discussion, which was transferred to fans’ social media. The content produced by fans in their personal spaces was responded by the producers, showing a certain conversation between fans and producers mediated by media. In this case, this conversation directed by the media producers generated spreadable content to engage audiences with the series and with the following episode.

Considering the publications analyzed, there is a difference in how the media address the author/producers in the Victorian period and contemporary newspapers. In Doyle’s time, in the articles related to the Great Hiatus, Doyle is directly addressed a few times with demands to change Holmes’ destiny. Contemporary criticism mentions the series producers related to the

audience and the fans, interviewing them, reporting their actions, and quoting their personal social media only as a way to enhance the audience's expectations and to promote the show. Even though the subject of authorship is not directly addressed, the differences can be connected to the difference in the creative process in literature and in TV series: while a literary author works alone, sometimes relying on an editor or reviewer, a television series is created by a large team of producers, directors, screenwriters, actors and other professionals. The names Gatiss and Moffat are ahead of the series as co-creators and producers, but their role as authors is different from Doyle's. Also, in TV series, the creation of new content depends more on the audience's approval, as only popular TV series have the possibility of the production of other seasons, while series that do not become popular are canceled and discontinued.

3.4 Responses related to the readers/audience and fans

The word "fan" is a modern concept, which was not yet defined in Victorian times. In the publications related to Doyle's short story, however, other terms were used indicating that the media recognized the importance of readers who had a closer emotional bond with the stories. More than one newspaper refers to them as "admirers", a term which already implies a more affective connection than simply reading the stories. Sometimes the word "readers" in the context used gives the idea of fans, mainly when they are preceded by adjectives as "unsatiated". Using this term, *The St. James's Gazette* from December 13, 1983 express "hope that the protests of still unsatiated readers will not compel Dr. Doyle to dig up Sherlock Holmes" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 168). Fans are also referred to as "mass of people", "legion" and "lovers of this sort of literature" showing how Sherlock Holmes's fans were large in number and easily recognized. Even though the terms are different, they show different meanings attributed to fannish behavior.

The emotional responses and the description of the reactions of writers place them as fans as well. One example is H. D. Traill's "The World of Letters", one of the few pieces with authorial marks, in which he expresses: "I should not be the least surprised to find him playing the violin in Baker Street before another six months are passed as if nothing had happened. Meantime I shall refuse to do more than enter him in the list of 'missing'" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 200). Another example can be found in *The Leeds Times*, from December

16, 1893: “It is with infinite regret I learn, through the pages of *The Strand Magazine*, that the most famous detective probably of any age or any country is dead. There were no adequate reasons why he should die; there were many good reasons why he should live” (173). One can conclude that in the Victorian press there were no restrictions to express critics' judgments and tastes, differently from the criticism on the contemporary press as discussed above.

Some of the articles analyzed refer to Sherlock Holmes as an actual person and Doyle as his literary agent, thus showing the early forms of The Grand Game. This can be seen for instance in *Harper's Weekly's* column “This Busy World”, on December 16, 1893, which narrates that “it seems that through the intervention of one Doyle, a physician, who had a claim upon him, he was induced to undertake a case of desperate peril, in which there is reason to believe that he lost his life” (173). This blurring of fact and fiction is seen in different fan writings both during Doyle's time and in contemporary criticism and reflects how fans have emotional bonds with the characters as if they were real persons. The bond created by the readers/critics with fictional characters can be seen as a “parasocial relationship” and is more explored in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

Fannish behavior in Doyle's time is usually described in the number of unsubscribers of the magazine (20,000 unsubscribers), but mention to individual fans is made in vague terms, with no clear data to support the statements. Following the idea expressed in *The Manchester Guardian*, December 26, 1893, that “The death of Mr. Sherlock Holmes (...) must have been to a great many people a matter of personal regret” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 189) *The Westminster Budget*, on December 29, 1893, informs that “There is lamentation in many homes today at the death of Sherlock Holmes” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 197). The editorial published in Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper, December 17, 1893, narrates one fan's reaction to Doyle's decision – an anonymous young reader: “‘What a shame!’ exclaimed a young reader as she perused Mr. Conan Doyle's closing passage.” (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 177). Different scholar publications refer to fans' reactions in the same period as a march with fans wearing black armbands but no reports of these events were found in the publications researched. These narrations express how fans were both fascinated by the character and frustrated with the narrative, which, according to Henry Jenkins (JENKINS, 2006), are the two characteristics that are related to the birth of fandom activity.

Fans are directly referred to in the criticism of *Sherlock* and are often described concerning their behavior. In this sense, Thomas points out that “the hit show will return next year after panic stricken viewers took to social networking sites demanding to know if the hit

drama had been axed” (THOMAS, 2012 n. p.). Referring to the audience expectation, Felicity Thistlethwaite comments that “the excitement around it has reached an all-time high with Sherlock fans, desperate to know the truth about how the detective cheated death” (2013b, n. p.). Here, again, the idea of excessive behavior is connected to fans, who are “panic stricken” and “desperate”. The increased number of posts on social media related to the series was an important topic and demonstrated how fans would be eager to respond to the show. Excessive behavior connected to fan practices is also described by Devon Maloney (2013), when refers to the series as “the long-on-hiatus drama that’s been tearing fans on Tumblr apart at their heart” (2013 n. p.). In this article, the connection between fans and their interaction in social media is made clear – the emotional bonds with the character are expressed on fans’ social media and generate different kinds of online content.

Fan activity is seen explicitly in the trailer released on November 23, which presents some sequences of “The Empty Hearse” that are analyzed in Chapter 4 of this dissertation. The trailer shows some sequences of the fan club “The Empty Hearse” discussing theories of Sherlock’s survival and using different hashtags on social media to report Sherlock’s return. On this date, Philiana Ng’s “‘Sherlock’: New Season 3 Trailer Sends Twitter Abuzz (Video)” (2013) for *The Hollywood Reporter* highlights how Twitter hashtags appear at the end of the trailer, commenting on how it is, in her words, “meta”. With these references onscreen, the audience would begin a new conversation on social media (including Twitter) concerning their expectations and commenting on the trailer. The connection between the trailer and its influence on social media is also highlighted by Eva Recinos (2013) and Felicity Thistlethwaite (2013). Thistlethwaite recognizes that “The fans are very excited to hear they’re (sic) idol is alive and begin spreading the message across social networking sites” (n. p.). The use of social media reflects how audiences share their opinion on the web, as they have room to use their voices to discuss the narratives presented. However, this cannot be labeled an expression of their own independent voice as they are motivated by what the television industry gives them, as the hashtags, which did not come from the audience but were suggested by the trailer itself.

3.5 Theories created by critics and fans

When Sherlock Holmes died in Doyle's short story, some of the critics created different theories suggesting that Watson's narrative was somehow mistaken as he did not see Holmes' body - and that the detective managed to find a way to survive from the fall. In a parallel manner, critics and fans from *Sherlock* created different theories to explain how he survived from the fall, even though Watson and a large number of other characters saw him jumping off the building and his body hitting the floor. These theories and the way that the news published them illustrate how the relationship between author/producers, media critics, and readers/audience works, influencing each other in the understanding of narratives and in the creation of new ones. Taking this issue into consideration, these theories must be addressed not only as an expression of people's eagerness for more stories but also of their importance to build and maintain the connection between production and reception through the media.

Some of the articles include editor's theories on how Doyle could revert the end of "The Final Problem" bringing Holmes back to life. This expresses both the affection that they had with the character and the discontent with Doyle's decision, which is often seen when fans disapprove the narrative developments created by the authors. This can be seen as a form of participation of the readers (here the readers in the official press, but also assumingly the fans at the time as it can be seen in the reports in the following section), who not only give their opinion on the publication but also may influence the writer in his decisions related to a well-known and loved character. One example is the publication "Is Sherlock Holmes Dead?" from *Democrat and Chronicle*, on December 13, 1893. After raising a large number of questions implying the possibility that Holmes is not dead, the article affirms "[t]he subtle genius of the great detective opens up a fertile field for speculation of this kind, and it should not surprise anyone yet to hear of Sherlock Holmes in the land of the living, showing renewed vigor and winning new laurels in his old profession" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 168). Articles such as "The Man About Town" published in the *South Wales Echo* on December 18, 1893, give reasons for this speculation: "[t]here is much that is suspicious in Dr. Watson's narrative, particularly in the fact that we have heard nothing about it from the two papers which he claims published a paragraph" (BOSTRÖM; LAFFEY, 2017, p. 179). The theories created during Doyle's time show how the readers were not satisfied with the idea of not following the detective's narratives anymore, narratives that were monthly published, and used the same resources of investigation to explore possible alternatives to the short story's end.

In the series, after the release of the episode “The Reichenbach Fall”, fan sites and social media were fed with a large number of questions and comments related to the cliffhanger, eager to understand Sherlock’s survival. Different from Doyle’s time in which the theories were an expression of refusal to accept Doyle’s decision, the reviews and articles that followed the broadcasting of the episode were responding to a cliffhanger created to generate discussions and to spread new content among fans. With the unanswered question – how did Sherlock survive from the fall? - left to the audience, a large number of theories were created, ranging from very likely to impossible ones, as one related to spaceships. Different newspapers engaged in this discussion, using the media space both to report and engage in the discussion and as a tool to promote the show. The examples below highlight the fan activity involved in the creation of these theories and express how the generation of expectation related to a cliffhanger influence in the following of a series.

About the connection between the series and the short story, David Brown’s review points out a problem: at the end of the episode, when Sherlock is seen alive, “we were denied the opportunity to properly mourn” (BROWN, 2012 n. p.) as the time between the fall and the discovery of his survival was marked by a small number of shots. He also points out that with the shift from the literary to the TV text “why did he have to die?” to “how did he cheat death?”, the series leaves room for speculation and expectation. That led to fan participation, as they produced a significant number of theories to explain the fall. His review ends with a direct call to share deductions, initiating a conversation with the audience that was seen also in other newspapers and magazines that made references to *Sherlock*’s cliffhanger. While the producers did not answer these questions – either in the form of interviews or comments on their social media or in the form of a new episode – the media and the fans had the opportunity to continue this discussion, generating new creative content that would boost the series’ popularity.

With the curiosity generated by the cliffhanger, all the comments made by the production team that could inform something about its conclusion were followed closely by the critics. In the interview “Steven Moffat: nobody’s spotted crucial Sherlock clue” (2012) to the *Radio Times*, Moffat admitted that he was following the online speculation about how Sherlock faked his death. In the same date, Georgina Littlejohn published the article “We want people to be in a frenzy of speculation!: Sherlock fans take to the internet to share theories on how Holmes faked his own death” (2012) for the *Daily Mail*, talking about the different theories and

highlighting the six most popular ones. LittleJohn also quotes Moffat when he reveals that they “just want people to be in a frenzy of speculation” (2012 n. p.), revealing that the cliffhanger was produced with a clear intent of having all these online and offline discussions. In these comments, it can be seen that media’s and fans’ responses are important for the producers and influence the production of new content in different ways. Usually, a series production needs to be concerned with the audience’s responses to produce a content that will be accepted and consumed by the audience – in this case, besides this usual influence, the production team also recognizes fan-generated content as inspiration for the creation of a new narrative.

During the two years between the cliffhanger and its solution, a large number of articles express the main theories found online, enhancing the audience’s curiosity and the show’s popularity. For example, on January 23, Polly Dunbar (2012) consults different specialists including an expert in Sherlock Holmes, a criminologist and a physicist and they create six different theories that would explain how Sherlock fell from the rooftop and survived. The theories are graded from 1 to 5 according to what is more likely to have happened or not. On December 30, Alasdair Glennie’s article for the *Daily Globe* (2013) points out the five most popular ones, while *The Telegraph* publishes “How Sherlock faked his own death: Telegraph writers' theories” (2013), in which the four writers Jake Kerridge, Paul Gent, Catherine Gee, and Chris Harvey present their versions. Also, Sam Webb for the *Daily Mail* published an article entitled “The Fall and Rise of Sherlock Holmes: The seven top theories on how the Great Detective survived his dramatic plunge as season three looms” (2014). These articles, with many theories being repeated or included, show how media – and the fans – were eager to find a solution to the narrative, testing all the possibilities. In this article, Webb recognizes that “[t]he show's co-creator, Steven Moffat, said making up theories was 'much more fun than being told' and his partner on the show, Mark Gatiss, admitted the hype from the fans put pressure on them to come up with a suitable solution” (WEBB, 2014 n. p.). By creating and quoting different theories, the articles increase the expectation for the episode that would be soon released, while also giving voice to the production team in their opinion about the theories.

