

The detective, the villain, and the trigger of the lens:
The limitations of archival desire in photographic and literary exposures, 1870-1915

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A Thesis
in
The Department
Of
English Literature

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

May 2005

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Your file *Votre référence*

ISBN: 0-494-04310-5

Our file *Notre référence*

ISBN: 0-494-04310-5

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ABSTRACT

The detective, the villain, and “the trigger of the lens”:
Photography’s challenge to realist representation, 1870-1915

karen emily suuramm

This thesis examines cultural and literary texts that trouble the status of the camera, the photograph, and the photographer, as they respond to the popularization of photography in Britain, from 1870-1915. More specifically, I locate particular anxieties about the consequences of an unchecked documentary impulse and the expansion of the photographic gaze, both facilitated by an explosion in photographic technologies.

Such an analysis challenges an often-perceived collaboration between realism, positivism, detection, and photography by focusing on three particular eruptions of such discourses: discussions regarding photographic representations of the London poor in the 1870s; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s short story, “A Scandal in Bohemia”, published in 1891; and E.W. Hornung’s novel *The Camera Fiend*, published in 1911. Rather than providing illumination, clarity, proof, or security, these texts articulate the ways that photography can challenge social order, especially when it threatens to expose the previously secure private worlds of the upper classes. The problematization of photography in these texts destabilizes various constructions: the moral authority of the detective, the excitement surrounding photography’s ‘democratized’ gaze, and the limitations of acceptable documentary projects. Finally, I will develop suggestions regarding the ways these texts simultaneously endorse and destabilize the project of literary realism, in their repression of photographic subjectivity and ambivalence with regards to the photographer’s capacity and desire to ‘capture the real’.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Jason Camlot, for his inspiring and challenging responses to my work. I could have never completed this project without his guidance, intellectual rigor, and ability to give shape to my ideas. Thank you, also, to my readers, Dr. Mary Esteve and Dr. John Miller.

I am indebted to all those who encouraged my intellectual development at Concordia University, and also to Dr. Barbara Leckie for first introducing me to the intricate world of Victorian England and providing me with constant support, encouragement, advice, and research skills.

Of course, all family and friends assisted me throughout this process. Those who provided incredible guidance include Alex Di Ninno, Jesse Brady, Shelley Boulton, everyone at fort argyle, and most especially, my mother, Christine Suurtamm. It would be impossible for me to adequately express my gratitude for the constant support and assistance of Veronica Tunzi, whose emotional and intellectual presence has deeply enriched this thesis.

Lastly, I am forever grateful to Nathan Medema, not only for his love, support, and tireless patience, but most especially for showing me that it *is* possible to take beautiful photographs of other people.

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INTRODUCTION
The Trouble With Representation:
A Brief History of Photographic Instability

I am a passionate lover of the snapshot, because of all photographic images it comes closest to truth.

- Lisette Model

If the camera could capture that moment when the body's guard was down, when the truth of a character was rendered visible through the subject's being unaware of the camera's gaze, then the photograph could stage the conflict between one's bodily existence and the creation of a social self for all to witness.

-Tom Gunning

J'ai beaucoup de collodion dans la tête.

-Gustave Doré

A contested technology: "This art-science"

In March, 1972, The Arts Council of Great Britain sponsored an exhibition that chronicled the history of photography. The exhibition's title, "From Today Painting is Dead," repeats the very words exclaimed by painter Paul Delroche when he saw the first daguerreotype in 1839. At this point in the early history of photography, Delroche was not alone in this sentiment. Many believed that photography, with its ability to satisfy the public's hunger for realism, would usurp painting as the new mode of artistic representation. In 1839, a Paris correspondent of the *Athenaeum* praised Daguerre's pictures as having "the force of Rembrandt's etchings" (qtd. in Jager 319). Others, however, argued that photography should be relegated to the realm of scientific pursuits. Art, they said, required interpretation, not simply recording what already existed in front of the lens. Both these conceptions of photography took for granted that the photograph was indexical, or, in Roland Barthes' words, that "a specific photograph, in effect, is

never distinguished from its referent” (5). Indeed, this “pencil of nature”¹ problematized debates in the field of representation, and photography has since been caught in the balance between art and science. Allan Sekula characterizes the tension between these two takes on photography as a kind of binary folklore. “That is,” he writes,

there is a ‘symbolist’ folk-myth and a ‘realist’ folk-myth. The misleading but popular form of this opposition is ‘art photography’ vs ‘documentary photography’. Every photograph tends, at any given moment of reading in any context, towards one of these two poles of meaning. The oppositions between these two poles are as follows: photographer as seer vs photographer as witness, photography as expression vs photography as reportage, theories of imagination (and inner truth) vs theories of empirical truth, affective value vs informative value, and finally, metaphoric signification vs metonymic signification. (Sekula 108)

Judging from early expository accounts of the meaning of photography, it becomes apparent that such a constructed dualism was not enough to solve the complexities of photography. An article printed in *The Athenaeum* in 1847 gives an account of a meeting of the Calotype Club in London. The author, a member of the club, admits, “we scarcely know the word fittest completely to designate...our experiments in this art-science” (qtd. in Jager 317). As John Tagg writes of this time, “an ideological contradiction was negotiated so that photographic practice could be divided between the domain of art, whose privilege is a function of its lack of power, and the scientific-technical domain, whose power is a function of its renunciation of privilege” (*Burden* 67). While the binary to which Sekula alludes certainly informed early conceptualizations of photography, such a dualistic model could not solve the complexities of photographic representation. No photograph could have existed solely on one side of this binary. Instead, the tension between science and art is negotiated in every photographic act, and any attempt to quell

¹ The title of William Henry Fox Talbot’s 1844 monograph, the first to feature photographs.

or repress either aspect will only cause discursive disruptions that expose the instability of such formulaic attempts at coherence.

While the problem is fascinating in itself, it is not my purpose to develop an argument about the ontological or epistemological status of photography. This study is one of observation, but even observations assume theoretical positions. My readings of photographic technologies will embrace a materialist analysis of history that understands technology as a human endeavour that is constantly constructed, contextualized, and co-opted by current discourses. Each chapter will watch eruptive moments in photographic discourses in British society, between 1870 and 1915, and relate them to similar literary positions on narrative objectivity and realism. It will be necessary, then, to build upon contemporary work in both literary and photographic studies. My approaches to literature are heavily influenced by deconstructive attempts to detect tensions and fissures within a text, with an aim to exposing “incoherencies, omissions, absences and transgressions which in turn reveal the inability of the language of ideology to create coherence” (Belsey 107). In photographically informed fiction, photography becomes the transgressive force that facilitates an eruption of the discursive conflicts that fiction (and criticism) attempts to smooth over. The foundations of this thesis were originally inspired by Roland Barthes’ *Camera Lucida*, and while I will be often turning to Barthes’s text, I read his photographic theory as richly symptomatic, not descriptive, of a dangerous desire for realism. My own project will develop and challenge John Tagg and Alan Sekula’s Foucauldian discussions of the socio-political construction of the photograph’s power, and draw upon the methodological models of recent work by Tom

Gunning and Bill Jay, who have chronicled the photographic trends and anxieties that emerged during this period.

Photographic literatures and literatures of photography

The representational capacities of photography have often been compared to the representational motives of literary realism. As Alison Lee notes, “the Realist movement endorsed a particular way of looking at art and life as though there was a direct correspondence between the two” (3). Realist authors have struggled with the extent to which the world could be represented accurately through the medium of language, especially when such fiction is obviously written by an author with a particular subjectivity.² Photography brought hope to some, as it was endowed with the capacity of visual documentation that realism aspired to: “If the camera were autotelic – that is, if the sunlight rather than a human sensibility were responsible for the image – then it was possible to resolve the problem of authorial mediation” (Schloss 16). Luckily for the realists, early conceptions of photography often focused on its ability to capture an objective truth. In 1858, *The Photographic Art-Journal* insisted, “if twenty photographers in succession were to take a view of the same object...the resulting

² By ‘realist authors,’ I am considering those concerned with the extent to which literature could testify to ‘actual’ contemporary life, in opposition to fiction that embraced romance. This includes those who were inspired by Emile Zola, whether realists or naturalists, including George Moore, Thomas Hardy, and Henry James. Moreover, this study is interested in a general ‘desire for the real,’ evident in many late Victorian projects. Kevin Moore’s research indicates that “by and large Victorians preferred reality over romance and that increasingly reality became defined as accuracy of depiction. The rise of realism in the nineteenth century was motivated by a desire for accuracy of representation and its corollary, precision of information transmitted precisely” (Moore 368). This desire manifested itself in many growing trends, both institutional and literary, including attempts to detect maladies, to name sexualities, to capture and photograph criminals, to see images of the poor, and in general, to uncover what is seemingly unavailable from everyday sight and understanding. Both Michael Neal and Mark Seltzer have used George Sims’s *The Mysteries of London* (1906) as an example of such desires. Sims’s work, which attempts to chronicle every aspect of London life, asserts that there are “no mysteries of modern London more terrible than its unrecorded ones” (qtd. in Seltzer 26).

pictures would be identical in every feature” (qtd. in Prasch 184). In order to produce the effect of literary realism, a work had to repress indications of the authorial presence and mute the particularities of a subjective narrative voice. Some realists clung to Emile Zola’s pronouncement that “the observer sets down purely and simply the phenomena he has before his eyes...He ought to be *the photographer of phenomena*; his observations ought to represent nature exactly” (qtd. in Schloss 17, italics mine).

Of course, the texts I examine do not fit neatly within Zola’s tradition. My consideration of realism is not dependent on rigid genre categories, but is instead inspired by Nancy Armstrong’s definition of literary realism as “the entire problematic in which a shared set of visual codes operated as an abstract standard by which to measure one verbal representation against another” (11). It was only inevitable that photography would become part of the realist debate, as it profoundly shaped and informed Victorian visual codes. In fact, “by 1850, critics were using the descriptive term ‘photographic,’ to enhance a writer’s credibility and value” (Moore 368). But what if photography was, in some sense, artistic, and not simply autotelic? In order to assert a photographic objectivity, the subjectivity (or gaze) of the photographer must be contained, and that regulation became more and more difficult as photographic apparatuses grew smaller and more accessible. The realist’s deployment of photographic metaphors becomes more telling; instead of acting as a metaphor for purely objective narration, attempts to limit the role of the photographer simply mirror the realist’s attempted repression of the author’s presence.

Nancy Armstrong’s most recent book, *Fiction in the Age of Photography*, examines interactions between photography and literary realism, looking towards the

ways that “‘the image’ – or, more accurately, a differential system thereof – supplanted writing as the grounding of fiction. Visual culture supplied the social classifications that novelists had to confirm, adjust, criticize, or update if they wished to hold the readership’s attention” (3). Once photography was introduced onto the representational scene, literature – like painting – had to compete or collude with its visual testimony. Armstrong argues, “in order to convince readers fiction was indeed offering them mastery of the world of objects, fiction had to authorize the transparent, reproducible image” (27). Unfortunately, Armstrong overlooks the fact that many representations of photography in the literature of late nineteenth and early twentieth century serve to destabilize the power of photography. Literary works did more than just respond to particular images presented in popular culture; literature *participated* in an articulation of the ways in which we should see/read such images in general, and suggested acceptable boundaries of photographic readings and deployment. In order to interpret the nature of such a participation, this study will identify a series of tensions beneath the surface of detective and realist fiction – tensions that are often represented in the discursive fissures caused by the introduction of ominous photographs and photographers. The photographic medium, seen by many as a friend of realism, actually troubles its status, uncovering realism’s own self-consciousness and hesitation about its project of objectivity.

Photography, as with all representational media, developed within generic codes and classifications that allowed the medium to fulfill various representational purposes. Of course, genre classifications can happen in many ways; we can consider the photographer’s purpose (social reform, record production, aesthetic appreciation), the

photographic method (studio portraiture, press photographs, surreptitious candid shots), or the venue of the photograph's presentation (gallery, publication, police file). For the purposes of this study, it will be useful to distinguish between three particular categories of photography that best structure a discussion of the photograph's representational power. These are, the artistic photograph, the evidentiary photograph, and the documentary photograph. Artistic photography makes few claims to being purely referential or autotelic, and permits a discussion of the photographer's artistic subjectivity within its discourse. For example, one of the most influential artistic photographers, Henry Peach Robinson (1830-1901) was using the combination print in order to heighten the aesthetic effects of his work.³ The technique, which involves using two negatives to achieve one image, allowed him to, for instance, place an ocean sky over a rural landscape.

The evidentiary photograph is often employed in the interests of science, psychology, and the law, such as those printed in Havelock Ellis's *The Criminal* (1890), a work which attempts to decipher modes of recognizing and capturing the criminal type (Figure 1). Unlike the artistic photograph, the evidentiary photograph depends, wholly, upon its ability to make truth-claims and attempts to repress any suggestion of the photographer's presence on the photographic scene. The documentary photograph, meanwhile, exists somewhere between the artistic and the evidentiary, in a highly contested space. Documentary photographs attempt to document, but they may not necessarily stand as evidence. This category includes much photography of foreign lands

³ One of Robinson's most popular photographs is "Fading Away" (1858), which depicts the scene of a young girl's death by combining portions of negatives together (Figure 2). Photographers such as Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879) continued this tradition. Some of Cameron's photographs feature her subjects (mostly women) costumed and posed as fictional and religious characters. Her photograph, "Prayer and Praise," (1865) is a recreation of the nativity scene (Figure 3).

and East London that seek to represent something or someone not typically seen by the viewer. More often than not, the documentary photograph was not submitted anonymously; the photographer was credited, and the image became an example of his/her skill in articulating a particular message, while at the same time 'capturing the truth.' It is this instability (between photographic intentionality and the truth telling capacities of the camera) that makes the hybrid generic category of the documentary photograph the most useful for my discussion, as it is the most carefully balanced, discursively, and most closely resembles the kinds of photography I will discuss.

Of course, all literature is connected to artistic creation, but there is an extent to which particular modes of narration attempt to create the aesthetic of document or evidence. Fiction – even realist fiction – would never claim to be evidentiary, but can often simulate the effect of evidence through deployment of various media (newspaper clippings, autopsy reports, court testimonials) within the text. Realist fiction does not claim to *be* fact, but seeks to create the sensation that what is being read *could* easily be true. In this sense, realist fiction straddles the same unstable categorization of science/art, objectivity/subjectivity, as the documentary photograph and actually depends upon such photography in order to produce its effect.

Late Victorian photography: truth telling and the subjective gaze

The 1880s experienced an increasing scientism of particular institutions and practices that began to employ photographic technologies, shifting the way people used (and thought about) the medium. Due to the perception that photography could 'speak the truth' of its object, the photograph was employed as a tool of identification and

detection in the service of the law, medicine, and psychology.⁴ Photography granted these practices the authority and ability to identify, name, detain, mark, diagnose, track, and capture its subjects. In turn, such practices were invested in supporting a conception of photography as scientifically accurate, establishing a symbiotic relationship of mutual legitimacy. Alan Sekula frames such a relationship as “a system within which the culture harnesses photographs to various representational tasks.” As such, the “folklore of pure denotation” generates “a mythic aura of neutrality around the image” and “elevates the photograph to the legal status of document and testimonial” (87). The photograph became socially invested with an indexical power that took for granted that identity is available in the image, but this concept could not survive long without complication.

At the same time, private photographic practices were also changing; the advancement of camera technologies brought photography onto the streets and into people’s homes. The invention of the first handheld camera by George Eastman in 1886, and the camera’s subsequent incarnations placed photographic powers in the hands of the middle-class public. The motto of the first Kodak ads, “Anybody can use it. Everybody will use it,” attests to the company’s confidence in their market potential (qtd. in Coe 53). Photographs of people were no longer limited to traditional portraiture, where “sumptuous studios, static cameras, and long exposures ensured that the process involved lengthy negotiations between the photographer and his subject” (Hiley 16). Instead, people could just “point and click” to produce a representation of the scene before them.

⁴ Much work has been done on photography’s employment by science, the state and the law, especially by Tagg and Sekula. Such groundwork informs most accounts of Victorian photography, including the following passage by Armstrong: “on the assumption that a natural predisposition toward certain forms of behavior would be apparent on the surface of the body so disposed, Victorian social scientists took to photographing the faces and bodies of criminals, whores, the indigent, the homeless, and mentally disturbed individuals, hoping to identify the visual signature of their social pathologies” (21).

An article in *The Strand* pokes fun at these new photographers, whose unconditional faith in their handheld camera's mimetic capacities are revealed in attempts to expose indoor scenes without a flash: "Ah, but *this* is an instantaneous camera, they argue, and, with an airy snap of the shutter, walk off, confident that the professional to whom they usually leave the development and printing – *all the real photographic work, in fact* – will be able to find somewhere in that mystic little box a picture of all that room and everybody in it" (Morrison 636, italics mine).

Bill Jay's *Cyanide and Spirits: An Inside-Out View of Early Photography* encourages a refreshing approach to studies in Victorian photography. Jay's study discusses various forms of photography that are grossly under-represented in critical studies, despite their popularity in Victorian society. He mines the many periodicals and journals that dealt with photography, in order to unearth, not photographic "ephemera," but what he argues were the most important trends and themes in Victorian photography. He attempts to reclaim these discourses, which have been eclipsed in historical accounts that privilege photographic genres most appealing to contemporary readers. His work includes discussions around hidden cameras, prison photographs, the camera fiend, and spirit photography. While Jay's study is fascinating for its archival work, my examination of photographic tensions proceeds from Tom Gunning's work on the impact of the 'detective camera' (the first handheld camera) on Victorian and Edwardian conceptualizations of photography, surveillance, and detection. Gunning, primarily a film theorist, characterizes popular photography "as a product and transformer of social relations of power and observation, negotiating new relations between the private and the public, and creating new notions of propriety and the body" (Gunning "Embarrassing"

47). He argues that “the hand camera...brought on nothing less than a social revolution that affected the legal definition of self and privacy as well as the nature of embodied social behavior. The popularity of images of both the famous and the abject taken unawares revealed ambivalent ideas about the relationship between truthfulness and propriety” (Gunning “Embarrassing” 57). Gunning’s work chronicles the various anxieties that are introduced and exacerbated with new photographic technologies. Perhaps most interesting is his location of the tension between a photography that ‘captures the real,’ and one which respects the integrity of its subject. As his research is almost entirely situated in social texts, he leaves much room for an analysis of the implications and articulations of this ‘social revolution’ in literature of the period. New photographic technologies satisfied many fantasies of truth and identity, including the desire to expose private lives and capture surreptitious photographs that exposed one’s ‘true character’. Literature becomes an imaginary space in which authors can exaggerate, explode, contain, and grapple with these concerns. Further, it is a space in which the tactics and techniques of verbal representation can be explored in relation to the representational powers associated with the other visual medium. It is my intention, then, to use the fictions discussed in this thesis as a space in which to explore Gunning’s observations about the cultural import of photography, and provide a social and literary analysis of how the tenuous “relationship between truthfulness and propriety” plays out in photographic and literary modes.

Specifically, the fiction of this period reacts to a range of threats and tensions posed by new photographic technologies and trends, including the introduction and mass production of the handheld camera. The instability of photography’s status (as either art

or science) is apparent in three particular anxieties that flourished during this time. First, the mass marketing of the handheld camera facilitated an increasingly pervasive gaze that threatened to dismantle boundaries between public and private lives. Second, many grew wary that such technology would become available to deceptive photographers who could undermine public faith in photography's indexical powers. Furthermore, public concerns around deceptive photography (including double exposures and studio recreations of 'real scenes') probably resulted in the eruption of a third anxiety: that a compulsive desire to both affirm and exploit the photograph's power of testimony and evidence would lead to a dangerously obsessive documentary impulse. While it seems such an impulse was typically praised and encouraged at the turn of the century, the fiction of the period suggests some hesitations regarding its limitations. An obsessive desire for the real, if not contained, could lead to uninvited intrusions into private lives, and, as we will see in some fiction, even murder. Fiction's articulations of such anxieties suggest a regulatory discourse that attempts to limit or draw boundaries around acceptable photographic uses and readings, and negotiate the tenuous relationship between photographic and literary representation. Within the context of this study, it is crucial to recognize the destabilizing effects of writing about such hesitations. An articulation of anxieties around authority, surveillance, detection, deception, disguise, and secrecy holds the capacity to destabilize authoritative discourses that serve as a foundation for such fiction, including those of medicine, psychology, detection, the police, and the state. Most importantly, the anxieties of these texts question the ability of photographic and literary works to accurately represent the world and its various subjects.

Private truths and public exposures

Part of the excitement over instantaneous and hidden cameras is their promise to fulfill the desire for a pure documentary record: to photograph people and things in their most natural activities and contexts. The indexical capacity of the camera makes way for an erasure of photography's characterization as art and the photographer as artist. Walter Benjamin and Roland Barthes have both praised photography's capacity to authentically capture the truth. For Benjamin, the camera transcends the photographer's intentions; it has the ability to be our "optical unconscious," ("A Short History" 7) that is, to "bring out those aspects of the original that are unattainable to the naked eye yet accessible to the lens" ("Work of Art" 220). In *Camera Lucida*, Barthes' last text, Barthes considers two aspects of the photograph. The first is the *studium*, those cultural and intellectual attractions that are "the order of *liking*, not of *loving*," a photograph, similar to "the...vague, slippery, irresponsible interest one takes in the people, the entertainments, the books, the clothes one finds 'all right.'" More interesting than the *studium* is Barthes's *punctum*, that accident which "will break (or punctuate) the *studium*" and wound or prick the observer (26-7). In this text, Barthes explores the *punctum* of various photographs: not that aspect that he notices intellectually, but the small detail that *calls out to him*. Most exciting to Barthes is that such detail may not have been noticed (or intended) by the photographer: "hence the detail which interests me is not, or at least is not strictly, intentional, and probably must not be so...it does not necessarily attest to the photographer's art; it says only that the photographer was there, or else, still more simply, that he could not *not* photograph the partial object at the same time as the total object"

(47). The punctum, then, is only present because of the camera's ability to record every object, necessitated by its sheer presence on the scene.