Other articles promoted the audience’s participation in the creation of theories using different technological devices. *The Guardian*’s small article about the trailer released before “The Empty Hearse” invites the readers to discuss how Sherlock fakes his death, asking “Are you looking forward to the new series of Sherlock? And just how *did* he fake it? Leave your thoughts below” (2013 n. p.). A space for comments following the article opened space for all the members of the audience who wanted to follow the newspaper’s discussion on the topic,

giving voice to the audience's members. *The Telegraph*'s "How Sherlock faked his own death: Telegraph writers' theories" (2013) presents one poll that could be voted related to the question: "How do you think Sherlock faked his own death?", which had more than 2,200 votes from readers. The article not only gives space to fan interaction but also increases the popularity and circulation of the newspaper. By accessing an article like this one, readers are exposed to links to other articles and to advertisement, which may lead them to other sections of the newspaper. By posting on social media their own content with the hashtags proposed by the series production team, fans promote the series in a more personal way, showing their close ones and followers reasons why they should also engage with the narrative content.

Considering these articles, one can see that BBC used the discussions online created by fans to promote the series and also to include information that would be shared in their productions, taking advantage of the discussions raised by the audience to promote the new season. Almost all the news referred to the cliffhanger and the theories related to Sherlock's survival, revealing the expectations of the audience while they enhanced them. More than that, each material is produced to be shared, relying on their spreadability to promote the official content and generate more fan-produced material. Even though offline strategies as a video released at Comic-Con and the Hearse that circulated the shooting places were used, they were discussed online and shared to include people who could not have access to them due to the distance. As it was demonstrated in the quoted articles, reviews and notes, the criticism that followed both the short story "The Final Problem" and the episode "The Reichenbach Fall" and "The Adventure of The Empty Hearse" reveal different aspects of their mediatic context, the understanding of literature and adaptation. Comparing and contrasting them show how some of the conceptions changed, while others remained.

While some of the articles related to Doyle's short story express an opinion that Doyle should write a short story in which Holmes explains that he did not die (which would be done only ten years later), critics of *Sherlock* and reporters had to deal with the fact that Sherlock was alive and that the main question has changed to "how?". This change in the question fosters participation, as it calls for an investigation and the creation of possible explanations by the audience, which is more suited for today's audience who is used to write fan fiction, engage in fan forums, and post comments and fan production on Tumblr and Twitter. The creation of

several theories to explain Sherlock's survival express the fans' willingness to participate in the production of the narratives that they love, and their promptness to the official content related to the series.

The cliffhanger, in this sense, not only generates curiosity and raises the expectations related to the following episode, but also influences the relationship between the audience and the media industry. While it has financial purposes related to the selling of official products such as DVDs, streaming services, and online videos, it increases the audience of the following episode and encourages the audience to rewatch the mentioned episode many times to solve the mystery. By giving the audience the task to also be a detective to investigate Sherlock's survival, *Sherlock* gives narrative elements to the creation of different fanfictions, forums, memes, and online content that would maintain the audience connected to the series during its hiatus.

From this analysis, it can be seen that criticism in Doyle's time presented different characteristics from today's criticism. Victorian articles, which were also published in literary magazines and newspapers, show that the boundaries between fact and fiction regarding these technical media are sometimes slippery. The main idea of the Grand Game, which refers to Holmes as a real person and Doyle as his literary agent, may have had its genesis from this fact. The medium, which presents both literary stories and journal articles, with critics following the trend of blurring this boundary, might have contributed to the way that some of these readers understood Holmes.

Some of the articles refer to fans and their reactions, but they present no references to specific cases or recordings of real fan reactions. Due to the difficulty of access to real recordings of fan activity in the period, the understanding of how fans of Sherlock Holmes would behave when the short stories were published are based only on the references on the articles and on the references related to Holmes' literary Canon. In the articles, it can be seen that a loyal number of fans would follow regularly the detectives' investigation – and this reference can be verified too by the number of magazines sold since the first short story with the detective. According to *The Strand's* history written by Chris Willis, the drop in sales was so intense after "The Final Problem" that the magazine almost had to close, and it took a long time to recover from that. Doyle himself predicted this when he offered himself to write to the magazine as he realized the potential of a series of short stories with similar narrative elements following a literary magazine.

This chapter proposed a study of *Sherlock* as an adaptation of Doyle's canon, arguing that not only the diegesis is adapted in this process, but also the relationship between author, narrative and receivers/fans. The analysis of how media portrays and mediate the reception of Holmes' death in Doyle's period and Sherlock's survival followed by a question on how he survived in contemporary criticism shows how this relationship changed in some aspects, as in the media's portrayal of fans, while remains similar, as in the way that the newspapers and magazines generate a space for debate, influencing the narratives. In this context of the participatory culture, the following chapter discusses if and how the reader/audience's responses are reflected in Sherlock Holmes' return, both in the short story "The Adventure of the Empty House" and in the episode "The Adventure of the Empty Hearse".

4 “It’s Good to See You Back in London, Sir”: Analysis of the return of the detective in “The Adventures of the Empty House” and “The Empty Hearse”

After his comeback, Sherlock Holmes reached great popularity and became dear to a large number of fans. When Holmes was declared dead by Watson in “The Final Problem”, fans mourned and began to ask for an alternative destiny for the character – which was only done ten years later. At that time newspapers started to announce the return of the detective, and the readers prepared themselves to read again the famous short stories – thus, creating expectations related to the narrative. On the other hand, with *Sherlock*’s cliffhanger, the expectations of the return of the character began at the moment that the episode was aired as reflected in the publications in the magazines and newspapers analyzed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

People have always liked narratives and reading or watching them cannot be considered only a rational activity, as it also influences emotions and ideas. Fan activity is highly connected to the way that narratives influence people’s emotions, creating an affective bond between fans and fiction. This affective relationship can be found in fandom related to narratives as in literature, television, videogame, but also with music and sports fans. Taking a fan of literature such as *Sherlock Holmes* as an example: more than the usual engagement with the reading activity, a fan of a written text gets attached to the characters, to the story world and to the narratives related to it, building a relationship that goes beyond the reading time. When the reading time stops, fans imagine other possibilities related to these characters and places, engage in conversation with other fans, consume official and non-official products related to the story and create amateur stories, images, videos, and other mediatic products.

Fannish behavior is sometimes seen as extreme and excessive, connected with hysterical crowds or lonely aliens – however, going beyond this prejudice and seeing fans as ordinary people with strong affective connections with narratives helps to reflect on people’s relationship with stories and media. Following Fiske’s definition of the fan as “an ‘excessive reader’ who differs from the ‘ordinary’ one in degree rather than kind” (1992, p. 46), a study of fannish behavior helps to understand how people *experience* different stories (and to what degree they may reach) and how they react to narratives.

Besides public complaints about Doyle’s decision, people would refer to a march with young men wearing black armbands that became very popular among Holmesian fans, which was mentioned by some critics as Thomas Leith (2012) quoted in Chapter 2. However, no

journalistic records of this event were found, a fact that caused a challenge in the Letters section of the Spring 2013 issue of *The Baker Street Irregulars Journal* to look for them. No proofs were sent to the Journal. Back in time, black armbands to mourn was a custom in the English society and the absence of the records may be related to two different reasons: either they were so common that they did not stand as extraordinary, or they were later created to emphasize fans' reaction to the event. Considering how Holmes was popular at the time, the former is hard to imagine, and the latter stands as a way to promote the detective's popularity.

After the fall of the character, Jennifer Keishin Armstrong also refers to "Let's Keep Holmes Alive" clubs founded in America to protest against Doyle's decision to kill him. In the period in which "The Final Problem" was published, it became common to have clubs gathering people around a cause which was of common interest to them. According to Armstrong, "Conan Doyle stuck to his guns in the face of the protests, calling the death "justifiable homicide" – referring, presumably, to his own justifications, not Moriarty's" (2016, n.p.). More than showing that fans' reactions were known by Doyle, the existence of these clubs is an expression of what would be common among fans – fan clubs gathering people to share information, to discuss the details of the cases, and to study deeper the short stories and novels. The most famous fan club related to Sherlock Holmes – The Baker Street Irregulars – was founded in 1940 and until these days has meetings every year. In The Baker Street Irregulars, each new member receives a new nickname from Doyle's characters (mainly the secondary characters). Besides the regular meetings, The Baker Street Irregulars organized a journal with scholarship and pseudo-scholarship related to the character, *The Baker Street Journal*.

While it is difficult to find information about fannish behavior in Doyle's period, one can see that fan clubs and fannish activities developed from the publication of the short stories even in pre-web times. Besides the fan clubs, fan activity can be seen when several authors published pastiche using Holmes as the main character or adapted the short stories to another medium, paying their homage to the detective – which can be seen as a genesis of fanfiction. Academic studies and pseudo-scholarship related to Sherlock Holmes increased in number, beginning when Doyle was still publishing and increasing in number until these days.

Even before the technology of the internet facilitated the bloom of fanfiction, fan production can be identified with different names and characteristics. Anne Jamison, when describing fanfiction as the creative production of narratives based on existent character and

stories points out earlier pre-web fan production: when Alonso Fernandez de Avellaneda, in 1614, published a continuation of *Don Quixote*, for instance, or when Renaissance writers such as Shakespeare used different existing stories to create their texts. In this sense, fan productions related to Sherlock Holmes can be traced in this period when considering pastiche and adaptation, as when J. M. Barrie (author of *The Peter Pan* and Doyle's personal friend) wrote in 1893 (the same year that "The Final Problem" was published) a short story called "The Adventures of the Two Collaborators", in which Holmes and Watson are visited by Doyle and Barrie. William Gillette's play *Sherlock Holmes* adds a romantic interest to the character, using some dialogues written by Doyle together with Gillette's created narrative. From this one, new cases written by other authors were published either privately, as Vincent Starrett's "Adventure of the Unique Hamlet" (1920) which was printed in a limited number of copies and circulated among friends before being published in a collection of fan writings, or publicly, sometimes changing slightly the name of the character to avoid licensing problems.

The genre of the short story and the serial publication of Doyle's narrative may have influenced the number of fanfictions created with Sherlock Holmes as the main character. As it was discussed in Chapter 2, Doyle's short stories follow a certain common structure, easily perceived by those who often read his narratives. Contact with the narratives enabled by the constant and serial publication help to create a relationship with the character, to get used to his fictional universe, and to assimilate the narrative structure of the short stories. The genre conventions related to detective stories are also very marked, giving parameters for the construction of a new story.

Considering the analysis of the critical reception of the supposed death of the character both in Doyle's and in Gatiss's and Moffat's period, as discussed in the previous chapter, questions arise: do the narratives concerned with the return of the character - both the short story and the series episode - address these expectations? How do they reflect the relationship between the narrative context and the reader/audience realm? How are fans and their reactions referred to in these narratives? Based on these questions, this chapter proposes an analysis of the literary return of Sherlock Holmes and the television return of Sherlock. Both include a discussion about the reviews of the narratives published in magazines and newspapers contemporary to their release and discussions related to if and how fans are addressed or represented in these narratives.

4.1 The Literary Return of Sherlock Holmes

Even with the different reactions to Sherlock Holmes' death in 1893 described in the previous chapter, Arthur Conan Doyle decided to stop writing his stories to dedicate himself to other writings, which he considered "serious work". Doyle recognized the reader's commotion with Holmes's death in different ways. In the article "Some Personalia about Sherlock Holmes", published in December 1917 in *The Strand*, Doyle recalls fans' reaction to the character's death pointing at a specific case:

Rather less pleasing, though flattering in their way, were the letters of abuse which showered upon me when it was thought that I had killed him. "You brute!" was the promising opening of one lady's epistle (DOYLE, [s.d.]).

However, the public commotion was not enough to convince him to continue to write Holmesian stories. Only eight years after the publication of "The Final Problem", Arthur Conan Doyle publishes a new Sherlock Holmes' story: *The Hound of Baskerville*, a novel, which is set in an earlier period of Holmes' life. With this publication, Doyle gave the readers a new case to read without stating that the detective was back, as the story happens before the case in which Holmes seems to die. In a letter to his mother, he comments on this new narrative and expresses that he "hope[s] he will live up to his reputation" (LELLENBERG; STASHOWER; FOLEY, 2007, p. 480). This novel, serialized in 1901 and 1902, narrates the investigation of a legend related to a gigantic hound, which seemed to be supernatural.

In *The Hound of Baskerville*, Henry Baskerville meets Sherlock Holmes and asks for help. He tells a story of a curse imposed on his family related to the enormous dog and explains about a warning note received by him recalling the curse. The investigation follows with a final confrontation with the assumed beast, which Holmes identifies as a big species of a dog, and ends with the revelation of a plot intended to kill Henry. This novel became very popular and was adapted several times to films and series episodes.

In the spring of 1903, ten years after the publication of "The Final Problem", Norman Hapgood, editor of the North American magazine *Collier's Weekly*, sent an offer to Doyle inviting him to write new Sherlock Holmes' stories, this time as short stories regularly published. Doyle found the offer hard to resist, as the money proposed was a great sum, and sold them the American rights of some of the stories. Even though one of Doyle's motivations

for returning to write the short stories was financial, he expresses a concern with the quality of his work. In a letter to his mother, Doyle wrote

I dont (sic) think you need have any fears about Sherlock. I am not conscious of any failing powers, and my work is not less conscientious than of old. I dont suppose any man has ever sacrificed so much money to preserve his ideal of art as I have done (...) But I have done no short Sherlock Holmes Stories for seven or eight years, and I dont see why I should not have another go at them and earn three times as much money as I can by any other form of work. I have finished the first one (...) and it is a rare good one. You will find that Holmes was never dead, and that he is now very much alive. (2007, p. 512)

With this report, it can be seen that Doyle was indeed motivated by the large sum proposed to the continuation of the adventures of Sherlock Holmes but that he cared a lot about the literary quality of his writings.

4.1.1 “The Empty House”

In 1903, Doyle published “The Empty House”, which brings to the reader the return of the character, and soon after published other short stories that later composed the book *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. The story was first published in the USA, in the *Collier’s Weekly*, and right after published in the October edition of *The Strand Magazine* and was previously announced in other newspapers and magazines. This edition of *The Strand* was sold to a large number of readers eager to read the return of the famous detective. According to John Lelleberg³²

When *The Strand* and *Collier’s* began to run *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* in October, the response was enormous. ‘Readers rushed to the bookstalls with the fierce resolve of shoppers at the January sales’ says *The Strand Magazines 1891—1950*. ‘Devotees were seen queuing at one of the largest public libraries for the chance of reading the latest story in the series. So pressing was the demand that closing time at the library was extended by half an hour on *The Strand* publication day, usually the third Thursday in the month.’ (2007, p. 517)

When the newspapers started to announce that Sherlock Holmes would return, the fans who were resigned with the character’s death would rush again to follow his investigations. “The Empty House”, the first narrative of *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, explains how the detective deceived everyone including Watson about his death and develops a new case with a narrative unity with “The Final Problem”.

³² Lelleberg is the editor who published the letters written and received by Doyle in the book *Life in Letters*. The quote is taken from a passage which contextualizes the letters written in the period.

As most of the Sherlock Holmes stories, “The Empty House” begins with an introduction with Watson’s voice guiding the reader into the investigation. In these introductions, Watson often narrates some of the current crimes and presents some remarks on the investigation practice. In this case, he comments on the case of Ronald Adair, who died locked in his own room with no apparent cause of death which is said to be widely commented on in different newspapers. From this beginning, “The Empty House”, as well as the other Holmesian stories can be classified as metafictional³³, blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction.

Concerning the case of Ronald Adair, mentioned at the beginning of “The Empty House”, Watson declares, “the crime was of interest in itself” (453) – but uses the context of the crime connected to him to narrate his encounter with Sherlock Holmes. Considering the period of ten years between “The Final Problem” and “The Empty House”, one can infer that the readers would be curious from the beginning of the story to understand how Sherlock Holmes survived. Interestingly, the encounter with Sherlock Holmes is not mentioned at the beginning of the narrative, making the reader follow Watson in his surprise as he realizes that Holmes is alive. Anticipating their encounter, Watson writes about the interest related to Adair’s case that

that interest was as nothing to me compared to the maybe sequel, which afforded me the greatest shock and surprise of any event in my adventurous life. Even now, after this long interval, I find myself thrilling as I think of it, and feeling once more that sudden flood of joy, amazement, and incredulity which utterly submerged my mind. (453).

³³ Linda Hutcheon defines metafiction as “textual forms of self-consciousness” (1984, p. 4), in which the process of writing is exposed, calling the readers for an active role in the process of meaning-making and leading them to problematize the boundaries between fact and fiction. “The Empty House”, in this sense, uses two distinct metafictional devices: the use of both diegetic with extra-diegetic information in the narrative and the genre conventions. In the former, Watson’s constant reference to newspapers, real ones, which is also present in some other stories narrated by him not only gives credit to the doctor’s narrative but also helps to blur the distinction between fictional stories and articles really published by the press, which might be associated with the Grand Game. The latter is related to how detective stories engage readers in the construction of the narrative.

According to Hutcheon, “the detective story is almost by definition intensely self-aware” (1984, p. 72). She enumerates three different points which clarify this statement: the first is related to the narrator, which often is the fictional writer of the investigation while making comments on the writing itself. Watson, who places himself as the narrator and writer of Holmes’ adventure, is an example of the self-awareness of the genre in this sense. The second point is related to the genre conventions that generate expectations for the readers related to the development of the narrative. This point has already been discussed in dialogue with George Dove’s argument for the importance of the reader in the study of detective stories. The third one, also discussed by Dove, is related to calling the reader to investigate the case with the narrator and the detective.

Considering the depth and the importance of the study of metafiction, this issue is a suggestion for further research.

With these characteristics described above, the readers are reassured that the short story will include the information related to the possible fall of the detective in Reichenbach Falls, and also will follow some of the patterns present in most Holmesian stories. The “long interval” referred to by Watson is shared with the readers, who, after a period of ten years, can read a new case investigated by the detective and may also feel the “joy, amazement and incredulity” with the news that the detective did not die.

The relationship between Watson and the public is made explicit when he apologizes directly to them for not sharing some knowledge related to Holmes, which according to him was prohibited by the detective:

Let me say to that public, which has shown some interest in those glimpses which I have occasionally given them of the thoughts and actions of a very remarkable man, that they are not to blame me if I have not shared my knowledge with them, for I should have considered it my first duty to do so, had I not been barred by a positive prohibition from his own lips, which was only withdrawn upon the third of last month. (DOYLE, 2009, p. 453)

The narration of the first meeting between the doctor and the detective after the persecution that leads to the episode in Reichenbach Falls follows, revealing to the readers that Watson was also surprised to acknowledge that the detective did not fall from the waterfalls. According to Watson’s narrative, when he was investigating Ronald Adair’s case he hits a strange man in the street, described as “an elderly, deformed man, who had been behind me, and I knocked down several books which he was carrying” (DOYLE, 2009, p. 455). This man later would be revealed as Sherlock Holmes in disguise, but on that occasion, he could not talk properly with Watson to avoid being recognized.

The strange man visits Watson and talks to him about his books. When he suggests that Watson should buy some volumes to complete his shelf, Watson turns around to look at the books. When he turns again to see the stranger, he sees Sherlock Holmes. In Watson’s recount:

When I turned again, Sherlock Holmes was standing smiling at me across my study table. I rose to my feet, stared at him for some seconds in utter amazement, and then it appears that I must have fainted for the first and the last time in my life. Certainly a gray mist swirled before my eyes, and when it cleared I found my collar-ends undone and the tingling after-taste of brandy upon my lips. Holmes was bending over my chair, his flask in his hand. (DOYLE, 2009, p.455)

With that, it can be seen that the appearance of Sherlock Holmes affected Watson in a very personal manner. Watson’s emotion is so exaggerated that the detective himself apologizes for causing that. The meeting and the surprise with the knowledge that Holmes is alive are followed by the questioning of what happened in the Reichenbach Falls, a questioning that was

possibly also being made by readers. Watson's questions "Is it really you? Can it indeed be that you are alive? Is it possible that you succeeded in climbing out of that awful abyss?" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 455) reassure to the readers that Holmes is back and that they will probably find more cases being published regularly. The answers demanded by Watson are also expected by the readers.

The explanation given by Holmes is quick and precise. Holmes answers:

"No, Watson, I never was in it. My note to you was absolutely genuine. I had little doubt that I had come to the end of my career when I perceived the somewhat sinister figure of the late Professor Moriarty standing upon the narrow pathway which led to safety (...) I walked along the pathway, Moriarty still at my heels. When I reached the end I stood at bay. He drew no weapon, but he rushed at me and threw his long arms around me (...) I have some knowledge, however, of *baritsu*, or the Japanese system of wrestling, which has more than once been very useful to me. I slipped through his grip, and he with a horrible scream kicked madly for a few seconds, and clawed the air with both his hands. But for all his efforts he could not get his balance, and over he went." (DOYLE, 2009, p. 456)

Holmes not only narrates how he ran from Moriarty but also emphasizes how Watson was wrong in his conclusions. With that, the detective tells the story of what happened in the Reichenbach Falls and answers to all of the doctor's questions, which may also be the readers' questions related to the story, leaving no loose ends. Also, with this narrative, Sherlock Holmes brings again the name of Moriarty, his nemesis, connecting him to the present case and showing a narrative coherence to his disappearance. The story justifies why Holmes had to remain hidden for some years – the diegetic time between the two stories is correspondent to the time of The Great Hiatus, blurring again the distinction between fact and fiction. According to Holmes, his disappearance was planned as

[t]here were at least three others whose desire for vengeance upon me would only be increased by the death of their leader. They were all most dangerous men. One or other would certainly get me. On the other hand, if all the world was convinced that I was dead they would take liberties, these men, they would soon lay themselves open, and sooner or later I could destroy them. Then it would be time for me to announce that I was still in the land of the living. So rapidly does the brain act that I believe I had thought this all out before Professor Moriarty had reached the bottom of the Reichenbach Fall. (DOYLE, 2009, p. 456)

With Holmes' revelation, the connection with Moriarty and his network brings about the villain that would be investigated in the case. These lines connect the narrative of "The Final Problem" with the plot of "The Empty Hearse": Moriarty's men are not only part of the explanation about why Holmes had to fake his own death but also the reason why he returned.

In this sense, both cases are diegetically connected and each short story has an investigation or adventure, even with the recount of the return in the later.

Holmes adds the information that only Mycroft, his brother, knew about his survival, and explains how it was important to convince Watson that he was indeed dead as he had to write and publish a convincing account to fool Moriarty's men. Holmes argues that "it is quite certain that you would not have written so convincing an account of my unhappy end had you not yourself thought that it was true" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 457). One can notice that Holmes was concerned with Watson and cared about their partnership when he adds: "Several times during the last three years I have taken up my pen to write to you, but always I feared lest your affectionate regard for me should tempt you to some indiscretion which would betray my secret" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 457).

Holmes' narrative, which was confirmed by the detective's presence, convinces Watson about what truly happened in Reichenbach Falls. This "remarkable" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 458) narrative (in Watson's description) takes half of the short story, answering the readers' questions and expectations about the return of the character and linking the dots generated in *The Great Hiatus*. It is followed by the new case, which will show the readers that the adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are back as they used to be:

"Work is the best antidote to sorrow, my dear Watson," said he; "and I have a piece of work for us both to-night which, if we can bring it to a successful conclusion, will in itself justify a man's life on this planet." In vain I begged him to tell me more. "You will hear and see enough before morning," he answered. "We have three years of the past to discuss. Let that suffice until half-past nine, when we start upon the notable adventure of the empty house." (DOYLE, 2009, p. 458)

The return of the old adventures is emphasized also when Watson clearly stated that "It was indeed like old times when, at that hour, I found myself seated beside him in a hansom, my revolver in my pocket, and the thrill of adventure in my heart." (DOYLE, 2009, p. 458). In this case, Holmes calls Watson to catch Colonel Sebastian Moran, "[t]he second most dangerous man in London." (DOYLE, 2009, p. 464) (the first one would be Moriarty) that was also persecuting them in Reichenbach Falls and was one of the reasons why Holmes had to fake his death.

In this short story, Watson follows Holmes to an empty house right in front of their old apartment, where they wait for Colonel. Watson sees that the shadow of a man who looks like Holmes is placed in their old window – such a perfect reproduction of Holmes that Watson had to "make sure that the man himself was standing beside me" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 459). The bust in wax was used to convince people that Holmes was there as he was sure he was being

watched by Moriarty's men. This way, Holmes would trick the Colonel and persecute him while he thought he was the one persecuting Holmes.