Despite an apparent faith in photographic indexicality, theorists of photography express concern that distortion occurs when the human subject becomes aware of the camera's presence. Even Barthes admits that "each time I am (or let myself be) photographed, I invariably suffer from a sensation of inauthenticity, sometimes of imposture" (13). Those who were developing what would come to be known as the mug shot grappled with this problem. How to get a photograph of a criminal that fulfilled its role as identification, especially when many criminals 'mugged' for the camera? In 1886, Thomas Byrnes, New York City's chief of detectives, brags, "the very cleverest hands at preparing a false physiognomy for the camera have made their grimaces in vain. The sun has been too quick for them, and has imprisoned the lines of the profile and the features and caught the expression before it could be disguised" (qtd. in Gunning "Tracing" 27). Despite such seeming confidence, men such as Alphonse Bertillon, a French police statistician, and Sir Francis Galton, an anthropologist, spent a good part of their careers devising new technologies for taking and reading photographs that most accurately represented the criminal's face.

Byrnes's boasting does hint at the possibility of capturing an 'honest face,' if the photographic technologies were sufficiently advanced. If the sun's imprints could truly be "too quick" for the subject's imposture, perhaps photography could uncover *some* truth. But when subjects must hold still for minutes, in order to produce a clear calotype or daguerreotype, it becomes difficult to capture them unaware. If one could 'catch' people, unaware, on film, the identity of these subjects would be more accurately

depicted; they no longer have control over their own image; they cannot posture, pose, mug, or 'fool' the camera. As Susan Sontag notices, "There is something on people's faces when they don't know they are being observed that never appears when they do" (Sontag 27). The handheld camera allows one to take a snapshot, and the hidden camera fulfills two desires: it grants the photographer anonymity, and it endows the photograph with indexical authority. Gunning reveals how such beliefs are articulated in nineteenth century photographic journals. One boasts, "the beauty of the invention [the hand camera] is that the victim is thoroughly unsuspecting. He does not know his picture is being 'took,' consequently the character is all preserved" (Gunning "Embarrassing" 57).

With the 'democratization' of such technologies, almost anyone can take a photograph when the subject is least aware. The possibility of being secretly photographed, or of the photograph publicly revealing private lives or indiscretions, becomes a source of concern.⁵ An 1886 article, published in a popular journal, gives testimony of such invasion when a Belgian man is shocked to discover he has been photographed at the beach without his consent. His complaints are similar to other much-published accounts:

I had no difficulty in recognizing myself. But what photographs they were. Certainly not such as might be calculated to tickle my vanity. In the first photograph, I was shown at the very moment of entering the water, and my face reflected all too clearly the sensation of the first contact with the cold sea-water. Really, one would not approach a lady with such gestures on shore.

The second picture had been taken while I was blowing out a mouthful of water which I had involuntarily gulped in, while my facial expression made it obvious that my taste buds had been stimulated in a far from

⁵ Roland Barthes reveals such concerns when he insists that 'private life' "is nothing but that zone of space, of time, where I am not an image, an object" and so it follows, "It is my *political right* to be a subject which I must protect" (15).

pleasant way. In the third picture, I resembled a bedraggled poodle rather than a civilized man. I emerged from the sea, dripping wet.
(qtd. in Gunning "Embarrassing" 57-8)

Informal vigilance societies began prowling the streets and beaches to regulate secretive photography, to censor the gaze, and to ensure particular people could maintain control over images of themselves (Thomas 147, Jay 228). One American resort even posted a notice, "PEOPLE ARE FORBIDDEN TO USE THEIR KODAKS ON THE BEACH" (Lindsay n.p.). In an article published in the *Harvard Law Review* in 1890, Samuel D. Warren and Louis D. Brandeis argue for the extension of physical rights of protection, in order to defend citizens from unwanted or inaccurate representations of their image or actions. For them, the rise of instantaneous photography is seen as a particular challenge to legal privacy and the protection of character:

Recent inventions and business methods call attention to the next step which must be taken for the protection of the person, and for securing to the individual what Judge Cooley calls the right to be let alone. Instantaneous photographs and newspaper enterprise have invaded the sacred precincts of private and domestic life; and numerous mechanical devices threaten to make good the prediction that 'what is whispered in the closet shall be proclaimed from the house-tops.' (195)

In response to public anxiety regarding deceptive photographs, a penetration of private lives became more prevalent, as photographers sought to capture a more 'honest' depiction of their subjects. Unfortunately for photographers, few subjects are actually interested in broadcasting *every* truth about their lives. Within the context of competing discourses for a simultaneously ethical and truth-telling practice of photography, photographers who wished to please/appease the public were trapped in a paradox. Ultimately, they were doomed either to be deceptive to the photograph's viewer or to its subject. In this sense, it is the photographer's call to objectivity, despite the inevitable

intrusion of the subjective, that comes to be identified as the primary source of concern. In *The Photograph*, Graham Clarke writes, “First, we must remember that the photograph is itself the product of a *photographer*. It is always the reflection of a specific point of view, be it aesthetic, polemical, political, or ideological. One never ‘takes’ a photograph in any passive sense. To ‘take’ is active. The photographer imposes, steals, re-creates the scene/seen according to a cultural discourse” (Clarke 29). Even the noblest attempts at pure documentary, the best sublimation of the photographer’s intentions, framing, and subjectivity, are impacted by the eye/I of the photographer. At the same time, any praise of photographic referentiality attempts to deny or erase the role of the photographer. For example, in *Camera Lucida*, Barthes mourns the recent death of his mother, and proposes that the photograph can offer him immediate access to her presence. Again, the photographic theories of Roland Barthes illustrate the ways in which a desire for the real necessitates a repression of photographic subjectivity. Barthes’s renaming of the photographer as, instead, “Operator,” signals his attempt to direct our attention towards the mechanics, not artistry, of photographic procedures:

For me, the Photographer’s organ is not his eye (which terrifies me) but his finger: what is linked to the trigger of the lens, to the metallic shifting of the plates (when the camera still has such things). I love these mechanical sounds in an almost voluptuous way, as if, in the Photograph, they were the very thing – and the only thing – to which my desire clings, their abrupt click breaking through the mortiferous layer of the Pose. (15)

But in this suppression of the photographer’s subjectivity, Barthes reveals (in parenthesis) a great anxiety regarding the terrifying eye of the photographer. The eye becomes the ultimate threat as it represents a photographic subjectivity and artistry that has the ability to destabilize photography’s claim to authoritative accuracy, consequently, to open up a

range of socially disruptive practices caused by deceptive, manipulative, or invasive acts of photographic representation.

Whose gaze? Class concerns, state power, and the detective

John Tagg, the most influential theorist to infuse photographic theory with Foucauldian notions of discipline and surveillance, argues that photography acts as an extension of state power. Despite Tagg's understanding of photographs as "material objects whose 'currency' and 'value' arise in certain distinct and historically specific social practices" ("Currency" 122), his work still affirms an essential power within the surveillance of the photographic eye. He describes photography as always complicit with ideological apparatuses: "as a means of record, it *arrives on the scene invested* with a particular authority to arrest, picture, and transform daily life; a power to see and record; a power of surveillance" (qtd. in Batchen 7, italics mine). If photography wields particular powers, it is only because those powers are recognized, constructed, and affirmed in cultural discourse; it does not "arrive on the scene" invested with any such meaning.

Geoffrey Batchen claims that Tagg's work characterizes photography "as an instrument that facilitates the imposition of power by those who have some (usually the agents of the state) on those who have none (already marginalized groups such as the working class, criminals, the insane, native peoples, ethnic subcultures, and so on)" (Batchen 7). Although Tagg's most influential work was done by the early 1980s, most critics still represent the photographic gaze as hegemonically disciplinary, moving in one direction from those invested with social power and authority, towards those

marginalized by/from those very systems of power. Indeed, early photography was bulky, expensive, and time consuming and so the gaze was limited to those with the privilege of access, wealth, and time. Photography's first few decades involved two main genres of photography. The most popularly circulated photographs were *cartes-de-visites* and other studio portraits that were commissioned by members of the middle class, in order to manufacture a particular image of themselves or their family. Other popular genres of photography included artistic, press, and documentary photographs that depicted people not normally visible to the middle-class gaze, whether they be subjects of colonialism, poverty, the law, or the asylum.

Once photography became popularized by the end of the nineteenth century, this predominantly middle class gaze was expanded, subverted, and sometimes reversed, eventually penetrating the lives of those classes of people who – until this point – were able to conduct their private lives behind closed doors.⁶ Perhaps it is no coincidence that concerns around photographic intrusions appear in public discourse when it is not just the marginalized who are being secretly photographed. The perceived threat to the social order is not a purely abstract concern regarding secretive photography or the impulse to document. It is that such impulses and fantasies are in the hands of the general public, and the gaze can be directed back at those classes and institutions that, previously had controlled the privilege of a pervasive and authoritative gaze. I would suggest that the fiction examined in this thesis gives preference to such middle/upper class anxieties, and

⁶ While the upper classes were always victims of gossip, many rumours could be discredited or ignored, due to the social standing/class of those making the accusations. Photography gives authority to such stories, and photographs of illicit, immoral, or unattractive activities could do great damage to one's reputation.

the articulation of these concerns confirmed the authority of their voice in public debates that shaped legal and photographic discourse.

In 1887, a writer for *L'Amateur Photographe* remarks that with new photographic technologies, “any person one meets could be photographed without suspecting it in the least, even against their will;...without doubt, alas, blackmail could be undertaken in this manner. It is certain that the general use of this little camera could take some very bad turns, just as it could render inestimable services, informing equally police officers and amateur spies” (qtd. in Gunning “Embarrassing” 49-50). As with all new technologies, the handheld camera has the capacity to fulfill various objectives, and social discourse seeks to set boundaries that define and contain illegitimate transgressions. The authority of the detective (supposedly juridical) and the photograph (indexical) could now expose private secrets in public spaces and hold people accountable for their actions in the domestic realm. In the passage cited from *L'Amateur*, we see that the use of secretive photography is permitted, so long as it is in the hands of the law or private detective. The question arises, why should the private detective have any more moral legitimacy or authority than an amateur photographer? It is at this point that anxieties concerning the proper use of photography abound, cropping up even in the literature that many expect to support such a pervasive gaze, including detective fiction itself.

In the literary texts I will examine, cameras and photographs are rarely depicted in a favorable manner.⁷ Instead of providing illumination, clarity, proof, or security, the photograph comes to represent a challenge to social order. Furthermore, the

⁷ In addition to the texts of Conan Doyle and E.W. Hornung, the following texts present similar possibilities: Hawthorne’s *House of the Seven Gables* (1851), Thomas Hardy’s work, including *A Laodicean* (1881) and “an Imaginative Woman” (1894), and E.W. Hornung’s short story, “A Spoilt Negative” (1888). Others who have documented interactions between literature and photography include Lambrechts and Salu, Rabb, and Bann.

photographer often appears as a villain, using photography to deceive, the darkroom to hide, or the camera to murder. So, while Victorians often considered photography as being in the service of the law, the fictional connection between photographers and villainy articulates various anxieties around the spiritual, psychic, and very literal connections that exist between kidnapping, murder, and the ‘capturing’ of images. Most importantly, these fictional works bring our attention to the threat of the photographer’s eye/I and attempt to repress that subjectivity by containing the questionable photographer and/or photograph. The readings that follow will challenge an often-perceived collaboration between realism, positivism, detection, and photography by locating three particular eruptions of such discourses: discussions regarding documentary photographers of the London poor in the 1870s; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s short story, “A Scandal in Bohemia,” published in *The Strand* magazine in 1891; and E.W. Hornung’s novel *The Camera Fiend*, published in 1911.

The photograph and the text: negotiations

Chapter 1 will illustrate a historical example of such a discursive eruption that predates the invention of the handheld camera, in order to outline some of the tensions already circulating in photographic discourse. Representations of the London poor are an ideal point of departure for a discussion of late Victorian photography. As these images attempt to represent a social class, they suggest the limits of photography’s indexicality, especially as it is employed for social commentary and change. First, this chapter will discuss public reactions to Dr. Thomas John Barnardo’s deployment of photography to create ‘artistic fictions.’ Barnardo, who organized a network of ragged schools in

England, used photography for fundraising purposes. His series of photographic cards, featuring ‘before and after’ shots of the children, were no less controversial than his philanthropic kidnapping. Such controversy expresses anxieties regarding both the possibilities of photography to arouse sympathy and the need to regulate its uses deployment in truth-telling claims. Second, this chapter will also place Barnardo within a tradition of authors and photographers who aimed to represent and document the London poor. Such comparisons will demonstrate the ways in which Barnardo is separated from other (more acceptable) modes of photographing these subjects, including John Thomson’s *Street Life in London*, the first photographically illustrated work to deal with social life. Specifically, I am interested in the ways Thomson and his audience express anxieties around photographic subjectivities and the potential for manipulation, in light of the Barnardo controversy.

In Chapter 2, I will turn to detective fiction, a genre highly influenced by photographic technologies emerging at the end of the century. Due to its perceived indexicality, photography became a powerful tool for law enforcement agents and the accessibility of the handheld camera allowed photography to be implemented in the gathering of evidence. This time also marks a proliferation in photographic techniques of criminal identification and discourses of physiognomy that aligned race, class, and the psychology of crime. Yet, interestingly, detective fiction is often troubled by the appearance of photography, especially when the camera is placed in the hands of the villain or criminal, not the detective. Focusing on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s stories of Sherlock Holmes, specifically “Scandal in Bohemia,” I will argue that these texts articulate particular anxieties around photography’s powers to expose private lives. In

Conan Doyle's stories, Holmes's optical precision is praised as camera-like and his activities resemble those of the surreptitious photographer. And yet, even as Conan Doyle aligns Holmes with photographic capacities, and questions the ethics of photographic powers, these texts destabilize the moral authority of Holmes himself. My reading of these texts will serve to destabilize popular conceptions that the detective genre participates, without ambiguity, in the project of realism. Instead, I will argue, Conan Doyle's fictions demonstrate a tension in the desire to limit/contain, and at the same time celebrate the inevitability of subjectivity.

Chapter 3 consists, primarily, of a close reading of *The Camera Fiend*, written by Conan Doyle's brother-in-law, E.W. Hornung.⁸ Hornung's novel provides us with an explicit articulation of the photographer as villain and the dangers of the subjective eye that peers behind even the most scientific lens. The villain of *The Camera Fiend*, Dr. Baumgartner, is compelled by his belief that the camera can capture an image of the human soul, a 'real' that is invisible to the human eye. He constructs a camera that shoots the subject – not only photographically, but also literally, with a bullet, attempting to “take the spirit” in an act of “psychic vivisection” (67). Ultimately, the doctor's greatest threat is that of destabilizing the legitimacy of detection, as his most ominous activities and attributes resemble those of detectives like Holmes and the novel's own gentleman detective, Mr. Eugene Thrush. Baumgartner subverts the state's gaze and resists the regulation of photographic surveillance, using the technology instead for his own investigative ends.

⁸ Hornung and Doyle, both photographers themselves, met in the early 1890s, when they were both contributing to newspapers and journals. They became friends, and then Hornung married Doyle's sister Constance in 1893 (Rabb 1).

The negative depiction of photography in the works of Conan Doyle and Hornung is not an anomaly. As Eugenia Parry writes in her foreword to her anthology, *The Short Story and Photography*, “fiction writing about photographs can be sinister and strange...camera pictures turn up – like a worrisome mole on the skin, a bad-news telegram, a vicious letter unsent. Somebody’s evidence, they’re weapons” (Parry xii). Such fiction responds to the popularization of photography by negotiating the boundaries of ‘acceptable’ photography, asserting that the camera should be kept out of the wrong hands. Moreover, it puts into question the whole project of hegemonic surveillance with which photography becomes aligned. These texts all grapple with the implications of widely accessible photographic technologies. They explore the ways in which the (invested) power of the photograph can help villains who are engaged in socially disruptive practices. Further, they undermine legitimate practices of detection – even when executed by a supposed moral authority like Sherlock Holmes – in part because those detective practices resemble the very photographic techniques these texts are critiquing.

As Jennifer M. Green notices, “expressions of anxiety concerning photography’s status and potential began to emerge in texts already preoccupied with their own representational status” (Green 119). Photographic and literary realism (not to mention Armstrong’s thesis) depend upon the notion that “in comparison with the eye, the modern optical apparatus seemed relatively neutral and impervious to such influences, as only a machine could be.” (Armstrong 77). But this literature demonstrates the photographer’s eye is ever present in the photographic project. Such anxieties include concerns, not only about the limitations of an objective narrator, but also the ethical implications of a desire

for an objective, pervasive gaze. Inasmuch as these texts negotiate such tensions in regards to photographic deployment, they engage in contemporary debates around literary realism and representation.

CHAPTER ONE
The Limits of the Photograph as Document:
'Imaging' the London Poor

'Document' means 'evidence,' and may be traced to *documentum*, a medieval term for an official paper: in other words, evidence not to be questioned, a truthful account backed by the authority of the law. And documentary photography, as a genre, has invariably rested within this frame of authority and significance. It seems the most obvious of categories, and is used precisely *as* evidence of what occurred, so that its historical significance is employed further to invest its status as a truthful and objective account (or representation) of what has happened.

- Graham Clarke, *The Photograph*

We are now making history, and the sun picture supplies the means of passing down a record of what we are, and what we have achieved in this nineteenth century of our progress.

- John Thomson, Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society, 1891

Making known and making sense: exposing the lives of the poor

In 2001, the UK Advertising Standards Authority ruled that Barnardos, a children's charity, could no longer run their current advertising campaign. The three print advertisements, captioned, "There are no silver spoons for children born into poverty," feature photographs of newborn babies with either a syringe, a cockroach, or a mentholated spirits bottle in their mouths (Figure 4). In response to public complaints that the photographs are "offensive, shocking and unduly distressing," ("Barnardos Outcry" 5) Rachel Knott, the marketing manager for Barnardos, argues that the images simply reflect "the hard-hitting nature" ("Barnardos Outcry" 5) of the charity's work, and the public's distaste and outrage aptly demonstrate their lack of exposure to poverty in their own nation. The images are obviously constructed with digital imaging technologies and do not depict any 'real' situation – not even one staged in the photographer's studio. Despite their status as constructs, these images seek to elicit outrage and sympathy in order to solicit funds, and obviously still have great impact, given the controversy they have incited. This is not the first time Barnardos has been in

trouble as a result of the controversial use of photography. Scandal marks the foundational years of the influential charity.

The organization began in 1867, when Thomas John Barnardo (1845-1905), a medical student at the London Hospital in Whitechapel, opened his first home for destitute children in East End London. In order to populate his 'Homes,' he engaged in what he termed "philanthropic kidnapping,"⁹ a mode of alluring and capturing children with "tender violence" (qtd. in Trachtenberg 72), even if they already had both home and guardian. In one pamphlet, entitled "A City Waif, How I Fished and Caught Her," Barnardo explains how he came to convince a young girl, after many attempts, to live in his custody: "it will surprise no one to learn that there came into my heart a great desire to win this little maid from her unprotected street life and its perils, and to induce her to enter our Home at Ilford" (qtd. in Smith "Introduction" 48). By 1896, as a result of such activities and various scandals, Barnardo had appeared in court 88 times, surviving three major cases against him.¹⁰ After so many trials and arbitrations, only one allegation was upheld in court: the 1877 condemnation of his use of photography to create "artistic fictions." The original complaint regarding Barnardo's use of photography was just one of many charges made by Reverend George Reynolds in his widely circulated pamphlet, *Dr. Barnardo's Homes, Containing Startling Revelations*. Reynolds was soon joined by Frederick Charrington, once a friend of Barnardo, and with the support of the Central Office of the Charity Organization Society the two led a series of attacks against

⁹ The title of one of Barnardo's articles in *Night and Day*, where he also characterizes his activity as "philanthropic abduction pursued as a fine art" (qtd Smith 33).

¹⁰ The tone of a *Times* article from December 2nd, 1889 reveals frustration with Barnardo's lack of judgment: "Dr. Barnardo's somewhat unscrupulous philanthropy has again brought him in conflict with the Law Courts. The case of Gossage, an infant, reported in our columns this morning, is in its main features very similar to the case heard earlier in the year, in which Dr. Barnardo was required to 'produce the body' of Martha Tye." (Dr. Barnardo's 9).

Barnardo and his charity. The case was finally settled in a widely publicized and controversial arbitration in late summer 1877.