When Colonel shoots the wax figure, Holmes captures him after a brief fight including Watson. Lestrade appears to arrest the Colonel and exclaims "It's good to see you back in London, sir" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 461). This line, which would be repeated in BBC's "The Empty Hearse" in 2010 is shared by Holmes' reading public who, after the reading of this new adventure, would rejoice with the return of the detective. At the end of the short story, it is shown that everything was connected: the murderer mentioned at the beginning of the narrative was the Colonel, an incredible gun (described by Holmes as an "admirable and unique weapon" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 462)) said to be used by the Colonel was related to this crime and the reference in the short story "The Final Problem" to air-guns seemed to anticipate all these references. Holmes asks Watson "You remember at that date, when I called upon you in your rooms, how I put up the shutters for fear of air-guns?" (DOYLE, 2009, p. 464) making a clear reference to the previous short story. He continues explaining that

I knew exactly what I was doing, for I knew of the existence of this remarkable gun, and I knew also that one of the best shots in the world would be behind it. When we were in Switzerland he followed us with Moriarty, and it was undoubtedly he who gave me that evil five minutes on the Reichenbach ledge." (DOYLE, 2009, p. 464)

Thus, not only a new adventure is presented, but it is also clearly connected to the previous one. The short story ends with Holmes telling that

"Meanwhile, come what may, Colonel Moran will trouble us no more, the famous air-gun of Von Herder will embellish the Scotland Yard Museum, and once again Mr. Sherlock Holmes is free to devote his life to examining those interesting little problems which the complex life of London so plentifully presents." (DOYLE, 2009, p. 465)

This paragraph reassures the readers that he is indeed back. The conclusion of the case, rather than ending a story opens up space for new narratives, implying that new problems in London would be the source for new investigations. The analysis of "The Empty House" shows that the narrative elements present in most of the short stories in which Sherlock Holmes is portrayed are also present in this one. The readers' expectations are not directly addressed, but most of the questions that would have appeared concerning the supposed death and the return of the character are answered through Holmes' narrative. To understand how this short story is connected to the reading public, a discussion of its critical reception follows.

4.1.2 Reception of the short story

In October 1903 a large number of newspapers announced the return of Sherlock Holmes in *The Strand*, both commenting on his return and reviewing the new short story. In these articles, some different elements can be found: some rejoice in the return of the detective and some narrate how he explained his return, giving quotes of the short story. More emphasis is given to the return of the character than to the case of the Hon. Ronald Adair and Captain Moran, expressing the fans' curiosity about Holmes' survival. In this section, a sample of the articles and reviews is presented – the selections were chosen due to their relevance and connection to the readers' responses.

On October 9th, *The Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal* included an article announcing: “Sherlock Holmes alive! On those three absorbing words the magazine-reading public may chew ‘the cud of sweet fancy,’ as shakespeare so delightfully phrases it, for many months to come.” This announcement not only talks about the short story in October but informs that a series of investigations would be published in the following months. Continuing the article, they include some questions which according to them, “will readily occur to everyone” (“Sherlock Holmes”, 1903, p. 3):

How did Sherlock manage to escape the terrible death we all believe he died?
How did Sherlock manage to conceal the identity of his striking personality from his enemies and his friends during all those years? What was Sherlock doing that long period of time? How does Sherlock reveal himself to his friends in general and Doctor Watson in particular? (“Sherlock Holmes”, 1903, p. 3)

These questions posed in the article are said to be answered in “The Empty House” are also published by other newspapers, and reflect the readers' expectations concerning the return of the detective. *Swindon Advertiser and North Wilts Chronicle*'s “The Library: The October Magazines” announces the resurrection of the character while it argues that “questions will be asked by the millions who have mourned him as a real friend” (“The Library: The October Magazines”, 1903, p. 7). The article points out the short story as a source of the answer to them. The word “mourned” recalls the affective connection between the fans and the character, as the former would “mourn” after reading “The Final Problem” as they would believe that Holmes was dead.

Aberdeen Press and Journal's “Magazines” also recalls the fan's mourning when the detective died to announce his return: “It was with infinite regret that they learned that the great detective had at last come to grief; and great will be their pleasure to know now that their sorrow

at his passing has been premature, and that once more he distinguishing himself in unravelling the mysteries of crime.” (“Magazines”, 1903, p. 3) *The Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria* on October 16th also recalls the period of grieving: “Loud were the expressions of regret at his supposed death. Indeed, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, as his biographer in chief, received many recriminatory letters, when he recorded his death. One began with so violent an expression as ‘You Beast’. (“‘Sherlock Holmes’ and ‘The Strand Magazine’”, 1903, p. 1)

Also referring to the reader’s expectations and responses, *Cumberland & Westmorland Herald*’s “The October Magazines” praise the publication while commenting on how the fans would react to the return of the detective. The Great Hiatus is pointed out as a “too lengthy” period as if the return of the character was planned and should have happened earlier. They say that

[i]t seems that ‘Sherlock Holmes’ was not dead after all, and after an absence much too lengthy for the taste of his many admirers, he makes a welcome re-appearance on the some of his former triumphs in the ‘Strand Magazine’ for October, displaying all his old power of ingenuity as the prince of detectives. (“The October Magazines”, 1903, p. 6)

The Carmarthen Weekly Reporter published in its very first page an announcement of the publication of “The Adventure of the Empty House”, somehow anticipating its plot:

The circumstances which led to the belief of his death, as well as those which explain his escape from the murderous attack of Professor Moriarty are fully told in the October number of "The Strand Magazine," which will, therefore, have a more than ordinary absorbing interest for its readers. That Sherlock should have been living for three years, with hardly anybody aware of the fact is remarkable. Still more remarkable is his first appearance to his admirers in general, and to Dr Watson in particular, in the story which tells of his return to London, and the pursuit of his self-imposed calling as the greatest detective of his time; for, incredible though it may seem, Dr Watson actually sees and converses with him without being aware of his identity (“No Title”, 1903, p. 1).

The return of the character is also the main point in *Gloucester Journal*’s “Monthly Publications”. It includes a comment on the emotional connection between the readers and the character, marking an affective response to the new short story. The newspaper narrates that

when find the astute Holmes once more installed in his rooms in Baker street following his old rôle of investigator with all his previous keenness, and his reasons for his long absence are made known to us, we welcome him back most heartily and are highly pleased—and, incidentally, a little annoyed with ourselves for having ever credited the report of his death. "The Adventure the Empty House" compares favourably with preceding "adventures," and augurs favourably for those as yet to come. (“Monthly Publications”, 1903, p. 6)

A large number of adjectives, mainly complimenting Doyle for the short story, can be seen in the publications. *Fraserburgh Herald and Northern Counties' Advertiser's* "Magazines of the month: The Strand Magazine" announces that in October's *Strand*: "the reader is enabled to renew his acquaintance with the famous Sherlock Holmes, whom the talented author Conan Doyle has cleverly resuscitated" ("Magazines of the month: The Strand Magazine", 1903, p. 2). They add that "the famous detective has lost none of his former cunning daring all the years he has been in abeyance" ("Magazines of the month: The Strand Magazine", 1903, p. 2). When announcing "The Adventure of The Empty House", *Todmorden & District News'* "Received" refers to "Sherlock Holmes" as "those two magic words embodying an almost magical personality the world never fails to respond with answering thrill" ("Received", 1903, p. 7).

Most of the articles are not so concerned with the new case investigated by Sherlock Holmes as they are interested in announcing how the character returns and to explain how he survived from the episode narrated by Watson in "The Final Problem". Describing the diegesis, *The Daily News* announces that "Mr. Sherlock Holmes never died — as we had good reason to believe when the great detective and Professor Moriarty disappeared from the ledge over the Reichenbach Fall" ("Sherlock Revived.", 1903, p. 3). *Shrewsbury Chronicle's* "Reviews" also highlight that

[i]t turns out Sherlock Holmes never died—an exasperating thing to those of us who remember clearly the author's vivid description of his encounter on the lonely European pass with his greatest enemy, the arch-fiend Moriarty, which, as we all read it, ended in the death of both. But the marvellous happened after all, and how It happened is related before the wizard detective proceeds with his fresh exploits. ("Reviews", 1903a, p. 2)

Arthur Conan Doyle is praised in articles such as "The Magazines" from *Shetland Times* on October 3rd both for his writing style and for the plots he creates. The article announces that "[u]nder the title of 'The Adventure of the Empty House' Sherlock Holmes appears on the scene, causing no end of astonishment to his friend Watson" ("The Magazines", 1903, p. 5) and continues its review pointing out that it "is told in Conan Doyle's well-known fascinating style, and is complete in this number. There is no doubt whatever that the Strand will make big hit with the revival of the Sherlock Holmes' stories" ("The Magazines", 1903, p. 5).

Differently from most reviews that are only concerned with the return of the character, Bucks Herald's "Reviews", includes a small comment on the specific plot, which is related to Colonel Moran. At the end of the Review, it announces that "[a]ccording to the latest installment, 'The Adventure the Empty House,' Sherlock Holmes, however, escaped, and it is now recorded how he succeeds in bringing to bay and capturing a dangerous criminal who has

long been seeking his death” (“Reviews”, 1903b, p. 2) Berkshire Chronicle’s review “Our bookshelf” on this case praises the investigation narrated in the short story. According to them, “the murder of the Hon. Ronald Adair gives him the opportunity for a clever deduction and a clever capture, with plenty of excitement in it” (“Our bookshelf”, 1903, p. 8).

Even though most of the critics praised the story and the return of the detective, two articles present a negative perspective on “The Adventure of the Empty House”. In a publication discussing the recent publications, Barry Pain for *The Sphere* attributes this to the two different plots told in the short story: “[a]s a matter of fact it is two stories the story of his escape and return and the story of the empty house and they both suffer from being crowded together.” (1903, p. 32) He also points out some details that are not clearly solved in the story while he adds that “this is all afterthought and while I read him I enjoy him” (1903, p. 32) This is common fannish behavior: fans, who enjoy reading the short story spend a lot of time thinking about them, finding strong and weak points in the texts and adding their interpretation. *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* criticizes “The Adventure of the Empty House” as “a thrilling story, but the motive assigned for the murder of the Hon. Ronald Adair does not strike one as adequate” (“Salisbury Winchester J.”, 1903, p. 2).

Doyle himself comments on the reception of the short story in “Some Personalia About Mr. Sherlock Holmes”. He mentions a specific case of a boatman, who criticizes his writing, and discusses this short story as it is related to the other narratives of *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*:

The most trenchant criticism of the stories as a series came from a Cornish boatman, who remarked to me: ‘When Mr. Holmes had that fall he may not have been killed, but he was certainly injured, for he was never the same man afterwards.’ I hope the allegation is not true — and, indeed, those who have read the stories backward, from the latest to the first, assure me that it is not so — but it was a shrewd thrust none the less. (DOYLE, [s.d.]

In all the articles, critical comments are not detached from fans’ expectations with the short story. More emphasis is given to the return of the character and to the way that he explains his absence than to the case which he is investigating. This reaction expresses how people would create bounds with the detective and would cheer with his stories. “The Empty House” expresses not only one extra story, as the novel “The Hound of the Baskerville”, but also a promise of more stories to be published soon.

4.2 The so-expected television return of Sherlock Holmes

After the great cliffhanger related to Sherlock's fall from the rooftop in the series and the two years of increasing expectation to understand how the character survived, the episode "The Empty Hearse" also had a lot of fan questions to answer. Considering the expectation created by the narrative of the series, the episode needed to maintain the characteristics of the series, with an investigative plot, while it also had to surpass a large number of theories and fan fiction created in the "small hiatus". The director Moffat affirmed that the episode would focus on the effect that Sherlock's death had on the characters, adding an emotional background to the narrative.

4.2.1 The Empty Hearse

The episode "The Empty Hearse" begins with a sequence on the rooftop, addressing the cliffhanger right in the first seconds of the show. The first shots seem to be the same ones in "The Reichenbach Falls", giving the impression that this sequence would be a recap of the previous episode. The sequence begins with a fast traveling beginning on the grass and ending on a grave in which the name "Sherlock Holmes" is engraved (

Figure 49). The extra-diegetic music, which is very different from the usual series soundtrack, presents melodic variations of a theme that was specifically developed for the program. In this sequence, the music is fast and electronic, giving the idea of an action sequence rather than an emotional one. Together with the music, Watson's scream "Sherlock!" can be heard, reminding of his presence in the episode and his reaction to Sherlock's fall. This composition of shots seems to be a flashback as they highlight important moments from the previous episode.