As many critics have noticed, the controversy over Barnardo's photographs is a rich instance for unpacking contentious notions about photography that circulated in the second half of the nineteenth century. The public outcries and legal proceedings against Barnardo highlight very serious concerns about the connections between photography and kidnapping, the circulation of deceptive photographs, and the desire to have control over one's own public image. Most importantly, this event reveals public anxieties regarding the proper use of the photograph; namely, that it tell the truth – if not always, at least when it relies on indexical resonance for its impact. This event, Seth Koven notes, was a moment of convergence between “histories of visual and literary representations of poor children, social welfare and voluntary philanthropy, metropolitan evangelicalism and sexuality” (Koven 11). Others have contextualized the Barnardo arbitration within historical discussions of philanthropy, charity, the role of religion, and the Poor Law, and this is important work.¹¹ I will read this episode alongside other documentations of poor life in London, especially those that employed photographic imagery. While the intended purpose of Barnardo's photographs is not perfectly congruent with other documentary photographers and journalists, his dependence on constructions of ‘authentic’ representations of the London poor resonates with projects such as Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851), and set a precedent for projects to come,

¹¹ See Wagner and Koven faith for such discussions. Koven writes, “Victorians were deeply invested in believing that Christian charity was a bulwark of integrity and honesty against the predatory machinations encouraged by their commodity culture and the free market. Some found Barnardo's photographic practices so disturbing because they threatened to undermine public confidence in the disinterested and truthful character, not just of his own schemes but of philanthropy itself” (Koven 26).

including John Thomson and Adolphe Smith's *Street Life and London* (1877-78). Of course, there have always been instances of photographic deceptions that have caused eruptions in public mistrust of photography's truth-telling capacity. This chapter is interested in the discursive eruptions that set the stage for late Victorian anxieties around photographic deployment. Specifically, I will argue that the success of a mid-Victorian photograph often depended on its ability to be produced, identified, and defended as either evidentiary or artistic. The documentary photograph, as it seems to straddle both categories, becomes a contested site for discursive upheaval. What these eruptions unearth is a particular concern around the intruding subjectivity of the photographer, as s/he shapes the photographic scene. In 1877, the tensions and slippages between record-keeping, documentary forms, and manipulated photography exploded into a social scandal that reflected and affected photographic practices and understanding at the time, marking a disruption in discourses around representation, documentation, and truth-telling that have never since stood on solid ground – and perhaps never did in the first place.

In "Photography and the Image of the London Poor," Thomas Prasch argues that "photographic images [of the poor] never stood alone, but were always seen in relation to previous visual representations and accompanied by explanatory texts that determined the range of their meaning" (181). Before photographic reproductions were easily facilitated, drawings of the poor graced sociological, journalistic, and literary texts, in order to provide visual confirmation, even if hand-drawn. The desire to 'see' the poor was only further satisfied with the availability of photographic technologies that held more indexical weight. Now, the middle classes could experience the effect of 'actual'

representations of the poor without leaving the safety of their own neighbourhood. However, photographic practices still “depended on existing visual conventions” developed by illustrators and artists that proposed particular ways of reading poor bodies (Prasch 181). For example, in *Fiction in the Age of Photography*, Nancy Armstrong argues that “the picturesque aesthetic had been uniquely geared to the task of turning poverty into art” (Armstrong 53), and while illustrations for Dickens’s novels attempted to meet his almost photographic descriptions, they often resembled exaggerated caricatures (Figure 5). Pre-photographic representations of the poor were often acceptably artistic, and photographic claims to pure objectivity are easily challenged when we examine the ways photographers reiterated – whether consciously or unconsciously – the visual codes that were not easily severed from their aesthetic sensibilities.

Henry Mayhew and the ‘photographic real’

In his influential work, *London Labour and the London Poor*, Henry Mayhew does not use photographic images to accompany his text, but he often employs the metaphor of photographic indexicality to attest to the documentary accuracy of his textual evidence. He claims that *London Labour*

stands alone *as a photograph of life as actually spent* by the lower classes of the Metropolis. That one half of the world does not know how the other half lives is an axiom of antiquity, but the truthful revelations and descriptions of the London street folk, workers and non-workers, and the means by which they exist, will go a great way to enlighten the educated classes respecting matters which have hitherto been involved in mystery and uncertainty. (4:xi, italics mine)

The four-volume text's tedious use of description, quotation, and statistics indicate Mayhew's attempt to accurately document a particular segment of London's population, an attempt motivated by his belief that "the general public still knew less of the poor of London than of 'the most distant tribes of the earth'" (qtd. in Gibson-Cowan 10). Mayhew's text endows the photograph with the capacity to unveil the mystery of these lives. He relies on a public conception of photography as indexical, in order to attest to the accuracy of his own written representations.

London Labour was not illustrated at first, but later editions feature numerous drawings, many based on original daguerreotypes by Richard Beard, who, after buying Daguerre's patent in 1841, opened Britain's first portrait studio in March of that year. Most images in *London Labour* include captions that testify to their origins, reminding us they are "from a daguerreotype by Beard" or "from a photograph by Beard." We are to assume that if a camera can accurately capture a face or scene without artistic corruption, a drawing of such a photograph would be equally objective.¹² Even those not based on a daguerreotype are defended as drawn in the most documentary of conditions. For example, the image, "View of a Dust Yard," (2:208) (Figure 6) is *not* drawn from a photograph, but the caption reassures us in parentheses that it is "from a Sketch taken on the spot" and so perhaps we should believe it has suffered from the least amount of artistic license, and as such, retains some degree of authenticity as documentation.

Unlike these impromptu drawings, Beard's daguerreotypes were not taken in the streets at all: "all the photographic images on which sketches were based were posed studio portraits" (Prasch 182). The positioning of the poor inside the studio is something

¹² It is puzzling that a drawing of a photograph would be considered less subjective than a drawing of a 'real' scene.

peculiar to urban photography. Whereas rural photography often celebrates picturesque landscapes, urban life is represented by its people, often decontextualized from their quotidian environment. Armstrong argues that “as it made the poor visible, Victorian photography also rendered invisible the local cultures in which most of the population actually worked and made sense of material things” (103). This is especially notable in Paul Martin’s statuary photographs that literally cut out the worker and situate him/her on a black background (Figure 7). The poor, then, are represented as isolated from any visual significations of their work and homes. Similarly, while drawings based on Beard’s photographs attempt to represent the worker’s context, they are in effect the result of simulated studio portraits. The illustrator then sketches in an ‘authentic’ background, so as to erase all evidence of the studio. Despite their call to authenticity, such drawings are many steps removed from ‘actual life,’ the subject is transported from street, to studio, to photograph, to drawing.

Barnardo’s transgressions: unpacking the tension

Dr. Thomas John Barnardo also participated in photographic representation, and used his own portrait studios to construct compelling images of the poor. In 1874, Barnardo opened his own photographic department in his first boys’ home, and by 1905 he had taken over 55,000 photographs, including one of every child who passed through the homes. A brilliant philanthropist, he knew that photographic testimony of his children would benefit his project. During the 1877 arbitration, he claimed his photographs had three purposes. They served as a method of record keeping, as a mode of detection and tracking, and as a means of advertisement, in order to solicit donations

and foster a positive public image (Wagner, 145). Barnardo's third object is the most pertinent to my study, because it involves the reception and influence of the photograph in the public sphere, a purpose most comparable to the projects of Mayhew, Thomson and Smith. However, we should note the ways that Barnardo's photographs straddle our three categories. Their status as record employs the evidentiary, their promotional circulation embraces the documentary, and the recognition of their status as studio shots alludes to artistry.

Barnardo's compulsion to 'save' children from the street often originated in his own visual experience, where such children provided visual testimony that aroused his sympathy and compelled action. In one pamphlet, he writes, "There is always in my mind something beautiful in the little ones, however disfigured they maybe with sin and suffering, something that looks out of their young eyes and half formed features, and that pathetically appeals to one's pity and sympathy and love" (qtd. in Trachtenberg 72). Barnardo was outraged that his society was more interested in international philanthropy, helping people who are "objects to us, not of sight, but of faith" while "our streets swarm with the living evidence of the need of these schools" (qtd. in Smith "Shoe-Black" 31). Like Mayhew, he intended to make these local worlds as visually accessible as the colonial worlds depicted in the works of photographers like Francis Firth and John Thomson. Perhaps he believed that by delivering the same image of the child's eyes that so impacted him, members of society would be moved to open their pocketbooks.

According to its title page, Reynolds's indicting pamphlet included charges in regards to "Management and Character, Appeals grounded upon Misstatements of facts, Deceptive photographs, Taking credit for other men's Workmanship, The authorship of

letters written under a forged name, and Doctor's Degree as a Physician used without a Diploma or Authority" (qtd. in Bready 142). The only charge the arbitrators considered worth upholding was the minister's third accusation, that

The system of taking, and making capital of, the children's photographs is not only dishonest, but has a tendency to destroy the better feelings of the children. Barnardo's method is to take the children as they are supposed to enter the Home, and then after they have been in the Home some time. He is not satisfied with *taking them as they really are*, but he tears their clothes, so as to *make them appear worse than they really are*. They are also taken in purely fictitious positions. A lad named Fletcher is taken with a shoeblack's box upon his back, although he never was a shoeblack. (qtd. in McHoul, italics mine)

This ruling refers to the most powerful, successful, and controversial images Barnardo produced: the 'before and after' cards that he sold to the general public (Figure 8). Each card cost three pennies, and a pack of twenty was five shillings. They were also sent to all who provided Barnardo's homes with financial support, in order to demonstrate the very concrete effects of the philanthropists' money; as a writer for *The Strand* confirms, Barnardo "takes a waif in hand, and makes a man or woman of it in a very few years" (How 173). According to an advertisement, these cards were 'Contrasts,' "Illustrating and comparing the past and present conditions of Destitute Lads received into the home" (qtd. in Buckland 76). Each card displayed two photographs of the same child: one taken (apparently) before his/her admission to a Barnardo home, and one taken after some time in the home. The cards illustrated shifts in representation that attempted to demonstrate the material effects Barnardo's charity had on the bodies of its children. As such, they relied on their status as testimony or document, similar to those photographs taken to identify and catalogue criminals and the insane.

The most obvious concern to the arbitration committee was the deceptive status of such photographs. The ‘before’ photographs are not actually taken before these children are in Barnardo’s custody; in fact, they were usually taken days after the children had moved into one of his homes. As such, Barnardo’s presence and vision are already invested in the scene. Like Beard’s work, the photographs are taken indoors, in “an enclosed space defined by certain props and background” (Trachtenberg 71), and not in the street, where the children have been found. These children have already been ‘roomed’ – in the charity, in the studio, and in the camera (chamber) – when they are photographed as homeless. While Victorian audiences certainly comprehended the possibility and legitimacy of artistic photography¹³, in Barnardo’s case, the photographs act as record and publicity for the activities of his organization, and the philanthropist must be able to defend the authenticity of the photographs as accurate documentation. It did not help Barnardo’s case when Florence Holder’s mother testified that the girl never sold newspapers, even though this is how she is depicted in her ‘before’ shot (Smith “Shoe-Black” 36) (Plate 9). Many other parents gave similar testimonies.

The condemnation of the arbitration committee intimates that if a project relies on the indexical powers of photography, it should strictly adhere to truth-telling – not only because the deception is damaging and harmful to the children and their families, but because it destabilizes public faith in photography and its potential to stand as testimony and evidence. It is not surprising that the arbitration committee expressed concern – only

¹³ In 1869, Henry Peach Robinson had already written his influential monograph on artistic photography, *Pictorial Effect in Photography*, which attempted to introduce photographers to aesthetic concepts. He was also employing combination printing (using two negatives for one result) in order to achieve the perfect image, not the most accurate representation of a particular scene.

– about the charge of ‘photographic fictions,’ given that photography’s aid to juridical discourse would be significantly undermined by such destabilization.

Barnardo defended his photographs by arguing that they stood somewhere between the binaries of art and science. He “admitted frankly that on rare occasions he had children ‘made up’ for ‘composite’ pictures” (Bready 148), but defended such practices as such: “very many photographs are *representative* or *typical*, i.e. not intended so much to represent the individual boy or girl whose face is depicted, but a WHOLE CLASS of street children of whom very many have been rescued” (qtd. in Trachtenberg 74). Barnardo’s photographs are clearly studio shots, and as the subject has obviously posed for the camera, they represent some degree of artistry. These portraits resemble the more constructed image of a *carte-de-visite* – created, not as an accurate representation of one’s character, but to advertise a particular, posed self to family, friends, potential lovers, and the public. It also resonates with the projects of artistic photographers, including Oscar Gustav Rejlander (1813-1875), with whom Barnardo aligned himself during arbitration (Smith “Shoe-Black” 36). Between 1859 and 1871, Rejlander produced photographs of street children (Figure 10), and although he often used the students of a nearby Ragged School as models, his were not considered documentary photographs: “First of all, they are clearly studio re-creations. The backgrounds are vague and generalized but are obviously interiors. The costumes in many, probably all, are also studio props. The same pair of ragged pants, for example, appears in *Night in Town*, *Day in Town*, the game of jacks, and *Adding Insult to Injury*” (Spencer 87-88). Furthermore, Rejlander was the first to employ the composite photograph, the technique that Henry Peach Robinson later employed in his artistic photographs.

If Rejlander's photographs were widely accepted as studio shots (i.e., not authentic), how did the Shaftesbury Society effectively use one of his photographs to raise money for their efforts? As an honest artistic statement, Rejlander's photographs were granted the ability to arouse sentiment and speak to the greater truths that artists could access. Unlike the 'pure documentary' photograph, Rejlander could manipulate the model and scene into conventional codes in order to maximize sympathy. Like Rejlander's photographs, Barnardo claims that he is presenting an accurate view of *the* poor child, even if not necessarily an accurate view of *that* poor child.¹⁴ But as the century became more interested in 'the real,' audiences were moved by properly contextualized photographs. They would be more apt to be moved if they discovered that the *image* of the street child for whom they felt sympathy was *actually* a street child for whom they should feel sympathy.

Like Rejlander, Barnardo's photographs deploy traditional artistic and photographic conventions established by those who represented the poor throughout the century. In highly manipulated studio shots, the camera becomes an artistic tool, not an autotelic agent of pure representation. The photographer, looking to motivate public sympathy, reiterates particular, collectively understood signifiers, often alluding to earlier caricatures of the poor (like those textually and visually represented in Dickens's works). For example, Barnardo admitted to ripping the subject's clothing in preparation for the photograph. The image of torn clothing alludes to the popular construction of the 'ragged poor,' a tradition popularized earlier in the century by Carlyle's characterization of Irish immigrants, full of "rags and laughing." Such people "lived in 'ragged homes,' squalid,

¹⁴ We could also draw parallels with Galton's composite photographs, an early form of mug shot technology that combined portraits of criminals to emphasize 'types,' rather than individual identification (Figure 11).

slovenly, untended; and they lived ‘ragged lives,’ disorderly, unsettled, unconventional” (Himmelfarb 371). And ‘ragged children’ went to ‘Ragged Schools,’ like Barnardo’s. Imaging poor children as ragged, then, easily fits them within a framework of charity – it identifies their class status, marks their current situation, and suggests their proper place in Barnardo’s homes.¹⁵

Representations of the poor, especially children, commonly employ racialized characterizations. It was not uncommon for Victorians to consider the poor as another race, marking their bodies as Other while – both semantically and visually – associating them with the appearance and supposed habits of those with darker skin. For example, Barnardo’s writings often employ the term ‘street Arab,’ coined by his philanthropic predecessor, Thomas Guthrie, in his “First Plea for Ragged Schools” (1847). The term obviously contributes to the racialization of East London’s poor, in order to justify ‘saving’ the children in philanthropic homes and schools. As Guthrie writes, “These Arabs of the city are as wild as those of the desert, and must be broken into three habits, - those of discipline, learning, and industry, not to speak of cleanliness” (qtd. in Smith “Shoe-Black” 30). Such racialization is evident in Barnardo’s contrast cards, where, for example, the “little vagrant’s” skin is darkened with dirt or soot; that same child, “now a little workman,” can properly pass as a white middle-class boy (Figure 8). The racialization of the poor is particularly effective in motivating philanthropy, because it

¹⁵ The arbitration committee heard incidences that connected what was happening at the home, behind closed doors, and what was happening in the field of representation. For example, “upon his admission to the Home, [one boy’s] clothes were torn and his limbs exposed for the benefit of the camera. Several years later, according to a published affidavit submitted to George Reynolds by John Hancorne, an employee dismissed for ‘gross impropriety,’ the [same] boy was forcibly stripped and flogged before the staff and other boys” (Koven 31). Such testimony only makes real the mystical/discursive connection between photography (the capturing of images) and kidnapping (the capturing of children).

promises visible proof of the effects of philanthropy. Because the darkened skin of these children is not essential to the subject's identity, these representations suggest, to Barnardo's patrons, the possibility of 'whitening' Victorian London.¹⁶

Barnardo's photographs, therefore, participate in and adhere to a particular generic tradition, and once this is recognized by the public, the photographs can no longer stand as evidentiary. Indeed, Barnardo wanted the best of both photographic worlds: he wanted "the staged or artistic...to be accepted as literal or true" (Trachtenberg 75). In this sense, he attests to the photographic capacity to reveal the 'truth' of these children's conditions, while granting his photographer necessary artistic license, considering the photographs were obviously not taken in the street. Unfortunately for Barnardo, arguing that the photographs represented 'types' of children did him little service. The impact of a 'before and after' shot necessarily relies on its authenticity as testimony of one's actual state in the 'before' and 'after.' Furthermore, there is no indication (within the context of the photographs and cards) that these are anything but the depiction of a specific child. For example, cards 27 and 28 assure the viewer that they indeed represent the very same boy. Card 27 testifies that the boy represented is "The same lad as on card No. 28," and card 28 refers to card 27. The generic instability of the 'before and after' photographs compromised Barnardo's defense. He could not profit from public faith in an indexical photographic testimony if in the end the public must still trust that the artistry of the photographer has accurately recreated the scene as it was once found.

¹⁶ Similar discourses are evident in an early Pears' soap ad, in which a white boy washes the colour from a black boy's body, 'cleansing' him of his racial markings'. The resonance of this comparison is that, unlike race, one can be cleansed of an undesired class status (Figure 12).

The repressed subjectivities of John Thomson

As the Barnardo arbitration was unfolding, John Thomson, a photographer, and Adolphe Smith, a journalist and labour activist, were producing *Street Life in London*, a monthly publication that ran from February 1877 to January 1879. Thomson and Smith took to the streets, “armed with notebook and camera” (“Preface” n.p.), in order to document the lives of the London poor. As the first photographically illustrated work to deal with social life, *Street Life* obviously owed much to Mayhew’s work. *Street Life*’s thirty-seven photographs act as visual affirmations of the text’s descriptions, “bringing to bear the precision of photography in illustration of our subject” (“Preface”). Thomson and Smith insist that photography necessarily insists upon truth-telling: “the unquestionable accuracy of this testimony will enable us to present true types of the London poor and shield us from the accusation of either underrating or exaggerating individual peculiarities of appearance” (“Preface”).¹⁷ Such a conception of photography – as able to give accurate testimony and legitimacy to one’s written depictions – is also evident in Thomson’s characterization of his work in the Far East. In *Through China with a Camera*, he explains how photography has granted his work accuracy: “I have always been able to furnish readers of my books with incontestable pictorial evidence of my ‘bona fides’ and to share with them the pleasure experienced in coming face to face for the first time with the scenes and the people of far-off lands” (qtd. in Buckland 53).

Thomson and Smith’s project was under close scrutiny, in light of the Barnardo arbitration, and especially because they testified to its ultimate objectivity. As Angela Vanhaelen notices, the authors were probably aware of the philanthropist’s troubles and

¹⁷ Compare with Mayhew’s preface, which asserts, “Be the faults of the present volume what they may, assuredly they are rather shortcomings than exaggerations, for in every instance the author and his coadjutors have sought to understate, and most assuredly never to exceed the truth” (xv).

consciously attempted to “distance themselves from recent scandal surrounding the photographs used by Dr. Thomas John Barnardo” (196). Despite this conscious attempt on their part, though, *Street Life* was often criticized for its lack of objectivity. In a seeming indictment of the work, one critic notices that “it is somewhat apparent that some of the groups were far from unconscious of the fact that they were standing for their portraits” (qtd. in Vanhaelen 196), suggesting that the self-consciousness of the photographed precludes the possibility for the images to stand as truth-telling documents of actual street life.¹⁸ Like Mayhew’s *London Labour*, Thomson and Smith’s *Street Life* demonstrates much anxiety around its truth telling capacities, and their preface attempts to quell concerns that they may be publishing false or doctored photographs. Thomson insists that his “share in the composition is very small indeed; I have only permitted nature to do what she is always willing to do, *if photographers do not stand in her way*” (qtd. in Vanhaelen 196, italics mine). According to Thomson’s preface, what is essential to the photograph is not that which is created or intended by the photographer. On the contrary, it is the intentionality of the photographer that has the potential to disrupt the power of the photograph. We are to believe there was no manipulation of the photographic moment, no manipulation of the photographic scene that could disrupt the legitimacy of their visual and written documentation. In order to ensure the validity of *Street Life*, Thomson has to suppress his role as photographer, and especially as artist; indeed, he represses his own eye/I in order to guarantee the authenticity of his project.

¹⁸ At the same time, Thomson was involved in a balancing act. There was no way to win public acceptance of his work: “Some critics saw evidence of artistic intervention and accused Thomson of manipulating or even touching up his photographs. Others complained that the photographs were too objective and lacked spontaneity and interest; in short, they were not artistic enough” (Vanhaelen 196).