Figure 49 - Close on Sherlock Holmes' grave recapping the last episode's plot



Source: Sherlock (2014)

In the grave, a shadow can be seen for less than 3 seconds, revealing that someone is approaching it. A closer look at this detail reveals that the man producing the shadow is Sherlock Holmes, as the figure is using a coat that in the series is rapidly associated with the detective. This shadow is a reminder of Sherlock's survival. With a fade to white, what seems to be a flashback sequence begins, with short shots in very fast succession. In a few seconds, the public is called to remember that Moriarty shot himself (Figure 50) and how Watson arrived at the scene, called Sherlock, and was asked to remain where he was (Figure 51).

Figure 50 - Shots that remind the audience that Moriarty killed himself



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 51 - Watson's participation in the sequence



Source: Sherlock (2014)

The selection of Sherlock's lines shown in this fragment is also revealing. Two lines can be heard in the succession of images: "It's just a magic trick" and "Stay exactly where you are". The first expression shows from the very beginning that the audience should be aware, from this moment, that some "trick" would happen: Sherlock would jump and seem to die, but the reality would be different. The second one highlights the importance of the location of the sequence, which gives an important clue about how everyone was fooled by Sherlock's fall.

When Sherlock is talking to Watson on the cellphone, new details are added to the sequence. Images from angles that were not seen in "The Reichenbach Falls" are added, giving the impression that the sequence was the so expected answer to the question "how did he fake his suicide?". In this sense, a man is seen carrying Moriarty's corpse behind Sherlock (Figure 52). From this angle, one can see that this action would not be perceived either from the street, where Watson was or from the other building, where Moriarty's informant was.

Figure 52 - New information added in the sequence



Source: Sherlock (2014)

A new sequence reveals how the plan developed: two men carry Moriarty's body to the hospital. The electronic music intensifies when a mask, contact lenses, and a coat are used to disguise Moriarty's corpse as Sherlock (Figure 53).

When Sherlock jumps, a new image (different from the previous episode) reveals that there is a rope connected to his body and that his fall is actually bungee jumping (Figure 53). The use of a mask and bungee jumping were theories mentioned by newspapers in the period between the episodes "The Reichenbach Falls" and "The Empty Hearse" and express the series' awareness of its own audience.

Figure 53 - Sherlock bungee jumping



Source: Sherlock (2014)

The character then enters the building from a lower window to Molly Hoopers' lab where he disconnects the hope, showing that she was part of the network that he used as part of his plan. He kisses her and leaves, meeting the expectation of fans who longed for a relationship between the characters. Moriarty's body with the mask is placed where Sherlock would have fallen, and fake blood composes the scenery which Watson would see a few minutes later. Watson, who fell on the ground when he was hit by a cyclist meets Derren Brown, a well-known British illusionist. Derren Brown hypnotizes Watson, delays his watch, and leaves the doctor when the setting up of Sherlock's fake place is completed. When Watson gets up, Sherlock leaves the hospital intact.

The long sequence is interrupted by Inspector Lestrade, who says "Bollocks!", showing that the sequence shown was just one theory and not the real explanation. Anderson's sentence "it's obvious", reveals that the sequence shown is one version created by him to explain that Sherlock survived. This interruption is a key moment for the audience, who were led to believe from the first shot that the sequence was a flashback rather than a projection of Anderson's

imagination. This can be seen in the online responses: a large number of viewers were commenting on the episode at the time that it was aired, and in the reviews of the episode this first sequence and its interruption are commented by some critics (as it will be discussed below).

As the conversation between the characters continues, Lestrade asks “Derren Brown?” and argues, “there was a body and that was definitely him”. His argument mirrors the articles in “The Great Hiatus” whose argument relies on the theory that the literary Holmes was not dead as there was no body in the scene. By evoking this argument, the series shows its difference to the literary narrative while referencing it, paying homage to the previous text while creating a new development to the story. Lestrade continues: “Bungee jump, mask, Derren Brown... Two years and the theories keep getting more stupid” (SHERLOCK, 2014). In this sentence, he might be talking about two contexts: first, the diegetic context, which is about Anderson’s narrative and the two years after the episode in St Bartholomew’s Hospital; second, the extradiegetic context, which refers to the two years in which theories were created and posted online. It is important to highlight that all details in the sequence were part of different fan theories, expressing an awareness of fan activity.

The episode continues showing Watson’s grieving over Sherlock’s grave, Sherlock’s meeting with Mycroft, and his request for Sherlock’s return and the other characters’ lives as they move on after what they considered it was the detective’s death. The series soundtrack returns to the usual while the narrative develops with two parallel stories: Sherlock’s return to London and the investigation of an underground terrorist cell. When Mycroft asks Sherlock to investigate a suspected terrorist attack, Mycroft warns him that Watson has not been prepared for his return. Sherlock then answers that he plans to get in touch with him, as he would be “delighted”. With this, the detective expresses how he was not aware of how people had reacted to his suicide, lacking consideration for their feelings and emotions. As he verbalizes his idea of appearing on Baker Street to talk to John he is surprised when Mycroft tells that Watson is not living there anymore, as “it’s been two years, he got on with his life” (SHERLOCK, 2014). Sherlock confirms his coldness when he questions “what life? I’ve been away” (SHERLOCK, 2014).

Sherlock meets Watson in a restaurant called *The Landmark*, as Mycroft revealed that the doctor had reserved places there. Sherlock, in disguise, tries to surprise Watson, but the latter is so anxious to propose to Mary that he cannot recognize him. When Sherlock finally talks to John and tells that he did not die, the doctor remains speechless and Mary gives voice to his expressive look: “Oh my God ... You’re dead ... Do you have any idea of what you did?”.

When Watson speaks, he questions: “Two years... I thought you were dead and you let me grieve... How could you do that?”. Watson’s question is interrupted by a joke made by Sherlock with his mustache, which would be recurring in the episode. Sherlock again shows he cannot understand human feelings, and Watson hits him. The sequence is followed by a shot in which the characters are talking in a less fancy restaurant when Sherlock starts to explain that he calculated 13 possibilities of survival when he called Moriarty to the rooftop. He starts to explain to them when he is interrupted by an angry John saying that he does not care how he faked it, but his main concern is why he did it. Sherlock then reveals that it was Mycroft’s plan and that Molly Hooper and The Baker Street Irregulars knew the plan (and consequently knew that he was not dead). Sherlock uses humor again in his answer to John and he gets angry, creating confusion again. They continue their conversation in a smaller place when Sherlock asks him to be part of the investigation. When Sherlock says that Watson had to admit that he missed the investigations, he is hit again, and the sequence ends with them talking on the street. This way, the episode refers to the question of how Sherlock survived and expresses how the “why” question is more important than “how”. While the fans kept trying to answer the latter, which Sherlock would easily explain, the former involves a more complex understanding of the narrative. The reason why Sherlock had to fake his death and could not get in touch with other characters would be the cause of their grief and involves a deeper understanding of their relationships and emotions, which would be one of the main themes of the episode.

After a brief sequence of the characters Lestrade, Molly Hooper, and Miss Hudson’s reaction to Sherlock’s return, a new version of the fall is presented. The soundtrack changes again, giving a hint of the sequence’s content. This time, the sequence begins with Watson’s perspective (Figure 54), when he and Sherlock are talking on the phone. Sherlock says “Don’t move! Keep your eyes fixed on me” and a new shot shows that Watson is actually looking at a doll with Sherlock’s coat and a mask (Figure 55) which cannot be identified by Watson as he is very far from him. Meanwhile, Sherlock is behind the figure with Moriarty (Figure 56), who is with him enjoying the trick played on Watson (Figure 57). The two characters stare at each other and get closer to kiss each other (Figure 58), but the sequence is interrupted by Anderson asking “are you out of your mind?” (Figure 59). In the sequence, the girl Laura who created this theory argues “I don’t see why not”, expressing her freedom to create her own narrative.

Figure 54 - The second version of the fall begins with Watson's perspective



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 55: A mask and a coat give the impression that Sherlock is in the rooftop



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 56 - Sherlock and Moriarty are behind the figure



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 57 - Sherlock and Moriarty are together controlling the figure



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 58 - The two characters get closer to kiss...



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 59 - The sequence is interrupted by Anderson



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Anderson's interruption shows that the sequence is a theory created by Laura, one member of the fan club named "The Empty Hearse". Particularly this sequence, but also the entire episode, represent fans and their reaction, in a way directing the expected behavior of the series audiences. Paul Booth defines fans as "both as a practice of resistance to media hegemony

and as an identity of consumer complicity within that same hegemonic state” (2015, p. 3). Fans action, which occurs in a “liminal state between resistant and complicit in institutional context” (2015, p. 4) are represented by the group “The Empty Hearse”, which not only follows the detective and possible hints of his survival but also create and discuss multiple theories of the character’s fall.

The conversation between Anderson and Laura is interrupted when a television program announces that Sherlock is alive, and the screen gets crowded by the hashtags “#SherlockisNotDead” “#SherlockHolmesAlive!” and “SherlockLives”, which were used in the teasers to promote the series. The characters use their phones to comment on the subject and use the hashtags in their social network, inciting implicitly the audience to do the same. When the audience responds to this and comments online, the series gets promoted.

“The Empty Hearse” members bring about a discussion of “hyperfans”, a term coined by Booth. The term “hyperfan” is chosen as a reference to Jean Baudrillard’s term “hyperreality”, which is connected to the idea that “we are unable to separate the reality of the image from the meditation of that image” (2015, p. 80). Based on that, he argues that the representation of fans in series and films “doesn’t actually represent an authentic experience but deliberately constructs and discipline audiences” (2015, p. 80). He identifies two identities of fans that are commonly present in mediatic narratives: the hyperfan and the “proper” fan. According to Booth, “the media industries offer more ‘normalized’ representations of fans for non-fan audiences while also implicitly criticizing overt fan behaviors” (2015, p. 76). By presenting excessive fandom in a negative and pejorative portrayal, the representation of the hyperfan “serves as an exemplar for the audience as a demonstration of ‘proper’ fandom” (2015, p. 77). In *Sherlock*, three kinds of fans can be identified – two hyperfans (Anderson and Laura) and one “proper” fan (Watson). All of them are diegetically inserted within the narrative as they are all characters within the plot.

Anderson, the former police member, criticizes Sherlock in the first and second seasons and is one of the responsible for Sherlock’s fall in the public opinion in “The Reichenbach Falls”. After Sherlock’s fake suicide, he is one of the few who believe that the character, against all odds, is alive. In the two years between this event and his return, Anderson looked for the detective, collecting different theories and trying to convince other people that Sherlock was alive. His excessive behavior is also seen in his appearance: his eyes, beard, and hair reveal that

he sleeps little and is not concerned with his look. Anderson is the creator of “The Empty Hearse”, a fan club that gathers people using Sherlock’s hats to discuss these theories, and also the creator of a set of rules of behavior that are criticized by Laura.

Laura, the creator of the second version of the fall in the episode, is another fan – but even though she admires and follows Sherlock, she questions the rules and conventions of the fan club, problematizes some of Anderson’s opinions, the news’ perspective of the detective and the production of new narratives. Her version of the fall, which can be considered a slash fanfiction³⁴, incorporates the discussion often seen among fans of Sherlock Holmes about the character’s sexuality. When the television announces that Sherlock was indeed alive, she has a stereotyped behavior: her surprise leads her to comment instantaneously in her social network, creating and sharing hashtags to follow the online discussion.

Differently, Watson has the expected behavior of what would be an ideal Sherlock’s fan: he admires the character and follows him in his investigation, but at the same time he has a romance with someone else, he is concerned with his physical appearance, he has a proper job while improving his professional career when the detective is not with him. When Watson finally meets Sherlock, he is more concerned with the motives that lead him to fake his death than with the explanation about how he did. When Sherlock gives up on explaining it to him, he has no exaggerated reactions and their friendship continues as it was.