Of course, as Richard L. Stein reminds us, “Even with the democratizing aim of journalistic exposure, the authority of the camera intrudes itself – organizing bodies, controlling action, creating distance. Standing behind the camera, we remain outsiders, tourists” (Stein 248). Thomson’s presence is repressed only rhetorically, especially as he does not yet have access to the photographic technologies that would more easily enable his erasure from the scene. Indeed, *London Labour* depends on the photographs as a supplement to the text – as a testimony that ‘it is really like this. It really is’. But when readers and critics grow skeptical of the honesty of the photograph, it becomes difficult to make such claims to authenticity. A studio shot is, at best, a recreation of the scene that is marked with the photographer’s own coaching of the subject. The illustrations in *London Labour* are only a reflection of the subject that has been filtered through the subjectivities and aesthetic sensibilities of both the studio photographer and the illustrator. Similarly, Thomson and Smith’s work risks destabilization when the audience recognizes what is invisible and yet implied in the photograph: that Thomson was there, framing, adjusting, and influencing the shot.

The emergence of regulation: photographic boundaries

This moment is a rich historical example of the demand for control over the evidentiary photograph, a theme we see throughout photographic history. If the photograph has such strong powers of representing an individual’s class, race, and respectability, who should be granted access to such powerful technology and its articulations? It is not surprising that during all these scandals and accusations, Barnardo was concerned with his own public reputation, upon which the success of his charity

depended. Most of Reynolds' published accusations attack Barnardo's misrepresentations of himself and his charity, including his use of the misleading title 'doctor,' in order to solicit public respect and trust. The arbitration, having placed Barnardo under public scrutiny, caused a dwindling in donations to the organization. It was for the purpose of discretion that the issue went to arbitration, not court, in order "to protect the two prominent Christian workers from the damage of publicity from a criminal prosecution" (Smith "Shoe-Black" 36). In a strange twist, while defending his own photographs, Barnardo found himself the victim of Reynolds's own deployment of photographic arsenal. In order to fortify his attacks, Reynolds began distributing a photograph of Barnardo, stolen by one of his disgruntled ex-employees, that depicts the philanthropist with his walking stick aggressively pointed outwards (Figure 13). Barnardo lamented that the "miserable photograph" was a "wretched caricature" (qtd. in Koven 19) and so began circulating a counter-photograph – a portrait that focuses on his face, in which he appears a more respectable and gentle member of society (Figure 14). It seems both Barnardo and Reynolds also recognized the power that photography could have in shaping one's public image, and while Barnardo insists upon his right to circulate images of others in a public sphere, he at the same time insists upon his own right to represent himself in only the most flattering way. With the early daguerreotype, one was able to carefully sanction the production and circulation of one's own image in the public sphere. Yet as photography moved away from a consensual interaction between photographer and subject in the studio, one's image could be constructed, produced, and circulated by anyone with access to photographic technologies. A true democratization of photography, then, would grant anyone the power to construct the image of another. It

seems this possibility caused much anxiety, especially for those in the middle class who had previously enjoyed a life free of scandal and misrepresentation, and, I will suggest, is a chief cause of demonization of the photographer at the end of the nineteenth century.

The highly publicized Barnardo arbitration became a focal point for contesting discourses of photography. It demonstrates that while photography can never be an objective 'window' on its subject, it can reveal much about the intentions behind the photographic project. Due to public acceptance of the evidentiary photograph, many philanthropists and social reformers used the camera in order to create sympathy and change: "The camera exposes the subject to an assumed public conscience which, having seen the evidence, accepts the moral implications recorded by the camera" (Clarke 147). But the photograph that relies upon public faith in the indexicality of photography must at all times defend such powers and adhere to its assumed rules of representation. Barnardo's photographs, even according to his own defense of their purpose, seem to stretch across all three categories. As manipulated studio shots, many of his photographs resemble the artistic. Inasmuch as they testify to an actual 'before and after' state of the child's body, they depend upon the evidentiary. Lastly, as they attempt to represent a particular class of children, in order to create a 'type,' the photographs become documentary. Given these shifting definitions, the Barnardo photographs demonstrate the inevitable blurriness of such categorization. Regardless, the photographs could never be everything at once. Most obviously, their status as art compromises their ability to be evidentiary. The public reaction to Barnardo's photographic deployment is a curious early example of a disappointed archival desire – one that sought legal apology and

reparation. Most importantly, it brought to public attention the possibility that the photograph – and, indeed, the photographer – should not always be trusted.

As photographic technologies advanced with the closing of the nineteenth century, these concerns became all the more real. Roy Flukinger argues that with the proliferation of photographic technologies, “the camera, often in untrained or even unintentionally deceptive hands, began once more to contradict its assumed objective status as an instrument of accurate documentation” (Flukinger 150). In the fiction I will examine in the next two chapters, there are great hesitations about those who employ photography, especially within those modes that lay some claim to the technology’s evidentiary status. Like Barnardo, these photographers hold the potential of destabilizing photographic authority and, in turn, of rupturing the smooth interaction between photography, psychology, medicine, the law, and literary representation

CHAPTER TWO
Scandalous Gazes:
Sherlock Holmes and the Photographic Eye

We cannot conceive of a more impartial and truthful witness than the sun, as its light stamps and seals the similitude of the wound on the photograph put before the jury; it would be more accurate than the memory of witnesses, and as the object of all evidence is to show truth, why should not this dumb witness show it?

-The judge in *Franklin v. State*, a murder case in America, 1882

My eyes tell me

- Sherlock Holmes, "A Scandal in Bohemia"

The camera is an instrument of detection. We photograph not only what we know, but also what we don't know.

- Lisette Model

Detective fiction and 'the real': vested interests

Traditionally, detective fiction is read as acting either in concert with, or with the interest of promoting a realist ideal. The detective's project, like realism, is invested in positivist science, and "underlying both the novels of adventure and detection is a belief in empiricism as a means of organizing and making sense of experience" (Thompson 65). The detective subscribes to the belief that we can solve the world's mysteries (whether physical or social) through careful observation of facts made available to our senses that will reveal some truth when submitted to a process of reason. In *From Bow Street to Baker Street*, Jon Thompson argues that empiricism is primarily a middle class concern that becomes popularized by fiction like Conan Doyle's: "The formal structure of these texts articulates an adherence to a particular ideology of empiricism, an ideology that, in conjunction with a general ideology of imperialism, determines the form of Conan Doyle's detective fiction" (Thompson 66). Typically, such readings make mention of photography, in order to assert an unproblematic relationship between detective fiction,

empiricism, and realism. Implicitly, photography becomes a metaphor for positivist conceptions of 'authentic representation.' Explicitly, photographic technologies are characterized as the detective's co-conspirators that aid his/her revelation of mysteries. For example, Ronald R. Thomas argues that Holmes is "the literary embodiment of the elaborate network of visual technologies that revolutionized the art of seeing in the nineteenth century" (135). Initially, the relationship between Holmes and the camera is clear: of course, Holmes's method of detection often demonstrates a 'desire for the real' that is comparable to those who employed, promoted, and celebrated indexicality of the evidentiary or documentary photograph. Like photographers, detectives are interested in uncovering, exposing, and documenting what is often hidden from public sight.

In the tradition of such readings, Mark Seltzer accounts for detective fiction's desire for a pervasive gaze, or what he calls a "fantasy of surveillance" that can "be seen to participate in, and even to promote, a system of constraint" (Seltzer 50). This narrative of panopticism pervades most theories of detective fiction – theories that (uncritically) align the detective and photographer in an oversimplified relationship of mutually benefiting surveillance, regulation, and power. Yet in much detective fiction, including that of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the relationship between photography and detection is rarely stable. While fantasies of unlimited optical powers may indeed be imbedded within both fictional and 'real' instances of detection and photography, they do not exist as a simple fact; instead, they are constantly submitted to scrutiny and question.

In "A Scandal in Bohemia" (1891), the first of many Sherlock Holmes adventures to be published in *The Strand*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle articulates the ways in which photography disrupts the smooth functioning of the detective's activities and

challenges the motives, techniques, and discursive foundations of his profession. In this story, Holmes's client is Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismond von Ormstein, the hereditary King of Bohemia, who asks the detective to apprehend, not a criminal, but a piece of evidence that attests to an old love affair. The king's former lover, Irene Adler, is blackmailing him, threatening to send the evidence to his new fiancée's family, people of "strict principles" (16). When they first meet, Holmes probes the king:

"Was there a secret marriage?"

"None."

"No legal papers or certificates?"

"None."

"Then I fail to follow your Majesty. If this young person should produce her letters for blackmailing or other purposes, how is she to prove their authenticity?"

"There is the writing."

"Pooh, pooh! Forgery."

"My private notepaper."

"Stolen."

"My own seal."

"Imitated."

"My photograph."

"Bought."

"We were both in the photograph."

"Oh dear! That is very bad! Your Majesty has indeed committed an indiscretion." (16)

The photograph of the king and his former lover together stands as the most damning evidence of the king's past, and has enough "weight that it may have an influence upon European history" (15). Holmes eagerly accepts the great sum of money offered by the king, and promises to retrieve the photograph from Adler's home. In "A Scandal," the photograph's threat lies in its capacity to render private lives public: to do, in fact, what detectives like Holmes do every day.

If detective fiction depends on the indexical status of the evidentiary photograph, what does it mean when such a photograph becomes the 'criminal' that Holmes must

capture? Focusing on “A Scandal in Bohemia,” I will observe the ways in which photography is represented as a threat, not an aid, for Holmes. This is not to suggest that the text dismisses any connection between Holmes, the camera, and the (especially, surreptitious) photographer. This fiction still draws parallels between photography and acts of detection. Therefore, anxieties about photography’s indiscriminate gaze ultimately trouble the moral status of the detective and *his* participation in systems of surveillance, invasion, and control, even if such participation is in the service of ‘truth.’ My analysis of “A Scandal in Bohemia” will attempt to destabilize popular conceptions of a symbiotic relationship between detective fiction, positivism, realism, and photography. Beneath the surface of “A Scandal” lies a series of anxieties around representation, detection, truth, and objectivity. I will be using photography (both its status in the story, and its cultural significance at this particular moment) as a way of unearthing some of these tensions, especially as they appear in Holmes’s challenges and failures, including his inability to ‘see’ beyond his society’s gender binary system. Lastly, I will be expanding the work of other critics who locate the various threats that Irene Adler poses – both to Holmes and to the fiction itself. This chapter insists that Adler’s threat is photographic, not only as she possesses the photograph/weapon of the text, but because her successful deployment of photographic and detective techniques reverses the traditional class and gender relations of the gaze.

An examination of instability in discourses of photography and detection will reveal the problematics of a desire for the real that photographic and realist projects sought to fulfill. For Nancy Armstrong, photographic technologies shifted representational discourse by creating what she terms “archival desire”: “By extending

our field of vision and yet presenting consumers with something already seen, the calotype simultaneously incited and thwarted a historically new desire to make contact with the world itself – a desire for documentary evidence of some person, place, or event” (15). Alongside Martin A. Kayman and Catherine Belsey, I would suggest that detective fiction does not leave such desires (whether embodied in scientific empiricism, photographic evidence, or narrative realism) untroubled. As a genre of popular fiction concerned with epistemological strategies for uncovering mysteries, detective fiction concerns itself with realism, and such narratives participate in discussions and critiques of realist modes of representation. In *From Bow Street to Baker Street*, Kayman argues that detective fiction explores “the mysterious territories of society and of the psyche which cannot be captured within the narrative strategies of literary realism, scientific positivism and contemporary legal structures” (10). In this sense, detective fiction is interested in critiquing realist modes of representation. This critique is facilitated by its status as popular fiction because, as Kayman notes:

What makes mystery/detective fiction particularly interesting is that, being constitutionally barred from these more respectable discourses whilst being obliged to refer constantly to them, it is uniquely placed to put in question the former's ability to narrate modern mystery. It is by no means incidental that it is precisely in the 'low' genre that we find major narrative experimentation with point of view, character, and plot...Crime, detective, horror, and mystery stories may on the one hand exploit the mechanics of narrative fiction, but they may also be used to put those mechanics in question. (Kayman 6-7)

Catherine Belsey seeks similar tensions and troublings in her examination of the ‘shadowy women’ that haunt the Holmes adventures, and she suggests possibilities for more challenging readings. Taking her cue from Holmes’s statement that “Women’s heart and mind are insoluble puzzles to the male,” (Conan Doyle “Illustrious” 20) Belsey

seeks to 'undo' detective fiction by locating its own discursive limitations in the mysterious women who are impenetrable to Holmes's deductive reasoning. In the case of "A Scandal," it seems photography provides a similar locus of discursive limitation, representing the horizon of Holmes's legitimacy and of the text's own commitment to revealing the truth.

Telling it as it is: on narrative techniques

The stories of Sherlock Holmes participate directly in discussions around literary realism, representation, and narration. But first, a consideration of detective fiction as a mode of realism must be qualified. It is clear that Conan Doyle was not writing within the strict tradition of literary realist authors influenced by Emile Zola's project. Conan Doyle's fiction prioritizes allegiance to the generic codes of detective fiction. However, the narrative strategies of detective fiction are considered realist inasmuch as they seek to 'produce an effect of the real' through an 'accounting,' not a 'recounting' of incidences. While omniscient narration usually grants literary realism the illusion of objectivity, much detective fiction is narrated in the first person. In the stories of Sherlock Holmes, Watson gives an account of the detective's activities, as he slowly reveals the mystery to the reader.¹⁹ Furthermore, like realism, they are interested in the ways we can come to know and represent the world, in both the form and content.

Such a narrative gives the illusion of a testimony, even if presented in a fictive form. Watson has witnessed the events, and attempts to narrate them honestly.

¹⁹ Many have mentioned that Doyle was quite successful in this matter, given that 221B Baker Street still receives mail addressed to Sherlock Holmes, and a series of articles were printed in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that "discuss, with all due medical seriousness, the nature of Holmes's cocaine addiction" (Kayman 225).

Furthermore, he includes – in his narration – Holmes’s eventual recounting of the full solution, granting the detective ultimate narrative power: By the end of the Holmes story, the criminal’s actions – events which neither Holmes nor Watson have witnessed – have been re-narrated by their voices.

Sherlock Holmes often remarks upon Watson’s style of narration, most profoundly in *The Sign of the Four*. Upon reading Watson’s narration of the events, Holmes criticizes his partner: “detection is, or ought to be, an exact science, and should be treated in the same cold and unemotional manner. You have attempted to tinge it with romanticism, which produces much the same effect as if you worked a love-story or an elopement into the fifth proposition of Euclid” (4). Watson argues that, in fact, he has not committed any exaggeration: “But the romance was there...I could not tamper with the facts,” and Holmes’s response is surprising: “Some facts should be suppressed, or, at least, a just sense of proportion should be observed in treating them. The only point in the case which deserved mention was the curious analytical reasoning from effects to causes, by which I succeeded in unraveling it” (4). It appears, then, that the most scientific account is perhaps not the one that articulates the results of a fully pervasive gaze. In order to create the appearance of ‘sticking to the facts,’ some facts – especially those that concern emotive events – must be censored.

Similarly, the mystery – if it is to be effective – must exclude certain facts until the end. Of course, the detective genre depends upon the existence of mysteries; even Holmes recognizes this. Those who witness Holmes’s reason at work are amazed at his detective skills, but, in “The Adventure of the Crooked Man,” he insists that “it is one of those instances where the reasoner can produce an effect which seems remarkable to his

neighbour because the latter has missed the one little point which is the basis of the deduction” (272). By withholding information until the right moment, the detective is able to amaze his clients. Holmes reminds Watson that he uses the same tools in his narration, “for the effect of some of those little sketches of yours, which is entirely meretricious, depending as it does upon your retaining in your own hands of some factors in the problem which are never imparted to the reader” (272). In this sense, while the detective himself may be aware of all the facts, his profession (and the detective genre) depends upon a certain degree of classification, a withholding of knowledge, and a retention of the authority of the detective/narrator. Holmes, just like Mayhew and Thomson, is able to justify his occupation precisely because there are mysteries to be revealed.

The Holmes stories, while narrated in a (self-confessed) subjective manner, demonstrate the detective’s desire for the appearance of a full access to the truth (and subsequent anxieties around subjectivity), but ultimately seeks to censor others’ possession of a fully pervasive gaze that speaks all things, not only in the realm of *solving* mysteries, but of *narrating* them. Conan Doyle’s text, as it *speaks* the desire to repress subjectivity (just as Barthes names the photographer’s terrifying eye), or limit the effects of a so-called objectivity, does more to uncover a fear of subjectivity than erase it. The archival desire of Holmes and other detectives is unstable. Their insistence on scientific positivism, empiricism, and objective narration are constantly subverted by the textual anxieties, tensions, and explicit suggestions towards new modes of understanding art, science, and subjectivity. Furthermore, the problematization of the photograph, despite its position as an ally in realism’s network of detection and representation,

generates anxieties around the limits of such a longing for evidentiary truth and a pervasive and/or objective gaze.

The detective and the photographer: penetrating visions

Popular photography and detective fiction both emerged during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and the analogy between private detectives and instantaneous, pervasive photography is not merely one of historical coincidence. The socio-political convergence of photography and the law is conventionally explored through the growing technologies of evidence and detection, the latter eventually developing into the mode of identification and classification we now understand as the mug shot. Soon after its invention, the testimony of the photograph became admissible in court, and the rise of scientific forensics readily admitted photography into its repertoire of tools.

Furthermore, as much of Tom Gunning's work demonstrates, the detective's role is similar to that of the photographer, especially documentary photographers like John Thomson. He argues that "the detective, dedicated to uncovering deception and operating frequently through his mastery of disguise, seems an equally relevant term of comparison for this form of urban voyeurism [photographing the poor]," as the detective is "focused not only on penetrating and mapping the urban wilderness but on uncovering wrongdoing and gathering evidence" (Gunning "Embarrassing" 53). Furthermore, most critics agree that the detective is motivated by "the impulse to explore and disclose the underworld," and so "seeing becomes the mode of power par excellence" (Seltzer 34). That photographers and detectives perform similar functions is not just a contemporary critical observation. The marketing of early popular photography was couched in

discourses of detection; anyone with access to the relatively affordable handheld camera could carry it with them and capture images of family, friends, and strangers. Indeed, the first marketed handheld camera – the only predecessor to the Kodak, and released by George Eastman in 1886 – was called the ‘detective camera.’

At the same time, as Thomas notes, “the detective appears in the Victorian popular imagination...looking like a camera” (138). The earliest detectives in fiction are described as having camera-like vision. For example, the first literary detective, Edgar Allan Poe’s Auguste Dupin, owes his professional success to optical powers: “through the lenses of his distinctively tinted green spectacles, he alone was able to see the purloined letter that had been hidden in plain view” (Thomas 136). The first detective to appear in British literature, Dickens’s Detective Bucket, meets Mr. Snagsby, in “his ghostly manner” with “his hands behind him, a composed and quiet listener. He is a stoutly built, steady-looking, sharp-eyed man in black” who “looks at Mr. Snagsby as if he were going to take his portrait” (355). And early in “A Scandal,” Watson refers to Holmes as “the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen,” for whom emotional sentiment would act as “grit in a sensitive instrument or a crack in one of *his own highpower lenses*” (11, italics mine).²⁰

Holmes’s photographic ability lies in seeing what most overlook – noticing and making sense of clues that others would consider trivial. Holmes displays such powers of

²⁰ The camera to which Dickens refers (in 1852) is a different kind of technology than in Doyle’s reference in 1891. Thomas argues that Dickens’s detective “stands in for the dreamed-of but as yet unrealized photographic technology in the novel” (144). While the camera was relatively new and inaccessible for Dickens’s readers, Doyle cannot refer to the camera without reminding his readers of the new handheld cameras that pervaded popular culture. By 1891, someone in their family or neighbourhood probably owned one. Doyle’s camera does not only suggest a perfectly technical image-making machine, but also refers to the recent pervasiveness of the photographic gaze throughout British communities.

observation in the opening scene of “A Scandal,” where he is able to detect Watson’s recent activities:

It is simplicity itself...my eyes tell me that on the inside of your left shoe, just where the firelight strikes it, the leather is scored by six almost parallel cuts. Obviously they have been caused by someone who has very carelessly scraped round the edges of the sole in order to remove crusted mud from it. Hence, you see, my double deduction that you had been out in vile weather, and that you had a particularly malignant boot-slitting specimen of the London slavey. As to your practice, if a gentleman walks into my rooms smelling of iodoform, with a black mark of nitrate of silver upon his right fore-finger, and a bulge on the side of his top-hat to show where he has secreted his stethoscope, I must be dull indeed, if I do not pronounce him to be an active member of the medical profession. (12)

The detective notices visible clues that are then transferred (deduced) into readings of undisclosed events. As Marshall McLuhan notices, Holmes “is a mind for which situations are total and inclusive unities. Every fact, every item of a situation, for Holmes, has total relevance. There are no irrelevant details for him” (196).

Holmes’s visual powers resemble influential theoretical descriptions of the camera. The detective notices clues just as Barthes is pierced by the photograph’s punctum, the “element which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow, and pierces me” (26). Similarly, Walter Benjamin highlights the camera’s capacity to capture those elements invisible to the human eye: “Photography makes aware for the first time the optical unconscious, just as psychoanalysis discloses the instinctual unconscious” (“Short History” 7). This is what makes Holmes not just a photographer, but also a camera. He has a machine-like ability to notice *everything* within the frame of his vision. Especially relevant is Holmes’s ability to see what the secretive criminal does not realize s/he is revealing, just as the punctum often goes unintended by the photographer. Yet what makes Holmes also like the photographer, or spectator, is his ability to *make sense*

of what he has seen. Holmes is not one to notice the studium, which seems to require effort. Instead, he is punctuated by clues that instantaneously call out to him, make sense in his mind, and are converted into detective readings. For Holmes, the distinction between his means of looking and another's is not due to corporeal superiority, but rather to a special mental aptitude. Holmes explains that he has "a turn both for observation and for deduction" (Conan Doyle "A Study" 23), whereas others only see.²¹

The fact that Holmes already resembles the camera may explain why he has no use for photographic technologies. When literal photography does appear in the Holmes stories, it is rarely in his service, but, rather, it represents one of his greatest challenges. The similarity between the camera and the detective seems to render them antithetical. In the camera, Holmes has met his match, and so photography becomes another challenge, another villain, or in the case of "A Scandal," a "double-edged weapon" (20).

Photography poses a discursive threat when such negative representations beg us to recognize and unpack the challenges and disruptions that photography poses to detection and the genre of detective fiction. They also contribute to ongoing discussions about the proper role of both photography and the detective – discussions searching to draw boundaries that exclude practices deemed threatening to social stability and legal order.

The troubling photographer

The photographs that Holmes encounters are either veiled in secrecy, waiting to be detected, or are themselves a means of bringing unwanted exposure. When the

²¹ In an interview printed in *The Strand* in 1892, Conan Doyle explains that Sherlock Holmes is based upon Mr. Joseph Bell, M.D., one of his teachers in medical school. Doyle describes the ways in which Bell used his "piercing grey eyes" to read symptoms and clues on the bodies of his patients and deliver impressively accurate diagnoses with "intuitive powers [that] were simply marvelous" (How "A Day" 7). Yet in Doyle's narratives, Watson, the doctor, seems limited by his training. He does not have the same total vision and precise reasoning as Holmes, and is unable to piece together visual clues.

photographer appears, he is a villain, using the photograph for blackmail, photography to deceive, or the darkroom to hide. In “The Red-Headed League,” (1891) Mr. Wilson tells Holmes about his employee, Vincent Spaulding’s, activities: “Never was such a fellow for photography. Snapping away with a camera when he ought to be improving his mind, and then diving down into the cellar like a rabbit into its hole to develop his pictures” (28). Holmes soon discovers that Vincent Spaulding is actually John Clay, a sought-after criminal who was spending his days in the cellar digging a tunnel to rob the City and Suburban Bank. In “The Adventures of the Copper Breeches,” (1892) Holmes reveals that a man’s darkroom is actually a cell that keeps his daughter captive against her will. In these instances, photography is not represented as an acceptable tool working in the service of the law. The connection between photographers and villainy articulates various anxieties around the secrecy and protection offered by the darkroom.

The most ominous element of photographers in these stories is that while they dismantle the private/public boundaries of others, they simultaneously insist on maintaining that boundary in their own lives. Nothing is more symbolic of this double standard than the darkroom itself, represented as a site of mystery that Holmes must uncover. In “The Red-Headed League” and “The Copper Breeches,” the villains use the darkroom because it is inaccessible to the public eye. Whether fake or real, the darkroom becomes that impenetrable space in which one can expose or threaten the worlds of others, and anyone can claim the privacy that photography offers.²² For Holmes to shine a light into these rooms, to uncover their true purpose, would be to transgress the very

²² Such depictions of the darkroom resemble those around both the artist’s studio and the scientist’s laboratory. When the scientist and artist are seen as threats, their creative space is characterized as ominous, compounded by its inaccessibility to others (i.e., we never know what kinds of inventions, products, or monsters are being created there). This characterization is also evident in *The Camera Fiend*, and will be discussed in Chapter 3.

purpose of the darkroom; it depends upon its darkness. In “The Red-Headed League,” Holmes and his men set out to capture the thief in his own tunnel/darkroom. Telling the men they must wait in darkness, Holmes says, “when I flash a light upon them, close in swiftly” (38). The flash of Holmes’s lantern exposes (as a camera shutter or flash) the criminal and his space, and whether darkroom or passageway, it has been penetrated and rendered useless, as both uses depend upon its darkness/secretcy. In this scene, Holmes uses his own photographically analogous powers of light, exposure, and truth to dismantle the misuse of the public’s trust in the darkroom’s secrecy, and put the criminal out of circulation.

In these stories, we encounter a similar prescription for photography that we found in Barnardo: that photography should be used to reveal the truth. Instead of illuminating mysteries, these villains use photography as a mode of concealment; the conceit of being a photographer serves to protect mysteries, not reveal them. Here, the use of photography to deceive unsettles what Gunning identifies as the foundations upon which photographic evidence and document survives: that the photograph is indexical, iconic, and detachable.²³ This is particularly unsettling for detective fiction, as the law depends upon the scientific accuracy of the photograph in order to exploit its evidential authority.

²³ Gunning writes, “Photography became the ideal tool of the process of detection, the ultimate modern clue, due to three interlocking aspects: its indexical aspect, which comes from the fact that since a photograph results from exposure to a pre-existing entity, it directly bears the entity’s imprint and can therefore supply evidence about the object it depicts; its iconic aspect, by which it produces a direct resemblance to its object which allows immediate recognition; and its detachable nature, which allows it to refer to an absent object separated from it in space and time” (Gunning “Tracing” 20). Despite the instability of these three categories, it seems photography depends on a continuous reassertion of these powers.

Private lives, exposed and circulated

In the case of “A Scandal,” however, the danger of the photograph is in its usually sanctioned purpose – as a tool of disclosure, not concealment. The camera not only reveals particular things that are unnoticed by the photographer, it exposes whole scenes that were never intended to be ‘seen’. In “A Scandal,” the photograph stands as testimony of the king’s affair, as it contains the bodies of both subjects: the king and his lover. And due to faith in the photograph’s indexical, or ‘truth telling’ qualities, it can stand as an authoritative testimony of the existence of the referent (in this case, the affair). Holmes does not dare to pass judgment on his client’s current predicament, save one aspect. Where the indiscretion lies – what Holmes pronounces “very bad” – is the existence of the photograph itself. That the king posed for the photograph, that he dared to create an incontestable certification of his affair with Irene Adler, is his primary indiscretion. The king’s only reply to Holmes’s condemnation is that he was “mad – insane,” and the detective warns the king that he has “compromised [himself] seriously” (16).

The photograph of Irene and the King has the potential, if circulated, to make public a private affair – to expose their secrets. Adler, as a woman of lower station, cannot rely upon verbal charges; she must deploy the photograph as the most authentic and authoritative document of proof. Indeed, the etymology of ‘exposure’ combines ‘ex’ (out of), ‘pose’ (to put, place) and ‘ure’ (denoting an act or its result). Thus, the exposure of a negative is to transform a scene onto a piece of paper, to re-contextualize it: in short, to create a new reality. In the case of Adler and the King, the photograph once stood as a private statement of their love for one another. If it remains private, it could still retain

this meaning. When Irene threatens to circulate the photograph, it has the potential to represent a new reality, one which speaks to public indiscretion, immorality and possibly adultery. The scene can be circulated in various contexts (be further 'ex-posed') due to the photograph's detachable nature, the quality that Alan Sekula and Jonathan Crary argue is often overlooked. Gunning also argues for the need to recognize photography's powers to re-contextualize, as photographic "signs and images, each effectively severed from a referent" have the ability to "circulate and proliferate" ("Tracing" 17). The possibility of circulation, in addition to the original exposure, is what threatens and blurs the boundaries between public and private worlds, as it transports a private scene into public contexts.

There is no evidence that the photograph in "A Scandal" was taken surreptitiously, by a hidden camera or celebrity photographer. The king consented to the original exposure, but not necessarily to its future circulation. It is a cabinet photograph,²⁴ and like the *carte-de-visite*, is usually intended to circulate and publicly represent one's identity and character in any formal sense. However, as it testifies to his poor character and marks the king with his own indiscretions, the photograph now more closely resembles, in this context, a picture from a rogue gallery, in which criminals' faces are presented to the public for entertainment and judgment. The king does not wish the world to know of *this* self, and so must prevent what Benjamin identifies as photography's power to "put the copy of the original into situations which would be out of reach for the original itself" ("Work" 220).

²⁴ The cabinet photograph was introduced in 1866. The photograph was usually elaborately mounted, and at four inches by five and a half inches, was larger than the *carte-de-visite*, allowing for more accurate detail (Coe 35-26).

This threat of circulation, or movement, is especially apparent when considering how a photograph of private spaces transports private referents into public space. This threat (of exposing the private) is comparable to Gunning's description of the way detective fiction seeks to limit the threat of the criminal, as s/he "preys on the very complexity of the system of circulation," while "the detective, whose intelligence, knowledge, and perspicacity allow him to discover the dark corners of the circulatory system, uncover crime, and restore order" (Gunning "Tracing" 20). In this sense, detective fiction is about who can circulate more effectively: the detective or the criminal. Part of the appeal of capturing the image of the criminal is to expose or re-place him: to put him out of circulation, which is the next best thing to his imprisonment. Of course, the ultimate goal is to have control over both his image *and* his body. Similarly, for Holmes to capture the evidentiary photograph – the image of Irene and the king – is to put the indiscretion itself out of circulation, the next best thing to ensuring it never happened at all.

Holmes's resemblance to photographic technology is not one of analogy to the mechanics of photography. The identification is not just about *how* he sees – but *what* he is allowed to see. Like the photographer, Holmes insists on a private space in which he can operate. In "A Scandal," Watson tells us that Holmes "loathed every form of society with his whole bohemian soul" and "remained in our lodgings in Baker Street, buried among his old books" (11). Holmes may be a private man, but his very profession, like that of many photographers, depends upon his having access to the private worlds of others. Let us remember Barthes's assertion that "[t]he 'private life' is nothing but that zone of space, of time, where I am not an image, an object...It is my *political right* to be

a subject which I must protect” (15). Barthes’s words are similar to the concerns articulated by the Victorian public as it anticipated the flourishing of popular photography that had the capacity to detach one’s image from one’s body and circulate it throughout public spaces.

The complicated intersection of privacy, detection, and the social good arise in the findings of Younger Committee on Privacy, who realized that to defend privacy would be to severely limit the abilities of private detectives: “The work of private detectives is of exceptional concern for us because *invasion of privacy is the essence of it*. If privacy is to be given greater protection it would, on the face of it, seem necessary to have special regard to persons or organizations who hold themselves on to invade privacy for reward” (qtd. in Hepworth 120).

Criticisms launched against photographers for their invasions of privacy are equally, if not more, applicable to the detective. In “A Case of Identity,” Holmes tells Watson,

We would not dare to conceive the things which are really mere commonplaces of existence. If we could fly out of that window hand in hand, hover over this great city, gently remove the roofs, and peep in at the queer things which are going on, the strange coincidences, the plannings, the cross purposes, the wonderful chain of events, working through generations, and leading to the most *outré* results, it would make all fiction with its conventionalities and foreseen conclusions most stale and unprofitable. (41)²⁵

While Holmes is critical of fiction’s ordinariness, Watson’s narratives are virtually narratives of such roof-lifting, and, ultimately, are analogous to Holmes’s acts of detection. Holmes relies on unlocked doors, large picture windows, and his own disguises to gaze into people’s homes and secrets. Furthermore, the detective has “a

²⁵ Compare to Warren and Brandeis’ concerns, expressed in an 1890 article in the *Harvard Law Review*, that “what is whispered shall be proclaimed from the housetops” (195).

system of docketing all paragraphs concerning men and things, so that it was difficult to name a subject or person on which he could not at once furnish information” (15-16). Like a police file, Holmes can access the lives of the population, without leaving the comfort and privacy of his own home. Like the stalker, blackmailer, kidnapper, or secretive photographer, Holmes is interested in understanding, pursuing, and exposing the private lives of others. Furthermore, Holmes’s system eerily resembles that of Baron Adelbert Gruner, the Austrian murderer who collects information on his victims in “The Case of the Illustrious Client.” This villain “collects women, and takes pride in his collection, as some men collect moths or butterflies.” Like Holmes’s catalogue, Gruner’s book includes everything: “snapshot photographs, names, details, everything about them.” Gruner’s collection is “a beastly book—a book no man, even if he had come from the gutter, could have put together” (25). Perhaps such a strong denouncement of Gruner’s collection could serve to relieve, contain, or distract readers’ anxieties around Holmes’s own invasive activities. I would argue, however, that as it speaks a fear of such archival desire, the text inevitably questions Holmes’s own practices of invasive documentation and destabilizes his moral authority.

Like the description of Gruner’s book, photography poses a challenge for Holmes because of its resemblance to his activities and methods, but also because it uncovers his inconsistencies. In order to gather truthful information, Holmes does not himself adhere to transparency or truth-telling, but instead often resembles the surreptitious photographer, whose attempts at invisibility at the photographic scene only make him more ominous. Documentary photographers, including Thomson, had already begun to notice that while the camera could create a record of the scene, the camera’s presence

also has the ability to shift the reality intended to be captured, limiting one's ability to 'expose the real'. For example, criminals posing for mugshots "would distort their facial expressions in the hope of rendering their photographs unidentifiable" (Gunning "Tracing" 27). We've seen similar concerns in the desire of documentary photographers to be invisible on the scene, or Roland Barthes's confession of the inevitable 'imposture' that results from his posing for a photograph(er). By the 1890s, camera manufacturers were profiting from people's desire to eliminate the subject's unease at being photographed: not for the sake of the subject's peace of mind, of course, but in order to more truly document his/her image and character. People desired a *true* detective camera – one that was hidden from the view of the subject, and between 1884 and 1894, cameras were "fashioned to resemble watches, revolvers, bags or purses, books, the knobs of walking sticks, opera glasses or binoculars, picnic baskets, cigar cases, matchboxes, and bowler hats. The operator of a detective camera could have kept it not only under his hat, but concealed behind a cravat; under a vest, with the lens fashioned to look like a button; or up his sleeve (Gunning "Embarassing" 51).

Similarly, integral to the detective's ability to detect a mystery is *his* ability to go undetected. No one, obviously, would be willing to reveal a secret in the presence of a detective, just as no one would perform a secretive act in front of a camera. Thus, the detective, when appearing in person on the scene, often goes as a detective camera should: in disguise. In "A Scandal," Holmes deploys his "amazing powers in the use of disguise" (17). He does not only wear different clothes, but Watson tells us that 'his expression, his manner, his very soul seemed to vary with every fresh part that he assumed" (20). Indeed, even Holmes considers his disguise as a "rôle" (20) and Watson

tells us how “the stage lost a fine actor, even as science lost an acute reasoner, when [Holmes] became a specialist in crime” (20). The effectiveness, then, of Holmes’s own penetrating vision is that he is not made available to the vision of others.

What is truly dangerous about Holmes’s vision is that it is discriminating, not pervasive. Yes, he is able to witness everything at a particular scene, but he is not present everywhere, and is often known to keep certain clues undisclosed. We must remember that Holmes is not in search of uncovering mysteries and revealing truths in any universal sense; in fact, he is quite selective about his detections. The most obvious example of Holmes’s questionable dedication to detection is the case of Adler’s photograph. In “A Scandal,” the king’s only hope is to keep this private matter a secret in the hands of Holmes and Watson, whom he trusts are men of “honour and discretion” (14). He binds them to secrecy for two years, and pays them to prevent the photograph from circulating and exposing a private event. This seems an unorthodox goal for Holmes, who is primarily interested in *uncovering* mysteries. Here, Holmes desires the evidentiary photograph, in order to limit, rather than exploit its powers. Holmes works on the side of privacy, to “protect those persons with whose *affairs the community has no legitimate concern*, from being dragged into an undesirable and undesired publicity and to protect all persons, whatsoever their position or station, from having matter which they may properly prefer to keep private, made public against their will” (Warren and Brandeis 214-215). But when have such concerns limited him before? Why must Irene Adler’s photograph (and the knowledge of that affair) be kept secret, while Holmes is able to uncover the ‘truths’ of various mysteries by exposing people’s private histories? For example, in “The Adventure of the Yellow Face,” Holmes uses a photograph to uncover a

woman's private secret: that she had a child with a "man, strikingly handsome and intelligent, but bearing unmistakable signs upon his features of his African descent" (223). Meanwhile, in "A Scandal," he keeps the photograph from speaking its truth and acts in the name of protection, not detection. Why does this photograph not serve his usual purposes of uncovering? In "A Scandal," the photograph represents the ability of those often marginalized by the photographic gaze – whether poor, gendered, or racialized subjects – to claim visual power and direct it at the private lives of those who were once protected from such invasion. Holmes, acting in the interests of his upper-class clients, is willing to sacrifice full disclosure and the concealment of a secret in order to protect the private lives of the privileged.

The limits of the master's gaze and the emergence of new visions

The photograph presents itself as a threat to Holmes's authority, and the precise nature of this threat is most apparent in two specific tensions: those of class and gender. The performances, representations and transgressions of identities in "A Scandal" disrupt the authoritative functioning of detection and realist narrative. In many instances of photography, the gaze of the camera and the law were set upon the lower classes. The narrator of a slideshow entitled "Slum Life in Our Great Cities," shown in England in 1890, comments on the courage of the photographer who captured images of the poor: "It need scarcely be mentioned that this was a work of no small difficulty, and at times of danger also, for many of the inhabitants in these districts strongly object to have their portraits taken, or to be photographed or noticed in any way. The photographer was several times threatened and *at others taken for a detective officer*" (qtd. in Gunning

“Embarrassing” 53, italics mine).²⁶ In order to gather information, Holmes often dresses as a member of the lower classes, hoping that workers will have privileged knowledge about the people they serve. The vision of the poor does not have the same credibility as the photograph (or as Holmes), as they alone would never be able to testify to the wrongdoings of their employers.²⁷ Instead, Holmes moves undetected amongst these people, like a hidden camera, in order to capture their world and give authority to their sight (or, perhaps more accurately, in order to exploit their sight for his own authority).²⁸ Of course, here, Holmes’s subject is not the same as Barnardo’s or Thomson’s. He is not interested in capturing an image of the poor, but instead is interested in what they, themselves, see. Luckily for Holmes, “[t]here is a wonderful sympathy and freemasonry among horsey men. Be one of them, and you will know all that there is to know” (17). These men deliver “as much information as I could desire about Miss Adler, to say nothing of half a dozen other people in the neighbourhood in whom I was not in the least interested, but whose biographies I was compelled to listen to” (18). Holmes’s ability to see an entire scene of clues is then extended by his own disguise, incorporating the visual knowledge of others while ensuring that a scene is not affected by the detection of his

²⁶ It seems photographers were increasingly concerned about their resemblance to the private detective. Soon after the invention of the detective camera, many photographers sought to eliminate the term ‘detective’ from photographic vocabulary. Of course, such critics were not looking to limit the uses or production of such an instrument, but were simply anxious about the connotations that the word ‘detective’ would bring to photographic practices. In April 1890, an article in the *American Amateur Photographer* pleads, “The name Detective should be dropped from the photographic vocabulary at once and forever. The word savors too much of *devious ways* and *shady practices* to be retained by any true lover of the camera” (Gunning “Embarrassing” 48-9, italics mine).

²⁷ Given this, the other reason Holmes does not need to employ photography is because his testimony has the same authority as a photograph, while the authority of Irene Adler’s voice is limited by her class status.

²⁸ Similarly, Dr. Barnardo had to disguise himself as a member of the lower classes, in order to gain physical and emotional access to the poor: “Barnardo’s impersonation of street Arab (disguise was a regular feature of his night wandering) suggests the fascination and fear (though a dilute version because it’s a child) of experiencing a reciprocal undoing before the ‘uncivilized’” (Smith 36).

gaze. In this sense, the most pervasive, penetrating, and evidentiary form of the gaze ensures that that gaze is not returned: it moves in one direction.

If both Holmes and photography are expressions of “fantasies of surveillance,” (Seltzer 50) the text brings the detective’s modes into question with its unease in the face of a pervasive photographic gaze. To what extent does anyone (along the spectrum of allegiances to the law/state) have the right to evade the gaze of others in order expose someone else? There are ways in which this text’s critique of photography can be extended to interrogate the role of Holmes himself, as he participates in similarly disruptive (even if legally or rhetorically sanctioned) activities. One clue may be found in returning to “The Right to Privacy,” the article printed in the 1890 volume of the *Harvard Law Review*. In it, Warren and Brandeis argue that “The design of the law must be to protect those persons with whose *affairs the community has no legitimate concern*, from being dragged into an undesirable and undesired publicity and to protect all persons, whatsoever their position or station, from having matter which they may properly prefer to keep private, made public against their will” (214-5, italics mine). The authors’ ambiguity begs many questions. Most importantly, how are we to determine when private affairs become the “legitimate concern” of the community? Furthermore, the law does not necessarily direct Holmes’s decisions; he is not employed by the state to uphold social order in any formal sense. In “A Scandal,” Holmes often reminds us that his work is extra-legal. When asking Watson to participate in his plot, involving a staged fight and a fake fire in Irene’s home, he must ask Watson, “You don’t mind breaking the law?...Nor running a chance of arrest?” and assures his partner that “the cause is

excellent” (19). If Holmes is not always acting in the service of the law, what motivates his work?

When Holmes first introduces the king’s case to Watson, he assures his partner “There’s money in this case...if there is nothing else” (14) and is more than pleased when the king offers them “*carte blanche*” (16). It appears that the lives Holmes is willing to protect are those of the classes that are willing to pay for his services. In this sense, while the private detective does not always work closely with the police or the state, he still acts on behalf of the status quo. In fact, the private detective may even be an essential extension of state-directed policing, precisely because he is granted the freedom to break the law and act on his own instincts. There seems to be no legal obligation for Holmes to pursue the case, and he may be hard-pressed to find moral authority for carrying out the king’s wishes, no matter what the financial reward. Furthermore, Holmes demonstrates how his adherence to a concealment of the truth necessitates his transcendence of the limitations placed on state-sanctioned police officers. In “The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter,” Holmes is accused of prying “into the secrets of private individuals” and raking “up family matters which are better hidden.” Holmes’s defense relies upon his separation from sanctioned police forces: “Incidentally I may tell you that we are doing the reverse of what you very justly blame, and that we are endeavouring to prevent anything like public exposure of private matters which must necessarily follow when once the case is fairly in the hands of the official police” (600).