The next sequence shows references to the transmedia world of Sherlock. It begins with Mary’s reading of John Watson’s post on his blog – her tablet device shows the layout of Watson’s blog, but the exact quote she is reading, which supposedly corresponds to the blog entry “The Speckled Blond”, is not on the online version available to fans on his blog (“<http://www.johnwatsonblog.co.uk/blog/13july>”). In this text, Watson shares his feelings about the death of his best friend and comments on the repercussion of the supposed suicide. This diegetic reference to the blog can be seen as, in Sharon Marie Ross’ definition, an “organic” strategy (2009, p. 8)³⁵ to call the audience participation, as it suggests that the audience may continue their experience in the web without directly saying so. Camila Augusta Pires de Figueiredo calls these points in which the series makes reference to the other

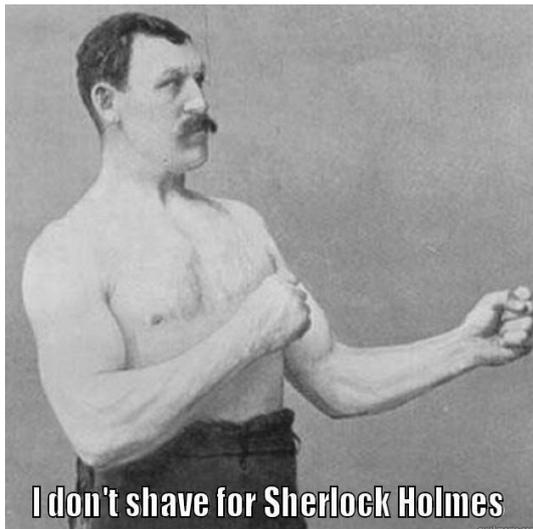
³⁴Anne Jamison defines “slash” as “homoerotic romance, usually between characters canonically portrayed as straight” (85) Commonly this kind of fanfiction is classified by the names of the characters with a slash among them. In this episode, her narrative is a Sherlock/Moriarty story – or, as it is known, a Sheriarty story.

³⁵ Marie Ross points out two different strategies to call the audience participation: the open and the organic. The first one refers to programs in which the public can interact live with the show, as in *American Idol*, while the second implies that the public is digitally inserted, so they will extend their experience to the web.

transmedia narratives as “migratory strategies”³⁶ which are used to move the audience from the television to the internet.

In the series, Mary stops reading Watson’s blog when he talks to her, and she notices that he is shaving, as it was earlier suggested by Sherlock. When Mary mocks him for taking into consideration Sherlock’s opinion, Watson says “I don’t shave for Sherlock Holmes” and Mary replies, “You should put that on a T-shirt”. This resulted in a large number of official T-shirts being sold by BBC, besides a larger number of non-official products and memes. Examples of fan-created content can be seen in Figure 60, in which the content of the series is explored in a picture used for different memes at the time and in Figure 61, making a joke with Watson’s mustache.

Figure 60 - Meme created within the context of “The Empty Hearse”

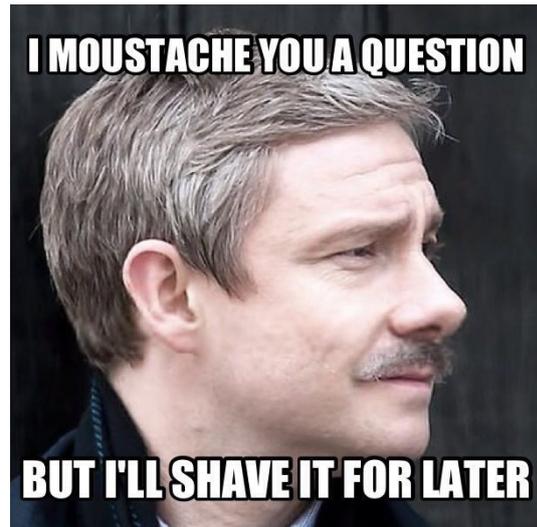


Source:

<http://www.quickmeme.com/p/3vr951>.

Access in 26/06/19

Figure 61 - Fan production with a joke related to Sherlock’s plot



Source:

[https://i.pinimg.com/originals/7c/5a/61/7c](https://i.pinimg.com/originals/7c/5a/61/7c5a61b7293ae9d8a378591a1e92480a.jpg)

[5a61b7293ae9d8a378591a1e92480a.jpg](https://i.pinimg.com/originals/7c/5a/61/7c5a61b7293ae9d8a378591a1e92480a.jpg)

³⁶ According to Figueiredo, “Usually, the use of these resources by the characters is followed by migratory signs exhibited throughout the program, which is one of the producer’s strategies to make the public move from television to the internet. As it was previously explained, they are hints that the more attentive public should observe in each episode and that leads them to the character’s blog – as the online journal of Dr. Watson – to fictional profiles or invented news about the fictional world” (2016, p. 191- my translation).

Half an hour after the episode began, the focus of the narrative changes from Sherlock's return to the case investigated by him. In "The Empty Hearse", Sherlock is called by Mycroft to investigate the subway system and the prediction of a terrorist attack in London. Also in this episode, Watson is kidnapped and tied to a Guy Fawkes fire and rescued by Sherlock with Mary's help. The date and the bonfires help Sherlock to solve the case, understanding that there would be a terrorist attack on the parliament in the same date that an antiterrorist law would be voted.

In one of the final sequences, Sherlock and Watson find out how a bomb would explode the parliament and, while they try to deactivate the bomb, Sherlock apologizes for not telling John that he was alive. The sequence is interrupted by another narrative of how Sherlock survived the fall, the third one in the episode. It begins with an image that reminds old amateur records (Figure 62), signaling that it is Sherlock narrating his story to someone (Figure 63). Sherlock explains the plan developed by him and Mycroft from its beginning to the fall. Sherlock repeats that there were 13 likely scenarios at the rooftop, adding that they were discussed in detail with Mycroft to guarantee that he would survive. He narrates how he texted his brother a code (Figure 64) that would be repassed to all the people involved in the plan expressing what they would do. The chosen plan involved an air-bag (Figure 65), which was already predicted by one newspaper – and the air-bag was removed when John was trying to reach the scene (Figure 66). The corpse that John saw was provided by Molly Hooper and, when he was hit by the cyclist, Sherlock had time to change places with the corpse. A squash ball was used under the armpit (Figure 67), which was also seen in fan theories. In this version of the story, the soundtrack is the common soundtrack of the series, exposing that it is the true version. As the clue that this one is the true one is not so evident, some fans ended the episode without an answer to the question about how Sherlock survived.

Figure 62 - Third version of the fall implying that it is a video record



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 63 - The fall is narrated by Sherlock himself in the video record



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 64 - A text message would inform which plan would be followed



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 65 - An airbag is used to protect Sherlock from the fall



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 66 - The airbag being quickly removed



Source: Sherlock (2014)

Figure 67 - Squash ball used under the armpit



Source: Sherlock (2014)

This narrative, which includes a large number of references to theories created in the period between seasons two and three and to online discussions, illustrates how the series

acknowledges fans' expectations, reactions, and discussions. After this narrative, a zoom-out reveals that Sherlock is narrating his story to Anderson, who was recording it. Anderson asks Sherlock some details about the story and ends up saying that this was "not the way I'd have done it". The conversation continues:

Anderson: I'm not saying it's not clever,
 Sherlock: What?
 Anderson: Bit disappointed
 Sherlock: Well, everyone's a critic (SHERLOCK, 2014).

Besides the diegetic context of the conversation, this dialogue may also be seen as an anticipation to the audience's reaction to "The Empty Hearse". With all the expectations generated with the episode, the possibility of disappointing fans was huge, and Sherlock's line shows how the series was aware of that. At the end of their conversation, Anderson questions Sherlock on different details showing that he was not satisfied with what he got as an answer.

After stopping the bomb, Sherlock is asked to give an interview. In a brief conversation with Watson before appearing to the cameras, John asks Sherlock if he would tell his story. When Watson talks about Sherlock's funeral, Sherlock says he was there and that he heard when Watson asked him to stop being dead. He ends the conversation saying that it is "time to be Sherlock Holmes", announcing that the series is back, in the same manner as it was some years ago.

4.2.2 Reviews of "The Empty Hearse"

After the release of the episode "The Empty Hearse", a large number of reviews were published. Most of them focus on the solution given to the cliffhanger – when the audience expected that the narrative would show one solution to how Sherlock survived, the episode showed three different versions, asking the audience to play the detective while watching it. An analysis of the content of these reviews illustrates the relationship between the media industry and the audience, as the importance of the responses given by the audience were points highlighted by different reviewers, thus, showing how the media industry is aware of the role of fans and audience not only as receivers of the narrative but also as capable of influencing its production. In this section, the references to the cliffhanger are highlighted, showing how the reviews discuss the solutions proposed by the show and their relationship to what was discussed earlier in newspapers and highlighted in the previous chapter of this dissertation.

On the same date that the episode was aired, Chris Havery (2014) and Sam Wolfson (2014) published their reviews, both referring to the cliffhanger and the theories. Harvey, for

The Telegraph, compares how the episode begins with what the fans expected: one thrilling sequence explaining the fall that refers to the theories published online by fans. This sequence, which soon reveals to be a joke played by the producers – in his words, is “a great twist at the end of a rollercoaster ride” (n. p.). Besides this sequence and the second possible explanation of the fall, Harvey criticizes the true explanation, arguing that it should be more ingenious, and the terrorist plot of the episode, that, in his opinion, is not convincing. He concludes: “But in the end it didn't matter. This was the triumphant return of the most charismatic, most fun character on British television, played by Cumberbatch with insouciant verve. Sherlock wasn't flawless but it was brilliant” (n. p.).

Wolfson, for *The Guardian*, also points out that the terrorist plot was “silly”, highlighting that the focus of the narrative is the reaction of the characters to Sherlock's survival. He also points out that “[t]he real issue then, was not how Sherlock managed to survive a four-story fall, but how to make the reveal – after two years of waiting and such great expectations – not feel like a disappointment” (n. p.). These reviews point out the challenge already announced by Moffat of dealing with the audience expectation. In this sense, the reviewers and the producers agree on this point: the highest the expectation is related to the solution of a cliffhanger, the more difficult it is to please the audience.

The day after the episode was released in the British television, two articles published in the *Daily Mail* stand out reviewing the content of the episode. They both comment on how the audience reacted to the episode on social media, mainly on Twitter. An anonymous Daily Mail Reporter includes images with several examples of fan reactions during the episode. According to this article, “Generally, the reviews were favourable, with just a small group of people claiming the episode was overly-complicated, camp and confused. One viewer wrote: ‘90 mins of my life I will never be able to get back. BBC. You owe me’” (2014 n. p.) Showing different examples of fan reaction, the article expresses how the audience was responding to the narrative at the same time that it was being broadcast for the first time, a practice that has become common with new media and that is been used commercially by television networks to interact with the audiences.

In the same date, Nich Enoch and Jessica Earnshaw's article focuses on the participation of the Cumberbatch's real parents as Sherlock's parents in the episode, and the positive reaction by the audience on their acting. They also comment on the reactions posted online quoting one

of the posts: “Viewer Matt Locke wrote: ‘The first 5mins of #Sherlock is the best example of how to write event TV drama in the age of Twitter. Very well played’” (2014 n. p.) With these reviews, it can be verified that the criticism of the narrative of the series is also connected to the reactions online from the viewers of the series.

On January 27, Emily Nussbaum (2014) discusses *Sherlock* and its audiences in a review entitled “Fan Friction”, for *The New Yorker*. She focuses on the relationship between the series and its audience, comparing and contrasting it to Doyle’s narratives and the fan reaction to them. In her review, she points out that Watson is represented as Sherlock’s fan. She also comments on the second episode, defining it in the opposite direction: at Watson’s wedding, Sherlock is seen as his fan. According to her, “it’s an episode about Sherlock Holmes as a fan—the god stooping to praise the human.” (n. p.). Concluding her review, she sums up the series to add that “The show is at its best in such moments, these sequences that capture the semi-virtual, semi-real ways that we think, and feel, and meet, and connect today” (n. p.).

The day after the release of the episode, IGN published Daniel Krupa’s “Sherlock: ‘The Empty Hearse’ Review” (2014), which begins discussing the questions that the episode was expected to answer, pointing out that “explanations weren’t forthcoming” (n. p.). Talking about the three different versions of Sherlock’s survival presented in the episode, Krupa comments that “It was coquettish, playful stuff and worked well, cutting through the emotional debris the situation had also created” (n. p.). He also highlights that “the test of a truly great cliffhanger comes later, when it’s time to resolve those events” (n. p.) – following the same idea that led Moffat to declare previously that they would have a hard time to meet the audience expectation. Krupa adds:

[a]nd after all of the recriminations and tears, we finally learned how Sherlock did it. Or did we? Holmes eventually divulged his version of events, yet it was implied that the real solution remains firmly up the large sleeve of his dapper coat. Holmes knows better than most that explanations never satisfy. Behind the impossible, the unfathomable, always plods the mundane, unnoticed. Who knows if we’ll ever get a definitive resolution – I, for one, don’t mind if there’s interminable speculation. It all seems fittingly Sherlockian. (n. p.)