Derek Longhurst argues that middle and upper class Victorians were ambivalent about the detective’s activities: “On the one hand there is the widespread fear of social unrest, associated with the Chartist movement, and on the other the social reality that the

most common form of crime in the period involves fraud or bankruptcy...the forces of law and order are...necessary for state control in the public domain but agents of state interference in the 'private' domain of a *laissez-faire* market economy" (Longhurst 52). Anxieties about the detective or photographer's gaze only grow when that gaze moves upwards in class. As Lydia Alix Fillingham illustrates in her reading of *A Study in Scarlet*, "[t]he detective is a distasteful voyeur –the more distasteful if he is of a lower class than those subject to his gaze. Holmes and the other private gentlemen detectives, therefore, are infinitely preferable to the police—while they may violate the secrets of the family, at least they are already privy to the secrets of class" (Fillingham 163). In "A Scandal," then, the photograph acts as a threat because it grants a woman of lower station the authority to expose the private life of her class superior.

The second site of tension – that of gender – is embodied in the figure most resembling a human villain in the story: Irene Adler. Adler deploys the evidentiary and circulatory powers of the photograph and serves to unsettle readings of this text as positing an unproblematized relationship between photography, detection, positivism, and moral authority. Irene Adler is a threat to Holmes, not only because she possesses the evidentiary photograph, but also because – like the photographer – she employs the same tools and techniques as Holmes. While not a photographer herself, Irene embodies the destabilizing effects of photography and poses a particular challenge to Holmes inasmuch as she resembles a more effective model of the photographic gaze than he.

In fact, Irene more closely resembles the detective of this story, as she is more concerned with revealing the truth than Sherlock Holmes. Catherine Belsey, in her deconstruction of the Holmes texts, identifies a circulating threat in Conan Doyle's dark

women: “these stories, whose overt project is total explicitness, total verisimilitude in the interests of a plea for scientificity, are haunted by shadowy, mysterious and often silent women. Their silence repeatedly conceals their sexuality, investing it with a dark and magical quality which is beyond the reach of scientific knowledge” (Belsey 114). While perhaps not the most respectable character, there is nothing criminal about Irene Adler. In fact, her threat – to expose a truth through photographic testimony – resembles the daily activities of the detective and the photographer. Furthermore, as Mike Hepworth argues, “although the blackmailer is presented as an evil profiteering criminal – the focal point of communications network transmitting discreditable information – he is nevertheless allowed to make some claim to moral status” because s/he is only revealing what is already there (3). Her resemblance to Holmes has the power to destabilize the discourse that supports his penetration of private worlds for (often) private gain.

While Watson tells us that Holmes could very well have become an actor, Irene Adler informs Holmes, “I have been trained as an actress myself. Male costume is nothing new to me” (24). In fact, Irene is the eventual victor in the challenge of disguises, and she employs male costume in order to go undetected by Holmes, at the conclusion of the story. Here, Holmes is limited by what he can see; his vision is still cloaked by the bounds of gender, just as Dickens’ Detective Bucket cannot detect class transformations when he is “deceived for a moment by a lady’s disguise as a laborer” (Thomas 149). Dressed as a man, she is able to walk up to the detective’s home and address him – name him – “Sherlock Holmes, I believe” (23), without his even recognizing her. Furthermore, Adler, as agent of the last detection, is granted the detective’s privilege of narrating the final mystery in a letter that details her escape.

Once Holmes is assured that the dangerous photograph will be kept secret, he no longer desires its possession. Instead, he asks to keep – as payment – a photograph of the woman in an evening dress. Holmes has not only defused the threat of the original photograph, he seeks victory in possessing and controlling the image of Adler. In his possession of this photograph, Holmes has captured an image of Adler as a ‘typical’ woman, or, as Holmes hence refers to her, “the woman” (11). Like Barnardo’s photographs, she stands as a *type* of femininity – no longer in disguise, but detectable, recognizable, in order to repress his own failure.

On the concealment of mysteries: repressing photographic powers

As Ronald R. Thomas notices, Sherlock Holmes becomes “the literary embodiment of the elaborate network of visual technologies that revolutionized the art of seeing in the nineteenth century” (Thomas 135). What Thomas fails to mention is Conan Doyle’s seemingly ambivalent attitude towards such technologies, especially as demonstrated in “A Scandal in Bohemia.” In fact, Thomas sees such detective fiction as promoting “the validation of photography as a technique of surveillance and discipline” that lead to “the transformation of the camera from an artistic device for portraying and honouring individuals to a powerful political technology with which to capture and control them” (136). In terms of narrative, a mystery (etymologically, “to close one’s eyes or lips”) necessarily depends upon a concealment of knowledge (Kayman 11). The detective narrative depends upon a containment of the gaze; it is not in favour of the accessibly pervasive gaze facilitated by popular photography, but one controlled by an authority who slowly reveals when necessary.

The photograph and photographer insist on re-contextualizing private spaces in a public sphere, and so they become obstacles for Holmes's efforts to do the same. What is most dangerous about photography in these texts is not their literal threat – the necessity of detecting and neutralizing their danger within the story – but their discursive threat, or their ability to destabilize Holmes's moral authority. The 'truth' that photography can expose is not morally selective – its gaze is placed on every scene, and it fails to miss a clue. As such, the worlds it seeks to expose are not always the same as those Holmes has been set to detect; indeed, sometimes they are the very worlds he must protect. In this sense, the adventures of Sherlock Holmes do not embrace a pervasive gaze, but one selected by the detective, only when it suits his own interests – often bound by his understandings of class and gender. In fact, an all-pervasive gaze is exactly what is threatening to his practice of detection. If Holmes is motivated (at least partially) by concerns of money and status quo, a pervasive gaze that is made available to everyone, even to the likes of Adler, is not Holmes's ally. Such pervasiveness, then, includes a reversal of the gaze that threatens to expose the private lives of the upper classes and circulate such information through an authoritative evidentiary medium. "A Scandal in Bohemia" reacts to such destabilizing phenomena, attempting to suppress and control the photograph. Even though Holmes is in possession of the 'proper image' of "the woman," the threat of Irene Adler and her undetected gaze still looms.

CHAPTER THREE
Expanding the Visible 'Real':
When Magic Becomes Science in *The Camera Fiend*

The optimists of the machine had forgotten that there was a night and madness and mystery to contend with, coexisting with daylight and science and universal literacy

-Lewis Mumford

Just as the camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a sublimated murder – a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time.

-Susan Sontag *On Photography*

New modes and models

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle constructed an influential model of the detective. He also introduced a new kind of villain – one who can be detected, punished, contained (roomed) by the juridical system, and who is connected with photography. Conan Doyle's photographer-villains are rarely actual photographers; they use the hobby as an alibi to conceal other, more devious activities. E.W. Hornung (1866-1921) expands his brother-in-law's examination of the dangers of photography and locates those dangers in the photographer himself – in the possible threats of the photographer's eye and project. In Hornung's *The Camera Fiend* (1911), we are introduced to a spirit-photographer, Dr. Baumgartner, whose desire to capture the image of a human soul on film leads him to murder others with a weapon-camera that is loaded with both film and bullets. Armed with this camera, and the belief that he can capture the subject's soul at the moment it leaves the body, Baumgartner embarks upon a murderous experiment. We come to know Baumgartner and his strange, private world, when he kidnaps Pocket Upton, an asthmatic seventeen year-old upper-class boy from a private school in the country. Pocket is in London to see his doctor, and after missing his ride back to school, is forced to sleep in Hyde Park for the night. He is abruptly awoken from a bout of somnambulism by

Baumgartner, who quickly accuses the boy of shooting his gun just minutes earlier.

When Pocket remembers that he strapped his newly purchased pistol to his wrist before sleeping, he is convinced of his own guilt. Doctor Baumgartner, the actual murderer, exploits the boy's pre-existing obsession with guilt in order to kidnap the boy and keep him silent in the doctor's home. Pocket, with the aid of Baumgartner's niece, Phillida, is eventually able to reconstruct the 'truth' of this story, and realizes that Baumgartner's photographic ambitions have led, not only to his captivity, but to the deaths of many men.

The Camera Fiend has received no critical attention. Instead, E.W. Hornung is best known for his series of stories about Raffles, a gentleman robber, and his friend Bunny, an "amoral pair" whom Jane Rabb characterizes as an "inversion of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson" (1). In fact, much of Hornung's fiction can be seen as responding to Conan Doyle's famous duo, and as a comment on detective fiction in general. In *The Camera Fiend*, Pocket's father hires a detective, Mr. Eugene Thrush, who works with Mullins, his partner. His method, which resembles the childhood game of 'twenty questions,' is an obvious parody of Holmes' famous method of deduction. Any confidence in his abilities is shaken when he declares that this A.V.M. method (Animal, Vegetable, Mineral) is "all the method I've got" (129). Despite the inclusion of Thrush, the novel operates as a thriller, not a detective story, as "the scene is where the action is, not where a witness is answering a detective's questions about action that has taken place already" (Watson 42). While the reader is not a witness to all of Baumgartner's murders, most of the action takes place in the doctor's house, and in fact, the reader often knows more than the detective at any given point. In this sense, *The Camera Fiend* employs different narrative strategies than most of Conan Doyle's

detective stories. It does not depend on a slow revelation of mysteries, and deploys a third person narrator able to disclose most events. Thrush and Mullins are not granted narrative power, and become merely characters within the larger narrative. Whereas Conan Doyle's stories conclude with Holmes's narration of the (now disclosed) mystery, Hornung grants this narrative control to Baumgartner, the villain. When Pocket and Phillida find the doctor dead in the river, they also find his camera, which is stuffed with a letter confessing to his project and its resulting murders. Despite some successes for the detective, it is Baumgartner's eyes that ultimately penetrate the landscape of the text and render the detective irrelevant. Instead of granting the detective narrative authority, Hornung gives the reader the perspective and position of the villain, Doctor Baumgartner; his knowledge is more complete and his penetrating gaze infects the text. In short, *The Camera Fiend* responds to Conan Doyle's model by providing its readers with two compromised versions of Sherlock Holmes: Thrush, the ineffective Holmes, and Baumgartner, the ethically degenerate Holmes.²⁹

In order to communicate the strength of this novel's participation in debates around photographic and literary representation, this chapter will focus on the characterization of Baumgartner and the various threats he represents. Doctor Baumgartner is an explicit example of the photographer as villain; he uses photography to deceive, the darkroom to hide, and the camera to murder. He is a literal threat because he kidnaps a young boy and uses his camera to murder, but his characterization does not emphasize an evil maliciousness. Instead, his villainy arises from a rationalized scientific, documentary impulse – an impulse that leads the doctor to disobey

²⁹ Of course, we can also read this text as a commentary on (or stab at) Doyle's rising interest in spirit photography, which began after his son died in WWI, and resulted in various spiritualist publications in the 1920s and 1930s.

conventional morality and disrupt social order. The more ideological, or sociological, threat of the doctor lies in the type of photography he practices, and in his misuse of the power he wields as one engaged in acts of representation. Doctor Baumgartner's presence expresses anxieties circulating at the beginning of the twentieth century, especially those about the spread of visual subjectivities and the expansion of possible 'visions' of the world, as more and more people were looking through the camera's lens. The doctor's particular project, then, is an extrapolated articulation of various concerns pertaining to the uses and misuses of photography, especially for scientific and documentary projects longing for a pervasive gaze that captures the real. Despite Baumgartner's insistence that his project is scientific, neither he, nor the narrative, can suppress the threat of his I/eye. Doctor Baumgartner's project blurs science and magic, employs dangerous technologies, and insists upon his concealment – whether in private spaces, the darkroom, or disguise. Most importantly his presence is particularly distressing because of the *kind* of photography he insists upon: one which reverses the detective's gaze and challenges the way that class and race are framed in traditional/hegemonic modes of photography and 'watching.'

Spiritualism and the unsettled sciences

By the early twentieth century, the desire to 'catch what is real' on camera flourished with the practice of psychic photography, especially as "spiritualism reached a renewed level of scientific interest and emotional fervor" (Flukinger 150). We have already chronicled the ways in which the camera is believed to capture a person's facial features and abnormalities, in order to make their appearance and character more clearly visible to the eye. Baumgartner's project extrapolates this idea, suggesting the possibility

that the soul – admittedly invisible to the eye – can also be captured on film. In this case, the category of ‘the real’ is expanded to include what has previously been considered immaterial or supernatural. Just as popular and detective photography expands the gaze into never-before-seen private spaces, the project of psychic photography seeks to expand the scientific gaze into realms invisible to the human eye. Typically, photographic testimonials assert that if things can be seen, they are real. Spiritualism hopes that the reverse will also be true: that if things can be seen, they must be real. Photography gives spiritualists the hope of scientific authority, because capturing the soul in the visual field would testify to its existence. In the service of such a legitimatization, Dr. Baumgartner always couches descriptions of his work in scientific terms, avoiding language that connotes the mystical. He explains to Pocket, “Take two crystal vases, fill one with one acid and the other with another; one comes out like water as we see it; the other, though not less limpid in our sight, like ink. The eye sees through it, but not the lens. The eye sees emptiness as though the acid itself were pure crystal; the lens flings an inky image on the plate” (64). Baumgartner’s project assumes that there are physical realities invisible to the eye that can be made visible through exposure on film, turning the question of the soul into a “question of photography, not of spiritualism” (63).

In fact, Dr. Baumgartner’s conception of photography resembles Holmes’s sense of vision, especially as it speaks to the theories of Benjamin and Barthes. The doctor asks Pocket to “think how much that glass eye throws already upon the retina of a sensitized film that our living lenses fail to throw upon ours; think of all that escapes the eye but the camera catches” (64). Thus, the spirit acts as a punctum, which insists itself into the frame, even if neither seen nor intended by the photographer. This conception is

not a refusal of the science of photography, as Pocket argues (and the doctor agrees): “There may be ghosts, you may see them, and so may the camera, but not without focussing and exposing like you’ve got to do with ordinary flesh and blood!” (62). Such a proclamation should remind us of Benjamin’s praise of photography’s potential for scientific discovery “It is possible, for example, however roughly, to describe the way somebody walks, but it is impossible to say anything about that fraction of a second when a person *starts to walk*. Photography with its various aids (lenses, enlargements) can reveal this moment” (7). Furthermore, Benjamin grants the scientific nature of photographic images a psychological import: “At the same time photography uncovers... aspects of pictorial words which live in the smallest things, perceptible yet covert enough to find shelter in daydreams, but which, once enlarged and capable of formulation, show the difference between technology and magic to be entirely a matter of historical variables” (7-8). Baumgartner’s project certainly marks the shifting of such historical barriers.

The Camera Fiend undoubtedly questions the ethics and appropriateness of Baumgartner’s project, even as it gives him space to voice the ‘reasonableness’ of his photographic desires. The doctor believes he must kill his subject at the exact moment of exposure, in order to capture the soul as it leaves the body; as such, his practice transgresses the ethical limits of an acceptable scientific project. In a rare moment of judgment, the narrator informs us,

Spiritualism one knows, but here was spiritualism with a difference; psychic photography one had heard about, but here was a psychical photographer gone mad or bad. When a gifted creature puts into admirable English his longing to snap-shoot the souls of murderers coming up through the drop, like the clown at Drury

Lane, you begin to want him elected to a *fauteuil* in Broadmoor.
(308)³⁰

Baumgartner tests the ethical limits of science, as ethical concerns have been eclipsed by a desire for innovation and discovery. And while Baumgartner is a doctor concerned with the practice of science, both Pocket and the narrator experience and represent him as a mysterious Other. This portrayal of Baumgartner seems a throwback to earlier representations of the photographer, similar to that seen in *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851): “In one of the earliest treatments of the photographer in a novel, the character of Holgrave embodies all the mystery associated with daguerrotypy [sic.] and set the pattern for what was to become a fictive cliché: the photographer as seer, voyeuristic wizard, lunatic scientist” (Green 115). The doctor is referred to as a magician (164), and a Turk (61-2) with a foreign accent (48) that we later discover is German. For Pocket, the doctor is both rational scientist and foreign magician who can justify his motivations “with irresistible logic, with characteristic plausibility, and all the mesmeric wisdom of a benevolent spirit” (299). Baumgartner’s scientific explanations, while seeming ‘rational,’ are even more disturbing than if he were simply madman or magician. What is most disconcerting is his embodiment of both science and (what is historically considered) supernatural magic.³¹ The text unsettles this movement of magic into science – not only because it rationalizes the irrational,³² but because the doctor uses science to justify immoral actions. The doctor embodies the threat of a combined capacity for

³⁰ A *fauteuil* is an armchair. The Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum was opened at Crowthorne, Berkshire, in 1863.

³¹ In “A Scandal in Bohemia,” Watson compares Holmes’s detective abilities to witchcraft: “You would certainly have been burned, had you lived a few centuries ago” (12).

³² Hornung found Doyle’s interest in spiritualism “absurd and insulting to the dead” (qtd. in Rabb 2).

reason, magic, science, medicine, photography (evidentiary and documentary) and detection.

The inevitability of the subjective

In “The Shadow of the Object,” Sarah Kember argues “that our current anxiety over the status of the photographic object ‘masks a more fundamental fear about the status of the subject, and about the way in which the subject uses photography to understand the world and intervene in it’” (qtd. in Smith “Introduction” 4). This fear is evident in Barthes’s suppression of the photographer’s eye in *Camera Lucida* and already is articulated in this literature’s characterization of the photographer as villain. Barthes’s fear of the photographer’s eye, and subsequent erasure of the photographer from the scene of the exposure, prioritizes the punctum and celebrates the position of the camera: that which captures everything on the scene.³³ Barthes is not admitting that the photographer’s eye has no value; instead, he chooses to praise the mechanical shifting of the camera’s plates and actively deny the possible motivations of the eye behind the lens.

As a scientist whose goal it is to document, we would expect Baumgartner’s photographic project to lack subjectivity or artistry. His attempts to ‘catch’ the soul necessitate secrecy on his part; like the documentary photographer, it must seem as if he is not present on the scene. But in fact, the doctor is quite manipulative, as far as photographers go. It is his click of the camera shutter that produces – not only the image

³³ I am convinced that Barthes embraces what is not intended by the photographer (i.e. that he celebrates the punctum) because it suggests that the spectator can see what the photographer has not. This freedom of interpretation grants the spectator/reader a more pronounced subjectivity. While most see Barthes’s later texts, including *Camera Lucida*, as a departure/retraction from his formative work in post-structuralism, this position resembles his characteristic longing for active, unrestrained, interpretive readings, similar to his praising of the ‘writerly text’ in works such as *S/Z*.

– but the *object* of his image – death (with the hope of also producing the soul). What appears most frightening in the *Camera Fiend* is the penetrating nature of the doctor's gaze. When Pocket first meets his captor, the doctor's eyes act as weapons of surveillance:

The tall man opened his lips impulsively, but shut them on a second impulse. The daggers in his eyes probed deeper into those of the boy, picking his brains, transfixing the secrets of his soul. No master's eye had ever delved so deep into his life; he felt as though the very worst of him at school was known in an instant to this dreadful stranger in the wilds of London. He writhed under the ordeal of that protracted scrutiny. He tugged to free his imprisoned wrist. (49)

Baumgartner's constant call to the scientific nature of his project attempts to eclipse these eyes, but they have a persistent presence throughout the text. The narrator will not let us forget his eye: the gaze of the photographer, the surveillance of the kidnapper, and the prowl of the murderer. The doctor's intentions and defenses are pragmatic, cold, and morally outrageous – threats all rooted in his particular subjectivity, and his imposition of that perspective on his victims.

The concealed eye/I

Baumgartner's project is highly documentary; it is obsessed with capturing what he believes is 'real', even if it cannot ordinarily be seen. In order to photograph the truth of a subject, one must capture the person's soul, character, or unconscious: what is never visible to the naked eye. Like Holmes's project, the photographer must represent what is invisible to most – find the clues of the person – and freeze them in time for all to see. In order to do so, he must catch his subjects/victims unaware. In this sense, Baumgartner's quest to find the true soul of his subject is not unlike that of much artistic and

documentary portraiture. For example, in 1916, Paul Strand took “a whole series of portraits of urban types...on the streets of Lower Manhattan. He took most of them surreptitiously, with a ‘decoy’ false lens screwed onto his camera at a right angle, hoping, by catching his subject off guard, to capture on film a certain elusive ‘quality of being’” (Mellow 111). Similarly, between 1938-1941, Walker Evans captured images of passengers on the New York Subway line with a camera hidden in his overcoat (Figure 15). He describes the photographs as a “rebellion against studio portraiture” (108), as he does not “think a photographed portrait is true” (108). Evans’s “raw, frank, and at times ruthlessly revealing” (108) work reveals human expressions classified by Susan Sontag as “private ones” (Sontag 27). Even when inhabiting public spaces, our countenance is private in the sense that we do not believe it will be exposed – that is, taken out of place – captured, preserved, and transplanted into other contexts, spaces, and times.

Baumgartner’s project could easily be described by the following statement regarding Evans’ subway photographs: “What he wanted to capture on film was not so much the private self of his subjects as the *unconscious* self” (109). Baumgartner tries to capture a person when unconscious or during the brief moment of movement between unconsciousness (sleeping) and consciousness (waking), or life and death. In order to capture this ‘true’ self, his accuracy relies on his victim’s ignorance of his intentions.

Like Holmes and the hidden camera, Baumgartner himself escapes detection. In order to facilitate the documentary end of his project, his subject must be unaware of his photographic and murderous ends. Like Conan Doyle’s detective, disguise ensures that Baumgartner is himself not subject to a gaze, making him even more threatening. He wears a beard and spectacles in order to pose as a “photographer representing himself as

concerned with the press” (268), physically making-real the analogy between his activities and the more widely sanctioned (though still criticized) work of press photographers. Most elaborate are his presentations to Pocket. Immediately, Pocket is concerned with his captor’s identity: “Dr. Baumgartner? Where was it he had come across that name? And when and where had anybody ever seen such a doctor as this unshaven old fellow in the cloak and hat of a conspirator by lime-light?” (54). As a man in disguise, he is able to maneuver through spaces normally restricted to his gaze. Such practice articulates the dangers of the hidden camera and disguise.

Dr. Baumgartner makes careful provisions in order to lead an almost exaggerated private life: “he had given up servants, and taken to doing half the work of the house himself, with the casual aid of charwomen, and saving the other half by having the meals in from a restaurant” (271). Like Conan Doyle’s tales, the darkroom becomes an exemplary site for an articulation of the menace of such a protected private sphere. In *The Camera Fiend*, Baumgartner does not use the darkroom to conceal some other hobby or crime; it is his very photographic project that is criminal. Pocket describes the darkroom as a “crimson garden” at the bottom of “red hot-iron steps”: a private, dark place where the doctor can reproduce his crimes. In the red light of the darkroom, the doctor takes on another form, “dyed from head to foot like Mephistopheles” (70). When he exits the darkroom, “The goblin inquisitor of Hyde Park had vanished with his hat and cloak. The excited empiric of the dark-room was a creature of that ruby light alone” (74).

Perhaps Baumgartner’s project ultimately fails because he has let Pocket come too close to his private life. Indeed, Pocket is one of the few people who actually gaze upon the villain’s countenance: “But there was something also in the way the doctor was

bending over him in bed, holding his pipe nearer still, so that the two dreadful faces seemed of equal size. And Baumgartner's had become a dreadful face in the boy's eyes now; there was none among those cruel waxworks to match it in cold intellectual cruelty; and its smile – its new and strange smile it must have been that made him shudder and shake his head" (234). Pocket is able to witness the doctor's many disguises, and because he is captive in Baumgartner's home, Pocket has penetrated his private sphere – the sphere of secrets. When Pocket and Phillida enter Baumgartner's darkroom, they begin to enact this penetration. Baumgartner catches them in this act, and flashes a light in on them, exposing his own darkroom: "The wick was turned too high, the flame ran up the chimney in the draught, and for an instant a demoniac face flared up behind it. Then the chimney cracked, and fell in a tinkling shower, and the doctor was seen whirling a naked tongue of fire about his head" (280). Baumgartner's monstrosity is exposed, along with the private space in which he reveals his crimes on photographic plates.

While operating in a highly regulated private space, Baumgartner, like the detective, insists upon access to the private worlds of others. Because dying is generally a private affair, the doctor must make formal requests to attend scenes of death: "I have applied for perfectly private admission to hospital death-beds, even to the execution-shed in prisons" (67-8). Such requests are made "in vain" (67) and so he must *resort* to murder, because his 'scientific' eye is not permitted in private spaces. In his confession letter, the doctor writes with great frustration that his project was not recognized and he was not granted such access:

I was that photographer. I am the serious and accredited inquirer to whom the London hospitals refused admittance to their pauper death-beds,

thronged though those notoriously are by the raw material of the British medical profession. Begin at the bottom of the British medical ladder, and you are afforded the earliest and most frequent opportunities of studying (if not accelerating) the phenomena of human dissolution; but against the foreign scientist the door is closed without reference either to the quality of his credentials or the purity of his aims. (321)

The doctor professes that murder is a last resort in a world that devalues the scientific importance of his project and refuses to admit him access to the private world of others.³⁴ He then carries his camera into those private worlds, unannounced, to capture his desired object. The dangers of Baumgartner's intrusive gaze are made real in the machinery through which he peers. Baumgartner's stereoscope does not simply hold the potential for intrusion but is a very literal weapon that threatens private lives in the most profound way – that is, by insisting upon the death of its subject.

Photographic technologies as weapon

In "A Scandal in Bohemia," it was the photograph (and what it revealed) that acted as a weapon. For Hornung, the camera is a weapon in and of itself. Baumgartner's instrument and weapon of choice is the stereoscopic camera³⁵, which serves the dual purpose his endeavour requires: "on the one side there was nothing between the lens and the grooved carrier for the slide, but on the other there was an automatic pistol, fixed down with wires, as a wild beast might be lashed, and its muzzle pointing through the

³⁴ Everyone in the novel seems to have a fear of 'going public'. The doctor must protect himself against the law, and the family wishes to protect themselves against scandal. Therefore, newspapers, indiscrete detectives, and photographers pose a threat to these private lives and secrets. The headmaster of Pocket's school says to Mr. Upton, "you may as well call in the public at once! It will be in the papers before you know where you are; and that, I need hardly point out to you, is as undesirable from our point of view as I should have thought it would be from yours"(114). Pocket is afraid of 'going public', because his mother "has had a frightful illness; bad news of any kind has to be kept from her, and can you imagine worse news than this? She mustn't hear it!" He says to Baumgartner, "For God's sake, sir, help me to hush it up!" (89).

³⁵ The stereoscopic camera was too expensive for anyone but the upper classes until 1870, when it started to become more pervasive (Darrah 46).

orifice intended for the second lens of the stereoscopic camera” (340). A characterization of the camera as a deviant technology³⁶ seems apparent in Hornung’s ominous descriptions of the instrument. When it is finally found in the river, “its apertures were still choked with mud; beads of slime kept breaking out along the joints” (315). The weapon, now that it is revealed as such to Phillida and Pocket, appears as a gruesome monster. This instrument, “rigged...up to take both kinds of shots in quick succession” (341) builds on a long-standing analogy between the camera and the weapon, one that became more prevalent with each technological advance. The very term ‘snapshot’ was originally a hunting term³⁷, and the connotations are re-united when Baumgartner professes that “the click of my instantaneous shutter coincided with the last clutter in [his victim’s] throat” (329). Similarities between the gun and the camera continued to be drawn with the increased accessibility of photographic technologies. In 1894, George Eastman developed the ‘bullet camera,’ which produced 3 ½ by 3 ½ inch photographs (Coe 19). And with the introduction of Eastman’s film technology, one could have a roll of one hundred shots, rather than having to reload a plate with each exposure. The photographer now had the same capacity for rapid succession as granted by the revolver³⁸, and the middle classes could stroll through their neighbourhoods, snapping off their ‘victims’ whenever they wished.

³⁶ In 1856, Sir David Brewster, the inventor of the stereoscopic camera, described the ways in which his invention could lead to (seeming) spirit photography: “for the purposes of amusement the photographer might carry us even into the realm of the supernatural,” as it would be possible “to give a spectral appearance to one or more of his figures and to exhibit them as ‘thin air’ amid the solid realities of the stereoscopic picture” (qtd Gunning “Phantom” 47).

³⁷ In 1859, the term ‘snapping’ was first used in reference to the shutter of a camera, and by 1860, Sir Hon Heischel used the term “snapshot” to describe “the possibility of a rapid sequence of instantaneous photographs for motion analysis” (Coe 6).

³⁸ First invented by Colonel Colt, in America, the revolver was developed by gun manufacturers as early as 1840. The weapon was named after its revolving chamber of bullets that freed shooters from reloading after each shot. According to *Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal* (1853), Colonel Colt sent the revolver to be

The Camera Fiend reminds us that technologies do not exist in a vacuum; the camera is never neutral. Terms like ‘snapshot’ and ‘bullet camera’ ensure that cameras enter the marketplace already invested with social meaning. Once in the hands of the public, that meaning is transformed into social significance when photographers begin to act as marksmen. The analogy between camera and weapon does not end with technological similarities; it also expresses concerns about the technology’s threat to social order. Baumgartner’s camera is only Hornung’s more literal articulation of what many authors have done: “turn the camera itself into a distortion of a monstrous clicking machine, guided by obsessives whose only goal is to cover the entire world with facsimiles” (Parry xv). It is clear that Baumgartner is the ‘camera fiend’ of the title, aligning him with a particular type of photography, characterized in popular culture as predatory and invasive.³⁹ A *Times* article of 1912 praises an artistic photographer while condemning the work of the camera fiend: “Let the ‘camera fiend’ cease annoying his neighbours, and turn, like Mr. Thomas, to the search for beauty, and waistcoat-pocket cameras will no longer be instruments of torture” (“Mr. Walter Thomas’s Photographs” 3). Surely, *The Camera Fiend* does not suggest that all photography – amateur or professional – is a social threat. Doctor Baumgartner tries to make Pocket identify with his practice when asking the boy, with “a reciprocal note in his unemotional voice,” if he, too, takes photographs. Indeed, photography is “the only thing [Pocket has] to do instead of playing games” (58). We must note, however, that the boy does not own an

part of an exhibition at Hyde Park in 1851. The revolver was an obvious metaphor for new photographic technologies. An article in *The Strand* mentions M. Marey, who, being impressed with motion photographs of animals, “set to work himself to invent a single instrument which should produce the same results, and shortly brought into practical use his ‘Gun Camera,’ working on the principle of the revolving pistol, and fitted with a stock and butt in the manner of an ordinary gun. With this a bird could be discovered in its flight, and a very rapid succession of exposures given” (Morrison 633).

³⁹ “Camera Fiend” was the common term for those that were found “at beach resorts, prowling the premises until he could catch female bathers unawares” (Lindsay).

instantaneous camera like Baumgartner's, and as the doctor points out, "what we put upon our plates, there's the difference, eh" (61). However, given Pocket's fascination with both cameras and guns (revealed when he is peering in the pawn shop window)⁴⁰, perhaps even Pocket is on a slippery slope towards deviant uses of photography, a slope that would be much more dangerous if he too had access to the same technologies of instantaneous photography and the same drive for realism. If Baumgartner's camera seems demonized in and of itself, it is only because its monstrosity is a product of the doctor's project.⁴¹ Baumgartner has altered the camera, making literal the connection between photographer and killer, camera and weapon. This text refuses the stripping of agency (and responsibility) that Kodak's slogan, "you press the button, we do the rest," takes away from the photographer.⁴² Despite Baumgartner's appeals to science, the text warns us against the artistry, subjectivity, and insistence on representational control inherent in his photographic project.

In *The Camera Fiend*, there is a fluidity between the mechanics of the camera and the threat of the photographer's intentions and subjectivity. In fact, the stereoscopic camera is the perfect metaphor for the threat of Baumgartner's project, and necessarily leads us to consider the doctor's eye and subjectivity. The goal of the instrument is to produce a product that more closely resembles our own capacity of sight (it has two lenses that can see in three dimensions). The very appearance of the instrument, with "duplicate lenses like a pair of spectacles" (58-9) sets up the stereoscope as an extension

⁴⁰ "There were only two things in the window that interested him at all, and they were not both temptations. One was an old rosewood camera, and Pocket was interested in cameras old and new; but the thing that tempted him was a little revolver at five-and-six, with what looked like a box of cartridges beside it, apparently thrown in for the price" (Hornung 16).

⁴¹ That is, "Cameras don't kill people, people/photographers kill people."

⁴² "You press the button, we do the rest" had been Kodak's slogan since at least 1888.

of our capacity to see and, specifically, of Baumgartner's gaze. It only intensifies the threat when we learn one of the lenses does not see at all, but is rigged with a weapon. With one half of the perspective obscured, the camera does not fulfill its observational potential, and so a full gaze is sacrificed along with the victim.⁴³

The menace of secretive photography again appears with the concealment of the doctor's camera/weapon. Firstly, Baumgartner's weapon goes undetected, as it is disguised within the camera. Pocket is convinced that Baumgartner must have an accomplice because the doctor "was unarmed the other morning. I'm quite positive of that. And Phillida has never seen a fire-arm of any kind in the house" (286). Like Conan Doyle's photographer/villains, the camera is used to disguise other, more mischievous, activities. Secondly, while Baumgartner's stereoscope is large, and does look like a camera, his victims, as they are unconscious, are not aware they are being photographed.⁴⁴ As such, the doctor's camera serves the same purpose as one of the many cameras circulating at the turn of the century – cameras disguised as other objects, with the aim of catching one's subject/victim unaware. For example, agents of the press would often smuggle cameras, disguised as hats, into the courtroom. When taking a surreptitious photograph, they would raise their hats and cough, in order to muffle the click of the shutter: "at one point during the Crippen trial in 1910 there was so much coughing from the press benches that the judge threatened to have them cleared" (Hiley 18). A viewfinder in such cameras would be superfluous, as they would never be aimed by the photographer's eye. Secretive photographers could not hold a hat or suitcase to

⁴³ There seems to be a parallel with literary and photographic representation, where objectivity (a full gaze) is compromised for the sake of either articulating a particular perspective or highlighting specific aspects of the object represented.

⁴⁴ Compare to the 'revolver photographique,' a camera hidden inside a revolver, invented in Paris, 1888 (Figure 16)

their eyes without the risk of disclosing their photographic intentions.⁴⁵ When Walker Evans was taking his subway photographs, his camera was placed in his coat, and so he lacked access to the viewfinder. The photographer had to hope that the intended scene was included in the camera's frame. The frame acts to give borders or an edge, but when the photographer has no frame, there is the possibility of not only excluding the intended, but also of including more (possibly a punctum?) than is intended. Here, the camera reigns. *It sees*. The photographer can only guess. Yet in *The Camera Fiend*, Baumgartner is granted a viewfinder. He can have a frame and a larger camera because his objects/victims are unconscious at the time of exposure. That the doctor photographs sleeping victims allows the text to articulate a dual threat: that of surreptitious portraiture *and* the ominous subjectivity of the photographer/villain's eye/I.

The challenge to photographic trends and conventions

Separate from Baumgartner's acts of murder, there is something ominous and challenging about the ways in which he practices photography. Inasmuch as he is a camera fiend, the doctor becomes one who collects many images. But this new camera fiend is more threatening than the nosy neighbour.⁴⁶ As his niece realizes, "it was not merely a hobby...he was an inventor, a pioneer, she had always felt, without dreaming in what direction or to what extent (252). His project is not only murderous; it also challenges acceptable photographic conventions that had been normalized by the early twentieth century. Although Baumgartner – angry with his failures – smashes the plates

⁴⁵ Even though it was not disguised as another object, the first camera, the 'detective camera' also lacked a viewfinder.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of public remarks and writings on the camera fiend, see Bill Jay's chapter, 'The Camera Fiend,' in *Cyanide and Spirits*.

before the photographs are set, he is indeed a collector of murder photographs. Instead of the rogues' gallery, or the lineup of criminals at Pocket's favourite attraction, Madame Tussaud's wax museum⁴⁷, Baumgartner's images depict his own act of criminality. The mug shot and wax figure represent the criminal *after* the crime has been committed and the criminal has been caught. His/her image is in the control of the state, and used as a tool of classification, identification, or deterrence. What Baumgartner is attempting to create is a collection of murder victims, not criminals. Indeed, they are evidentiary photographs of a murder scene, but they are used to detect the soul of the victim, not the identity of the criminal. In this sense, Baumgartner not only escapes detection by the authorities, but his project is to create images, not become one. This reversal indicates a resistance to the usual relationship of photography, and Baumgartner's subversion of the state's gaze upon the criminal renders him all the more dangerous.

If the doctor's project is scientific and documentary, it is one that should be interested in exposure and contribute to a larger project of discovery. In some ways, the popularization of photography encouraged some degree of regulation. Photographers were no longer developing their prints at home; instead, the photographer sent his/her camera to Kodak, who sent back the prints, along with the refilled camera. In this sense, the photographer is removed from the private space of the darkroom – that space in which the artist/scientist concocts his creations. In *The Camera Fiend*, Baumgartner

⁴⁷ The wax museum becomes a common parallel to the photograph. John Ruskin, in *Cestus of Aglaia* (1865) said "photography can do against line engraving just what Madame Tussaud's wax-works can do against sculpture. That, and no more" (qtd. In Prashc 185). Nevertheless, in the first volume of *The Strand* (1891), the author of "A Day with an East-End Photographer" characterizes the photographic studio as fierce competition for the wax museum. He describes how a portrait gallery was opened in a photographic studio and, "from that day the shop was a huge attraction, and the proprietor of the wax-work show over the way cast glances of ill-concealed envy and jealousy at the crowd which had deserted his frontage for the later inducements opposite" (459).

clings to an old sense of photography, maintaining control over the future of his images. He declares, "I develop, print, tone, and all the rest of it; that's half the fun" (60), and does not "merely press the button and let them do the rest" (60).⁴⁸ By refusing to have his negatives developed by the manufacturer, he does not submit his photographs to the metaphorical nation-wide collection/album being produced at Kodak's developing plants. The photographic evidence, like Irene Adler's photograph, lies in concealment. Furthermore, Baumgartner's negatives are never successful; they do not capture the intended image. The plates are smashed before they can ever leave the darkroom; they are never offered up for public judgment. As such, it is nearly impossible to detect his actions, with the proof of the murders (the photographs) not only hidden, but rendered permanently invisible. Instead of using photography to reveal, Baumgartner brings an end to the lives of his subjects: he kills them, removes them from public space, houses them in the camera and the darkroom, and then smashes them on the cellar floor. All evidence is destroyed.

What is disconcerting about Baumgartner's photographic method is not only that he takes secretive photos, but that he is willing to sacrifice the life of his subject in order to get the desired photograph. The moral randomness that results from his unrestrained documentary impulse is a further development of the attitude that Green identifies in Hawthorne's Holgrave, the daguerrotypist of *The House of Seven Gables*: "Holgrave's indifference to propriety in his choice of subject (upon finding Judge Pyncheon dead in a chair, his first action was to take a daguerrotype of the corpse) suggests a wide, even amoral, indiscriminateness of the recording eye, and the potential for everything that came before it to be regarded as subject matter" (Green 118). Susan Sontag notices that

⁴⁸ Baumgartner directly quotes Kodak's slogan.

“photographing is essentially an act of non-intervention,” and we should be horrified at “how plausible it has become, in situations where the photographer has the choice between a photograph and a life, to choose the photograph. The person who intervenes cannot record; the person who is recording cannot intervene” (11-12). In *The Camera Fiend*, Baumgartner’s moral negligence is not simply one of non-intervention. His desire to document explicitly intervenes in the lives of his victims, as he does not just record, but *causes* the death of his subject.

Acts of detection

The doctor is a perfect example of a villain who seizes power by claiming the privileges usually afforded to his nemesis: in this case, the detective. Like Irene Adler, Baumgartner’s greatest threat is rooted in those activities that resemble detection, bringing into question – along with the photographer – the limits of the detective’s proclivity towards questionable modes of observation. Baumgartner’s “master’s eye” that “delted so deep into [Pocket’s] life” (50) is paired with an attempted morally authoritative voice. When he first meets Pocket, he tells the boy that the man sleeping in the park “is the sort that staggers in as soon as the gates are open, and spends the day sleeping itself sober. But you are not that sort at all, and you have spent the night here contrary to the rules. Who are you, and what’s the matter with you?” (50). Baumgartner profits greatly from Pocket’s own obsession with images of murderers. This “budding criminologist” reads both fictional and real crime stories on his train ride to London, and once he arrives, is enticed by Tussaud’s “Chamber of Horrors,” the very name of which “had frozen his infant blood when he first heard it on the lips of a criminological

governess” (12). The chamber features wax figures of real-life criminals who “in the poor light, and their own clothes, and the veritable dock in which many of them had heard their doom...looked hideously human and alive” (14). Complete with original props, the wax figures serve the dual purpose to both frighten and regulate. The criminals are often placed at their own executions, and so one is reminded of the horrors – not of crime, but of punishment. Together, the figures act as a three-dimensional rogues gallery, a collection of bodies and “faces...made of wax in the devil’s image” (15). These images inform Pocket’s heightened imagination, and his modes of thought become more and more visual. When the doctor informs Pocket, “you must see the rest as well, since you see so far so clearly,” the boy is enticed and “blushed with pleasure, determined to see as far as anybody” (63). Later, he is able to see “what he did see so very vividly, in his mind’s eye” (279). Representations of crime serve to influence and regulate Pocket’s behaviour, as they are models for identification.

Images invite us to place ourselves within their world – to identify ourselves as suitable or unsuitable inclusions within their frames. The scenes at Madame Tussaud’s become the lens through which Pocket defines many of his actions. When Dr. Baumgartner has Pocket believing he has killed a man in the park, he is racked with guilt, horrified that he may be just like the wax images he viewed. Pocket repositions his identity, imagining himself as an object in the world of criminals, and not a viewing subject in a museum. In his guilt, “there was no end to his mental pictures, for they included one of himself on the scaffold in the broad-arrows of the little old waxwork at Madame Tussaud’s! He could not help himself” (93). Pocket does not imagine himself

on an *actual* scaffold, because he has no actual experience of one. Instead, he imagines his punishment as taking place in the basement of this entertainment attraction.