For the author, the episode is good, but it is different from the series standards, as it keeps more time trying to solve the cliffhanger issue (which in his opinion might not be solved at all) than presenting a new case, which would be expected.

After the screening in the USA, many newspapers published reviews praising both the series and the episode. On January 16, Robert Bianco (2014) for the *USA Today* defines Sherlock’s possible death and the revelation of his survival as

a joke, one Sherlock shares. ("Oh, please. Killing me? That's so two years ago.") Over the course of the episode, numerous theories are offered as to how he could have survived the jump, some from Sherlock, some from the "Empty Hearse" fan club that provides the episode with its title. All are implausible; none is certified as real. At least not yet. (n. p.)

Even though he related the three explanations presented to Sherlock's survival to narrative instances, he does not connect them to online discussions and fandom, which is one of the objectives of this thesis. Overall, Bianco praises the episode and the series, highlighting the way that it portrays the relationship between Sherlock and Watson.

On January 18, Robert Lloyd (2014) reviews the episode and the series, including interesting comments on its cinematic aspects. Concerning the cliffhanger and how the series deals with Sherlock's return, he points out that diegetically

[t]his return is anticipated within the series itself by a group of Sherlock cultists called the Empty Hearse (also the title of the first episode), to echo "The Adventure of the Empty House," the story in which Arthur Conan Doyle brought the original Holmes back from the presumed dead — and also to reflect Cumberbatch's own followers. Its bickering members imagine the ways in which Sherlock cheated death, including a takeoff on fan-written "slash fiction," in which Holmes and nemesis "Jim" Moriarty nearly kiss. (n. p.)

Within this review, the connection of the series narrative with fan writing and fan activity reviews connected to Cumberbatch's followers reveals that the critics are also aware of the different ways in which the series relates to its audience. Also, it is important to highlight the connection between "The Empty Hearse" and "The Adventure of the Empty House", expressing how the fan issue is present both in Doyle's and in Moffat and Gatiss' narrative.

Louisa Mellor (2014) for *Den of Geek* comments on the narrative choices to solve the mystery of Sherlock's fall and argues that "[t]hat was a smart solution – perhaps the *only* solution – to defuse the tension of two years' speculation without leaving anyone disappointed. Make 'em laugh, as the old song goes" (n. p.) This reference to the audience's expectation and the solution reveals how critics were eager to see how the series would deal with the tension generated around the cliffhanger. Mellor also points out the relationship between the series and the audiences when she highlights that

[o]n that note, the red herrings performed another role in *The Empty Hearse* by absorbing *Sherlock's* real-world celebrity and serving it back up to fans with a brash wink. The fantasy versions of Sherlock shared lingering kisses with Molly and – very nearly – Moriarty, echoing a thousand fanfics. The red carpet was all but rolled out for the return of Sherlock's fan-favorite Belstaff coat. "I believe in Sherlock Holmes" said Anderson at one point, speaking in hashtag. (n. p.)

Considering her report, one can see that the narrative choices may all be linked to fan activity and their tastes: some events are inspired by trends in fanfiction, the coat is also part of fan's choices and one character's sentence is often shared by fans in hashtags in different social media. Related to that, she comments:

[w]hen a show joins in with the shipping and throws opens its doors to fandom, it risks becoming a pantomime of its greatest hits, its story playing second fiddle to the preening moments when it flashes its veneers and winks to camera. At worst, it becomes an end-of-term revue sketch, a ham and in-joke sandwich. Cleverly, *The Empty Hearse* avoids all that (n. p.).

Even with the devices that she connects strongly with fan activities, she recognizes the quality of the narrative and its capacity to entertain those who are not fans, “the millions-strong audience who haven't spent the last two years updating blogs with rooftop fall theories and calculating angles of impact” (n. p.). This point is important to the success of the series as it may be popular not only for those who consider themselves fans and get involved in fandom but also by the overall public who watches the series as entertainment.

On January 19, Genevive Valentine (2014) reviews the episode for the *Av/TV Club*. Related to the cliffhanger, Valentine points out that “[o]ne of the most off-putting threads in ‘The Empty Hearse’ is its attempts to illustrate how Sherlock survived the Fall, for which Moffat assured viewers the answer was forthcoming. Spoilers: nope. Instead, we get a collection of fan scenarios that could have been lifted from Tumblr” (n. p.). With this comment, she expresses awareness of the theories which circulated online and recognizes how they were echoed (not to say reproduced) in the writing of the plot. She still comments on how the relationship between Sherlock and John should be the focus of criticism, as the main theme of the narrative is the effect of the return of the detective on the other characters' lives.

Differently from most of the criticism which complements the episode, Hannah Shaw-William (2014) for the *Screen Rant* defines the episode as a good entrance to the season but a bad episode by itself. According to her, “The Empty Hearse' definitely feels like a 'Part 1' more than either of the other season openers (...) One unfortunate side effect of this is that the episode's plot and structure feel rather loose and meandering – more like a collection of minisodes than a cohesive whole” (n. p.). When most critics praise the narrative for the encounter between Sherlock and John, Shaw-William highlights the loose plot. No comments refer to the cliffhanger, showing that the episode was criticized isolated from the other seasons and the media debate that surrounds the series.

James Hibberd's “recap” for *Entertainment Weekly* (2014) includes a sequence-by-sequence description of the episode, together with some analytical comments and personal

remarks. Talking about the hiatus between seasons two and three, Hibberd highlights that “it was still an awfully long time, and wouldn’t you know it — that wait has been mixed into the creative DNA of Sunday’s season 3 premiere, along with plenty of other fan-driven notions” (n. p.). In a personal tone, Hibberd describes the first sequence of the episode, emphasizing the blanks, the expectations, and the negation:

[w]e open with instant excitement as we’re back at the rooftop: We’re going to find out how Sherlock survived! We’re going to find out *immediately*. No mucking around. And what we see is ... insane. Scenes leading up to Sherlock’s rooftop leap, a reminder that Sherlock told Watson it was “a magic trick” and that he insisted Watson stay in that exact spot across the street. Then: A team out of nowhere grabs Moriarty’s body, puts a *Mission Impossible*-style Sherlock mask on the corpse, Sherlock leaps with a bungee cord, bounces back up and smashes through the window, smooches Molly (!) and Moriarty’s disguised body is left on the sidewalk for Watson to find — but not before he’s given a hypnotic delay by Darren Brown (U.S. translation: British hypnosis celebrity). It’s all very exciting ...

And pretty disappointing in its ridiculousness.

Just when we’re starting to think, “Oh well ... maybe the rest of the episode will be better?” We hear—

“Bollocks!” Lestrade denouncing Anderson’s theory that we just witnessed as to how Sherlock faked his death. We realize: We’ve been punk’d! Or whatever the Brit version is of *Punk’d*. Relief floods. Oh Sherlock, we knew you wouldn’t do that to us (n. p.).

Concerning the way that the episode brings the online discussions into the screen, Hibberd comments that “it’s quite clever to bring the Internet speculation surrounding the cliffhanger into the show itself” (n. p.).

Michael Dirda’s review “A Stylized Sherlock” (2014) for *The New York Review of Books* talks about the episode as one which “focuses our attention on Holmes’s attempts to win back Watson’s trust and affection” (n. p.). Dirda highlights how the “show leaves almost everything open to doubt” (n. p.), including the explanation on how Sherlock survived the fall. Dirda also defines the episode as metafictional, as “It even includes videos, supposedly submitted by young *Sherlock* fans, that explain how their hero might have survived his fall. At regular intervals, too, the action actually pauses so that the camera can linger on the Byronically handsome Cumberbatch, brooding Batman-like over the city of London” (n. p.). In his perspective, the emphasis on fan activity and the clear influence that the audience had on the plot may be negative, as it may become too narcissistic. In this sense, the author “wonder[s] if it has grown a little too self-aware and too reliant on punning riffs for its titles, plots, and in-jokes” (n. p.).

Daniel Bettridge's recap for *Vulture* (2014) refers to the cliffhanger as it "ranks up there with TV's biggest mysteries: Who shot J.R.? What exactly is the island on *Lost*? And just who are the people still tuning in to Fox's *Dads*?" (n. p.) After describing the first sequence of the episode and the way it is not correspondent to the series world, he highlights that the following sequence, in which Lestrade voices "the opinion we'd all been building toward over the preceding five minutes: 'Bollocks!'" (n. p.) reveals much about the mediatic context of the series. In his opinion, when Lestrade says "Two years and the theories keep getting more stupid", he

might as well be speaking for writers Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss; who are taking the time to acknowledge the rampant speculation that's taken over the Internet like an illiterate burger-eating kitten in the two years since Sherlock's death-defying stunt. It's the start of a running gag throughout this episode that sees the writers doff their deerstalker in the direction of the fan's who've dreamt up ever more absurd explanations for the events of "The Reichenbach Falls" (n. p.).

He comments on the decision to use different theories to explain how he survived as a way "to ensure that after two years of waiting that it wasn't a disappointment" (n. p.).

As can be seen, the solution of the cliffhanger and the interaction between *Sherlock* and its audiences are themes present in a large number of reviews on online newspapers and magazines of "The Empty Hearse". Even though there is a small number that disregarded them, they show that the cliffhanger was so important that the narrative could not be fully understood without the context of the online discussions and fan activity.

With the episode in Reichenbach Falls, people believed that Holmes died, even though some would hope that there was a different explanation of what happened to him. Ten years later, when the announcement of a new series of stories was published, a large number of questions related to the supposed death of the character were raised, together with the expectation of following new cases in the same pattern from the previous ones. The analysis of the short story "The Empty House" proposed in this chapter shows that the return of the detective happened in a short story that uses similar narrative elements from the previous narratives, meeting the audience's expectation of the story's structure. There is no direct reference to the audience's response in the narrative, but it succeeds in explaining the return of the character while also developing a new case. The reviews of the short story show that most people were more concerned with the return of the character than with how he survived, leaving the case of Ronald Adair in third place.

Differently, in “The Empty Hearse” the references to the audience’s responses and the relationship between media and audiences are explicit. *Sherlock* illustrates the “participatory culture” defined by Jenkins (2006) both in the references made to the theories created by fans and in the metafictional representation of fans, hyperfans, and fan clubs. This complex relationship between media and audiences generates fidelity and, by enabling the public to participate in the process of production, *Sherlock* captures the heart of the public who is willing to freely promote the series, buy products and watch several times the same episodes. The importance of fans to the construction of the narrative to the episode and the narrative references to them are recognized in most of the reviews of the episode, showing how important fan audiences are for the television program.

5 Conclusion

Fandom practices begin with an emotional attachment to a narrative combined with some form of discontent. While fans like the stories they read/watch, they imagine and hope for different events and story ends. In the specific case of Sherlock Holmes and *Sherlock*'s audiences/readers, this discontent may refer to the long period between one story and the other, which opens space for discussions and creativity or to a disagreement with the development of the story, which leads many fans to express their disappointment and/or write their own versions of what they believe it would be better. This can already be seen in the expression of discontent in the magazine articles mourning Holmes' death and in the creation of alternative solutions to his fall. Nowadays, fans are getting louder – they follow the actors' personal activities and the recordings of the series, they discuss the stories online and produce a massive number of online creative content.

Fan practices changed from Doyle's period not only in their forms of expression but also in their intensity: what started as fan clubs protesting about Doyle's decision developed to fanzines and fan conventions even before the popularity of the internet – and the contemporary online tools changed the way fans meet, talk and behave. Identification with the character and the narrative continues, with fans even cosplaying their favorite characters in conventions. Cosplay in this sense means dressing up like a character – and more than that, it means imitating characters' voices, expressions, and behavior, in what can be considered as performing the character in an amateur way.

Media specificities and the technological development of the media are connected to these differences, as they are mediators of the changes in fan behavior and not their causes. While television and the internet open up more space for interaction between the audiences and the narratives, it is a change in their relationship with the media, seen in how the audience is finding more ways to interact and influence the narratives they like (which is a consequence of the two aforementioned mediators) that makes them use them in different ways. Internet, mainly, opened up a cheap and unlimited space for the creation of virtual communities, amateur production, and interaction both with real people and fictional creations. Now, audiences can read Watson's narrative in the same format and platform that they publish their own writings (both personal and fictional), they can see Holmes using SMS and Twitter in the same way that they use to talk with their friends and family.

In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, I analyzed the rhetoric of the short stories and the television series to show their connection to the responses given by fans, both in fans' involvement with the narrative as well as fans' productions. In these analyses, the theoretical tools were used to investigate the questions proposed. The concepts developed by Iser and Jauss in the reader-response criticism approach were very helpful to understand how audiences experience Doyle's 'narrative and Moffat's and Gatiss's adaptation and to identify the strategies in the narrative structure of these texts that invite audiences' participation.

As demonstrated in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, detective stories, which propose a game to be played along with the detective in the process of reading, are good instances to investigate audiences' relationship with Sherlock Holmes and *Sherlock*. The main characteristics of the genre can be identified both in the short story and in the television series, and are important to raise the audience's expectations related to the narratives. As most of the readers/audience are aware of some of the conventions of the detective stories, they are invited to investigate the case with the detective. Also, the specificities of the short stories in literary magazines (as the plot structure followed by Doyle in most of his short stories, the blanks in them and their metafictional aspect) and of television series (as the onscreen-text and the cliffhangers) are influential in raising audience's expectations, thus, helping to understand the close relationship (almost visceral) between the narratives and their receivers.

Considering specifically the narratives of the death (or supposed death) of Sherlock Holmes, some aspects are seen as places of interaction between readers/audiences and the narrative and have influenced directly their responses. The short story "The Final Problem", beginning with Watson's regret for the death of his friend, directs a mourning tone that would also be seen in the articles published by different newspapers and magazines reporting the detective's death. The filtering of Watson's perspective in the narratives is highly influential in this sense, as he guides the readers' expectations and curiosity, also the tone given to the adventure and the conclusion of the story. When Watson sees no footprints of Holmes returning from the edge of the falls and talks about how Holmes was a great man, he assures that Holmes' death is true and definitive.

The episode "The Reichenbach Falls" also shows how the series narrative guides the audiences' understanding and reception of the story while it also invites the audience to participate either in the investigation of the case and in the promotion of the show. In *Sherlock*,

the audience has access to Sherlock's investigation process mainly through the editing, with the use of on-screen text, fast and slow camera movements, and voice-over narration. The beginning of the episode, similarly to the short story, which begins with Watson talking about the death of the detective, assures the audience that Sherlock died. The audiences' curiosity about how that happened only ends at the end of the episode and the new fact brought by the appearance of Sherlock in the graveyard raises a new question to be left as a cliffhanger: how did he survive? Cliffhangers were common in the previous episodes, but this specific one worked to create a small hiatus, parallel to the great hiatus from Doyle's stories.

In the short story, no migratory strategy or invitational mode of participation can be identified as described by Figueiredo and Ross in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. However, the rhetoric of the story mainly in its narration and text guides the readers in a process of investigation mainly led by curiosity. While Watson narrates the story, the dialogues written by him postpone the readers' cognition of the actual diegetic events in Holmes' death, thus increasing the emotional attachment between the reader and the detective. The first sentence of the short story and of the series sets the morning tone of the narratives, already announcing the death of Holmes. The language used, in this sense, has a strong influence on the experience of the narrative events.

Watson's first-person narration of the short story is an important rhetorical tool for the reading experience. As the readers follow the narrator in his relationship with Holmes, the emotional bonds between the characters also influence the attachment that the readers develop with them. Differently, the audiovisual resources of the series such as onscreen text, voice over narration, camera angles and movements enable the audience to follow Sherlock's process of investigation with the character, with information and clues that other characters have no access to, making the audience one-step ahead of Watson and the other characters. The bond with the detective, which in the short story was mediated by his relationship with Watson through his narration, in the series is mediated by the television apparatus. As there is mainly a camera narrator, not a character, there is an impression of a more direct connection with the detective.

It is important to emphasize the role of intellectual curiosity in the relationship established by the narratives and the receivers. In the short story, the narrative raises the readers' curiosity while it proposes an investigation game. While Watson narrates new events, the readers can connect the clues to finally understand what happened to the detective. This game generated by curiosity also happens in the series, with an additional instance: when Sherlock is seen alive in the last seconds of the episode with no explanation on how he survived, the

curiosity generated by the cliffhanger works as a tool to promote the series and to call the audience to watch the following season.

Comparing and contrasting these two narratives, one can see that neither of them has explicit calls for reader participation, but they use conventions of the genre and the technical media to involve the reader/audiences, inviting them to follow the narrative as detectives. While the short story does so with the language, postponing an explanation about Holmes' death to generate curiosity, the series used cinematic conventions, visual icons, and clues for the same purpose. The former, by presenting a conclusion to the story affirming that the detective is dead, generated commotion among readers: the latter, by giving space for different understandings about how the character survives, calls for audiences' curiosity and creativity. These differences are reflected in the critical articles and reviews discussed in this dissertation.

Regarding the series, some of the articles analyzed in Chapter 3 reveal the relationship between the audience and the development of the narrative, considering how fans feel part of the series and how they interact with them – as, for instance, the large number of theories created by fans concerned with Sherlock's survival were incorporated in the narrative, reinforcing their importance to the series and showing the expected behavior of fannish practices. For fans, in the contemporary context, it is not enough to follow the narrative and discuss its content: they would follow the actors and the producers' social media, go to recording sets when they find out where future sequences are being recorded, consume official products related to the show and create own material and distribute it online.

Still related to the analysis of Chapter 3, a difference was seen in the criticism produced on the short story and the articles on the TV episode "The Reichenbach Falls": while the short story is often referred to when journalists express their opinions and emotional responses to the plot, the TV series is evaluated in more rational and technical terms, such as the narrative development, the aesthetics, and the cinematic aspects. This difference shows a concern of the current media to create a clear distinction between official commercial newspapers and magazines to fan publications, which are often more emotional and affective. Most of the articles promote the series while they inform about it, inviting fans to interact with the newspapers, post on social media, and comment on the articles. In the Victorian Press, the blur between fact and fiction, which causes *The Grand Game*, was seen in the articles examined and may be connected to the characteristics of literary magazines.

The articles in the magazines and newspapers with responses to the short story showed that the Victorian Press had a clear hierarchical view of literary genres and literary works within each genre. Detective stories were seen as mass publication and thus as minor works when compared to historical novels or essays. In the genre of detective stories, Doyle's prestige as a writer gave Sherlock Holmes a status of "quality" detective fiction, different from amateur publications seen in other magazines or the fanfiction created based on Holmes.

In the criticism of Doyle's short story, there is a large number of intertextual references to other literary characters and authors. While references to other detectives show how Sherlock Holmes was influential in the genre of detective stories, references to Shakespeare's Falstaff, Dicken's Nell, and Trollope's Prodie show how Holmes was dear to the public, and how his death was felt with regret by the reading public. Differently, the series makes references to previous adaptations of Sherlock Holmes and the canon, showing how the critics recognize the importance of the series as an adaptation and its clear connection with previous works.

Fan reactions and fannish behavior are referred to both in the criticism of the short story and in the criticism of the series. Even though the word "fan" was not used in Victorian times, "admirers" and "readers" are explicitly mentioned, and the excessive emotional behavior now attributed to fans are present in the Victorian publications. While in Doyle's period they mourn, show they approval/disapproval of the short story, and address Doyle directly, in contemporary times fans express themselves loudly on social media, go to the production settings and produce content to be included in the following narratives.

The return of the character in "The Empty House" makes no direct references to fans, readers, or the responses in the press after the publication of "The Final Problem". However, it does include some references to previous short stories to connect them in a concise whole, showing that the gap between them experienced by the readers was also experienced by Watson. The metafictional device of including references to real newspapers and magazines is used again and it reinforces the idea that the characters might be real. The genre conventions of Sherlock Holmes short stories were followed in this narrative, giving a comfortable feeling to the readers that the same Sherlock Holmes that they admired was back, and would continue to share his investigation process in the following months.

Differently, the references to fans and their responses to "The Reichenbach Falls" is explicit in "The Empty Hears", presenting theories created by the same fans in the narrative and including characters that represent fans while presenting them expected norms of behavior. The jokes related to the theories created to explain how Holmes survived, the fan club "The

Empty Hearse”, the fanfiction and the direct references to online content approximate the audience to the series, showing a recognition of their role in the narrative development (which tells them that they are being heard and that their voices and opinions matter to the series). It is not possible to affirm the intentionality of the writers with this – but one thing is sure: this reflects how contemporary audiences (and fans) want to be heard, and the importance they give to the inclusion of their voices in the narratives that they like.

Sherlock is self-aware of its fans by the large number of “migratory strategies” (FIGUEIREDO, 2016) and the references in the series to fandom, to social media and the mediatic context. As it was analyzed in Chapter 4, “The Empty House” includes tags so that the audience can post on their social media following other audience members with a mark of the official television content. This gives an impression of a connection between the audience and the series – as it happens when the producers or the actors respond to a tweet or comment – enhanced by the portrayal of fans in the same narrative. This connection works to promote the series as fans feel like they can be part of the narrative – either commenting on it or even having their own theories as part of the official content.

In Doyle’s period, fans were not referred to in the short stories themselves, but the practice of fandom and the production of fanfiction was part of the world of the detective and was highly promoted by *Tit-Bits Magazine*. People would find in it an open channel of communication to ask about the detective and the cases he was investigating, to publish their own opinions and narratives. In *Sherlock*, the practice of fandom is referred to in its narrative - while for some (either fans or press members as some that have been quoted) this is a characteristic of a series which is concerned with its audience, the fan practices displayed in the narratives are strategic and correspond to contemporary anxiety. According to Ross’ argument that “[d]ebates exist among my respondents and among industry professionals as to whether or not viewers being heard and heeded is a right, but the pleasures of being heard are not up for question” (2009, p. 66), the responses analyzed in this thesis and the fandom practices related to the contemporary narrative show that fans are increasingly looking for spaces to speak and to be heard.

With the analysis proposed, I questioned if these changes in the responses given by fans are related to the medium specificities, and what they reflect about the contemporary understanding of media. In Doyle’s period, literary magazines included both fictional and

factual pieces, blurring the distinction between fact and fiction. As Holmes was a Londoner, with characteristics that could be found in a man who interacted with the readers, this blurring of fact and fiction might have influenced the affection that the readers experienced with the character. In a period of high technological development and great uncertainties, a man such as Holmes who could find logic in mysterious events was someone to be admired, followed, and listened to.

Television and its interaction with the internet provided another feature to the parasocial relationship between Sherlock Holmes and his admirers: the technological possibilities of these media enable the audience to watch and listen to the character while also interact with the narrative world, both officially and non-officially. With the official websites of the characters, the audience may interact with Sherlock as if they held an actual relationship while recognizing that he is fictional. Fannish behavior is becoming more expressive and louder, and its insertion in the narrative plot stimulates the audience to continue watching, commenting, sharing, and interacting with the series.

Sherlock Holmes has often been described as a man of his time – and this is true concerning Holmes from Doyle's period and Sherlock from Gatiss and Moffat's series. While Holmes was a product of the scientific and forensic development, together with the literary mass production and the blurring of fact and fiction in serial publications from Victorian Literature, Sherlock is a technologic-savvy, using the same electronic devices than the audience to solve his cases, in a fast-paced city with a large number of unanswered mysteries. The contemporary trend among those who watch series such as *Sherlock*, which is a bigger interaction with the screens than with real people, explains how fans' reactions became more expressive and louder. The one-dimension way of a parasocial relationship is connected to the pleasure of being heard experienced by fans: if a fictional character such as Sherlock cannot talk and interact in fact with each member of the audience, having their voice being represented in a screen can be a substitute for that.

Moreover, Sherlock Holmes, the most adapted literary character, proved to be an important point of departure to understand readers' and audiences' engagement with narratives. With Holmes, important reflections about the academic studies on adaptation, intermediality, and medium specificities can be raised, shading lights in disciplines that are still in development such as fan studies. A large number of fans of Sherlock Holmes also shows that he attracts and involves audiences, either from Victorian or contemporary times. Differently from detective stories, in which a problem is investigated to find a solution to the case, this thesis investigates

the relationship between readers/audiences and narratives but does not find one single and definitive conclusion to that. The process of investigation, however, gave important clues about the contemporary relationship between fans, media, and industries.

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