Pocket is anxious that he too may be a criminal worthy of immortalization in wax. He dreams of Madame Tussaud's, but this time the faces of the figures are covered in white sheets making "their defiant, portly figures the more humanly inhuman and terrifying" (138). When Pocket lifts off one of the sheets, he sees "a young face like his own, as ill-mounted on high shoulders, with thickish lips ajar, and only a pair of intelligent eyes to redeem an apparent heaviness: one and all his own identical characteristics. And no wonder, for the last recruit to the waxen army of murderers was a faithful model of himself" (138-9). What begins troubling Pocket's uneasy conscience is not the untimely death of his victim, but how his actions speak to his own character, and position him in relation to the various forms of criminality to which he has been exposed. He has always been fascinated by the lives of criminals, their images, their stories – but now there is a possibility that he too is one of them – that there is no longer the distance between object/criminal and Pocket, as a viewer or reader of their terrible deeds. He, too, may become absorbed into the catalogue of images that track the deviant body. His actions may be horrific enough to include his visage in a rogue gallery of wax figures, to haunt young children into obedience.

From their first encounter, Pocket reads the doctor as a man concerned with obedience to the law, and set to detect subversive activity. Baumgartner searches to maintain this voice and presence throughout the text, in order to ensure Pocket's silence and obedience. In one scene, he gives the boy legal advice:

They cannot hang you; after what I should certainly have to say I doubt if they could even detain you in custody. But you would only be released on

bail; the case would be sent for trial; it would get into every paper in England; your family could not stop it, your school-fellows would devour it, you would find it difficult to live down both at home and at school.
(89)

In this sense, Baumgartner has performed another reversal; he has turned the criminal into the detective and disguises his own crimes as another's. Indeed, there are many parallels between *The Camera Fiend's* villain and Conan Doyle's detective: both have piercing, photographic vision and a seeming ability to detect other people's private worlds with discretion and authority. In order to gain Pocket's trust, the doctor acts as a pseudo-detective, appearing to solve the crime and identify Pocket as the murderer. Baumgartner's detections, of course, are lies, fabricated to disguise his own villainy, and he never succeeds to detect the soul through photographic means. Nevertheless, his attempts to grasp this kind of authority and exploit Pocket's trust questions the acceptable limits of the photographic/detective gaze, and while the novel may attempt to contain his pervasive and invasive visionary power, the threat of Baumgartner's gaze prevails, even after his death.

On reversals

The presence of Doctor Baumgartner's gaze is particularly distressing to contemporary readers when we consider him as a foreign other. The inception of documentary photography was especially concerned with the lives of two groups: the poor and the foreign. Traditionally, audiences would expect to peer in on the life of Baumgartner, observing his strange ways. For example, George Sims' *Living London* (1883) boasts of the visual privilege it offers its readers:

A score of times we may have walked through Soho and wondered at the mix of races. But now we are to do more than pass on our wandering way. We are to step into the old houses and peep into the *strange* rooms, to note how these people live and earn their daily bread...to study with our own eyes the daily life of this *strange* colony – “the Continent” in London.
(1:5)

Like Mayhew’s *London Labour and the London Poor*, Sims’s project attempts accurately to describe the lives of Londoners; its readers are given the rare chance to ‘peer in’ on the lives of such strange figures. In this text, it is Doctor Baumgartner who is strange, and who is doing the peering of the text – who is granted the gaze. And at the same time, his own strange world is protected from the gaze of others, thanks to his use of disguise and the maintenance of a very private home.

Lastly, Baumgartner’s gaze is especially threatening when it is directed at the upper classes. The doctor, not granted access to hospital beds and execution rooms, instead goes to the public park, what Pocket calls “the vast dormitory of the houseless” (32), to choose his victims. Like Thomson and other photographers of the poor, he takes photographs of those who occupy public space: those who have no private sphere in which to hide from the lens. These victims are not only convenient, but weigh less heavily on Baumgartner’s conscience. As he explains, “in England you breed undesirables enough to manure the world! It’s a public service to reduce their number” (96), and so he feels justified: “I have picked my few victims with infinite care from amid the moral or material wreckage of life; either they had nothing to live for, or they had no right to live” (325). Ironically, such a choice may indeed be the reason for Baumgartner’s repeated failures. He worries, “What if the human derelicts I had so far chosen for my experiments had no souls to photograph?” (333), and realizes “I should

have chosen saints instead of sinners such as these, entities in which the soul was a major and not a minor factor” (334). Within Baumgartner’s classist worldview, the upper-class subject/victim provides the best chances of offering up a soul for the camera to capture. For this project, photographing the poor will not suffice. If the lower classes cannot provide Baumgartner with a soul to photograph, Pocket then becomes his “chance of a lifetime” (68). Baumgartner detects that Pocket does not belong in the park, but his unfortunate circumstances render the middle class boy unconscious in a vulnerable public space. The text becomes complicit with this privileging in the sense that Pocket’s narrative drives the novel; Baumgartner’s actual victims are only fuel for the plot. The doctor becomes a real threat when his photographic project begins to disrupt, invade, and capture the private lives of the middle or upper classes.

Unfinished business: inevitable resistances

The Camera Fiend explores various concerns we have chronicled throughout this study: Firstly, it provides us with a substantive articulation of the photographer as criminal/villain; secondly, it expresses concern with photography’s expansion of what can (supposedly) be captured by the camera. Dr. Baumgartner’s project is similar to most photographers’: to capture a desired object on film. Whereas Pocket photographs his friends “in the flesh,” the doctor’s “psychic vivisection” proclaims to “take the spirit,” (61). The doctor resists the regulatory powers of photography, and is not plagued by the same guilt complexes that images have instilled in Pocket. Instead, Baumgartner seizes hold of photographic powers, resisting the regulation of photography’s surveillance, using the technology, instead, for his own ends. As his project is supposedly scientific,

he is an exaggerated articulation of the possible ethical consequences of an impulsive and unrestrained desire for objective documentary photography. Of course, this threat becomes widely articulated in literature when it is felt by those who have the discursive powers to write it. Within the narrative of *The Camera Fiend*, Baumgartner's project becomes truly problematic when his gaze/weapon is pointed towards those members of society who have, not only the power to name their threats, but the privilege to have that naming heard.

At first, it seems that the accessibility of photography produces a diffused gaze that works in collusion with systems of surveillance and control. It would also seem that the texts examined are interested in supporting such systems, inasmuch as they are concerned with the uncovering of mysteries (whether those mysteries be the activities of London's poor, or its criminals). However, the demonization of some photographic practices – especially in literature so concerned with the law, with guilt, with uncovering mysteries – calls us to question such a simple alliance. In order to service the law, photography must be defended as indexical or autotelic. The discursive complications of such a facile construction soon appear, not only when we consider artistic photography, but when we see how the Victorian public (and courts) struggled with the photographic work of Barnardo, Rejlander, or Thomson. Obviously, cameras do not necessarily 'tell the truth' and are only as honest as those employing them. With the rise of manipulative photographers, the 1870s saw many attempts to curtail such destabilization in photographic authority. What happens, then, when such a powerful medium soon becomes accessible to the general public? Does this diffused, authoritative gaze threaten or enhance surveillance and self-regulation? We see such ambivalence in the fiction of

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whose narrative depends on a carefully controlled revelation of mysteries and appears threatened by the possibility of other visions or narratives. As Belsey warns (reads: promises) us, "There may be a direct contradiction between the project and the formal constraints, and in the transgression thus created it is possible to locate an important object of the critical quest" (Belsey 107). Fortunately, these contradictions do not supply us with easy answers, but open up possibilities for the text to reveal its fissures and cracks, to expose its inconsistencies, and in turn, to question the very discourses that constitute it.

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APPENDIX

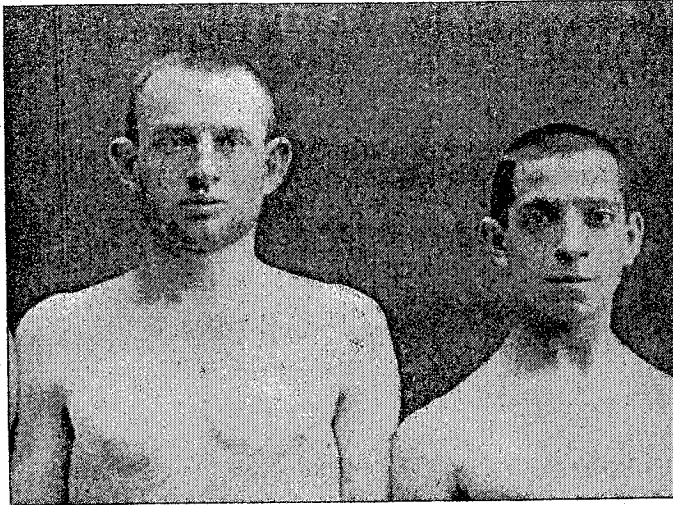


Figure One: "Outstanding Ears (Elmira)" from *The Criminal*, by Havelock Ellis (1890).

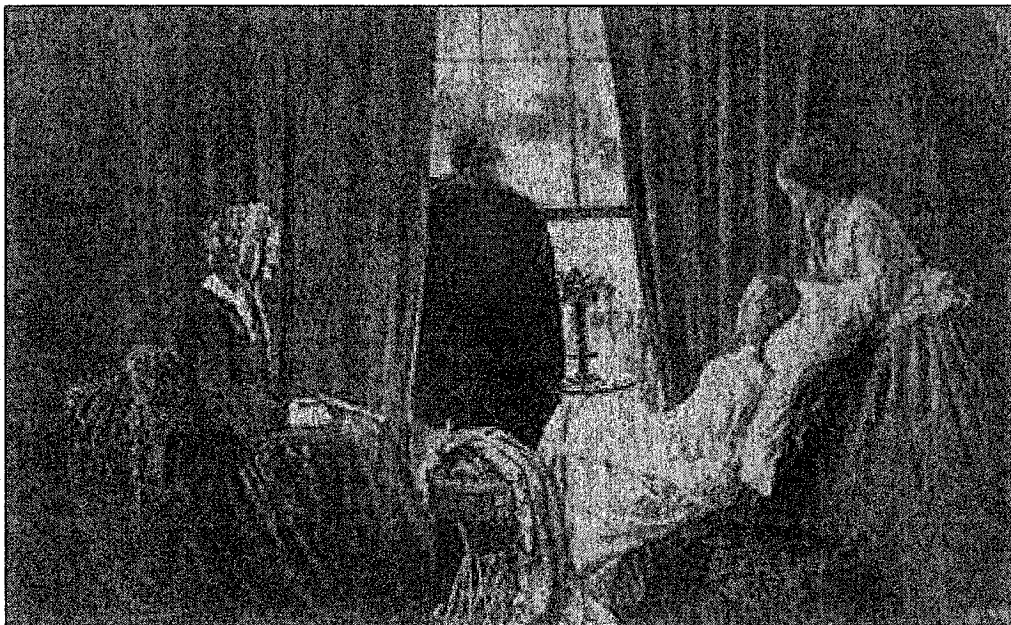


Figure Two: "Fading Away" (1858) by Henry Peach Robinson.
from http://www.geh.org/taschen/htmlsrc6/m197601160001_ful.html



Figure 3: "Prayer and Praise" (1865) by Julia Margaret Cameron.
From <http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/objects/o65179.html>

THERE ARE NO SILVER SPOONS FOR CHILDREN BORN INTO POVERTY

There is no one who can help the child born into poverty. Poverty is not a choice. Poverty is not a curse. Poverty is not a punishment. Poverty is not a sin. Poverty is not a disease. Poverty is not a weakness. Poverty is not a failure. Poverty is not a lack of talent. Poverty is not a lack of opportunity. Poverty is not a lack of support. Poverty is not a lack of love. Poverty is not a lack of hope. Poverty is not a lack of faith. Poverty is not a lack of courage. Poverty is not a lack of strength. Poverty is not a lack of will. Poverty is not a lack of determination. Poverty is not a lack of resilience. Poverty is not a lack of perseverance. Poverty is not a lack of patience. Poverty is not a lack of kindness. Poverty is not a lack of compassion. Poverty is not a lack of empathy. Poverty is not a lack of understanding. Poverty is not a lack of respect. Poverty is not a lack of dignity. Poverty is not a lack of honor. Poverty is not a lack of pride. Poverty is not a lack of self-respect. Poverty is not a lack of self-worth. Poverty is not a lack of self-love. Poverty is not a lack of self-esteem. Poverty is not a lack of self-confidence. Poverty is not a lack of self-belief. Poverty is not a lack of self-empowerment. Poverty is not a lack of self-actualization. Poverty is not a lack of self-fulfillment. Poverty is not a lack of self-achievement. Poverty is not a lack of self-actualization. Poverty is not a lack of self-fulfillment. Poverty is not a lack of self-achievement.

<http://ad-rag.com>

Barnardo's
Specialist Children's Care. From 1875.

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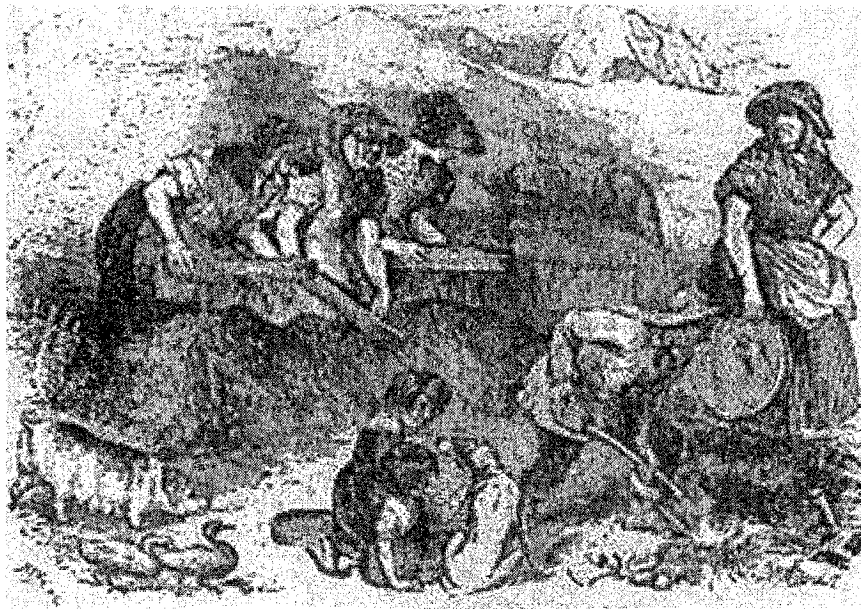
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Figure 4: Advertisements for Barnardo's Charity, banned in 2001.
 From barnardos.org.uk>

Figure 5: Drawing of Poor Jo, Crossing-Sweeper, by 'Phiz'. From Dickens, *Bleak House*.



VIEW OF A DUST YARD.
(From a Sketch taken on the spot.)

Figure 6: "View of a Dust Yard." From Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*.



Figure 7: "Loading Up at Billingsgate Market: Cut-Out Figures" (1894) by Paul Martin. From Flukinger, *Paul Martin: Victorian Photographer*.

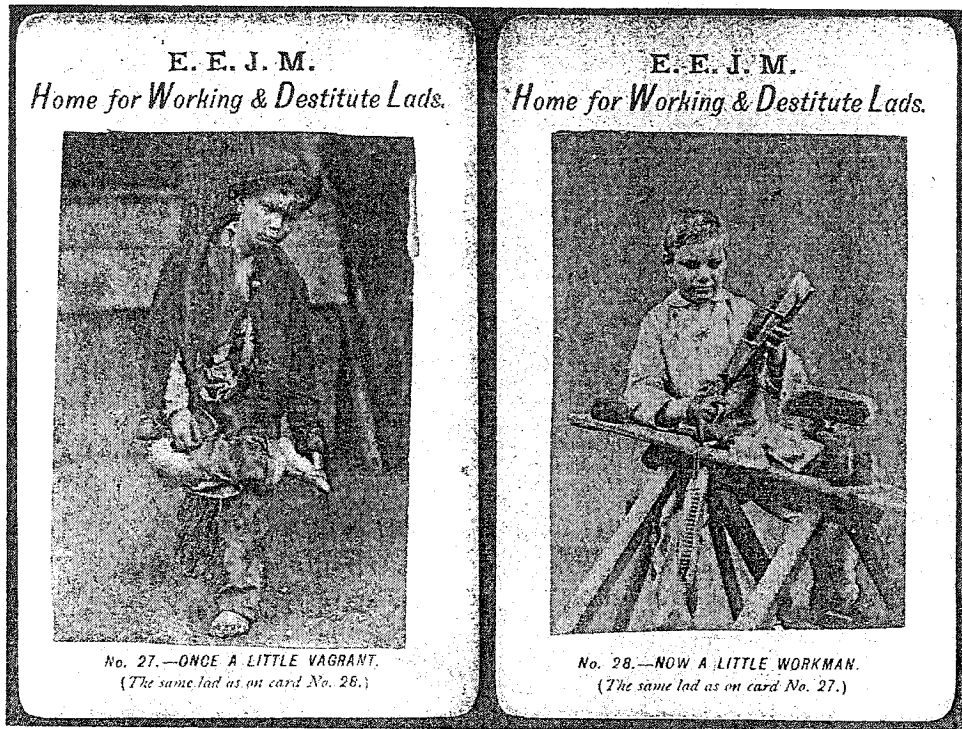


Figure 8: Example of Barnardo's 'before and after' Contrast Cards (reprinted in Koven).



Figure 9: One of Barnardo's children, Florence Holder, posed as if selling newspapers. Reprinted in Smith, "Shoe-black."



Figure 10: "Two Urchins Playing a Game" (1860) by Oscar Gustav Rejlander. From the George Eastman House Still Photograph Archive, <http://www.geh.org>.



Figure 11: Galton's composite photographs of criminals (galton.org).

Figure 12: Pears Soap Ad, late 19th century.



Figure 13: Photograph of Barnardo circulated by Frederick Charrington. Reprinted in Koven.



Figure 14: Portrait commissioned by Barnardo, in order to tame his public image. Reprinted in Koven.



Figure 15:
"Subway
Passengers, New
York" (1938) by
Walker Evans.
From The
Metropolitan
Museum of Art.

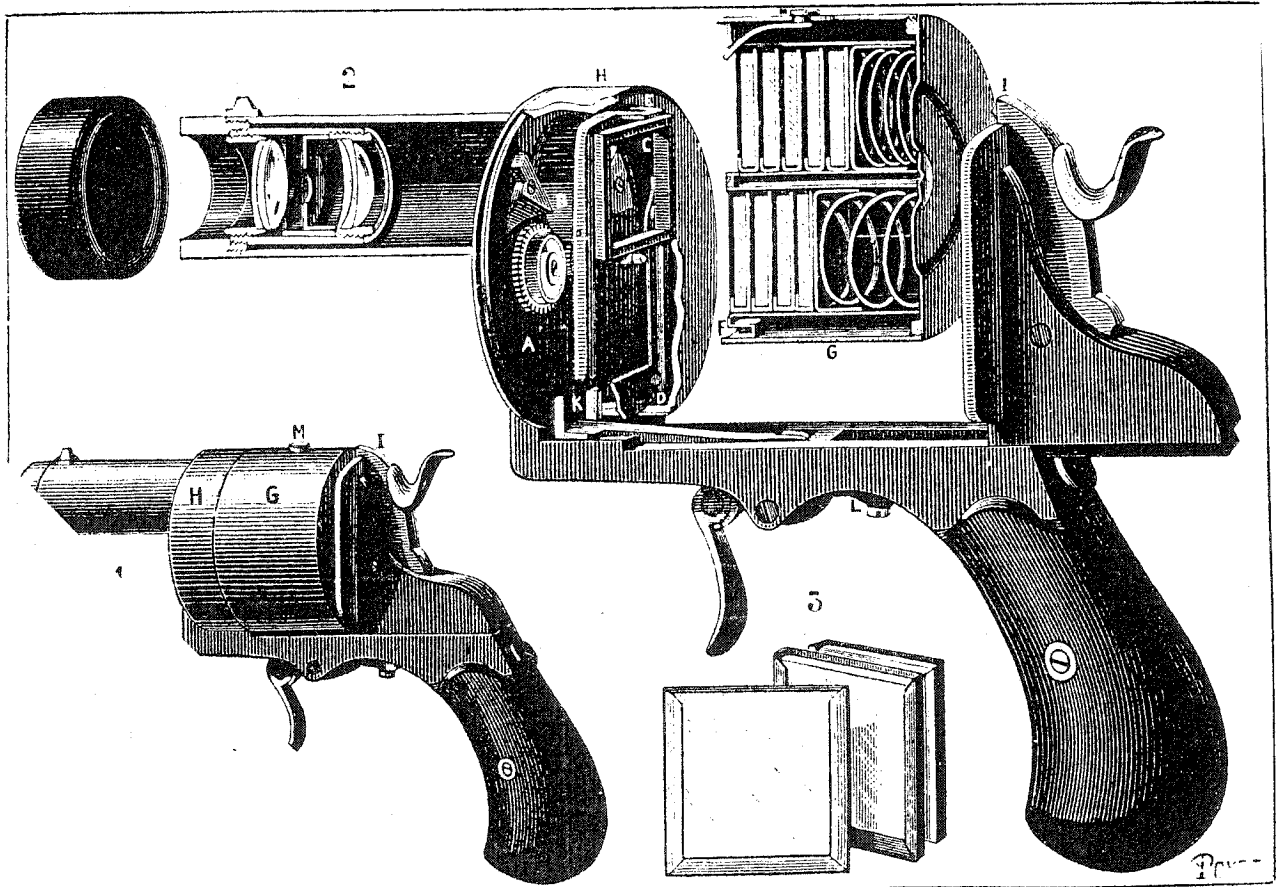


Figure 16: Revolver photographique de M. Enjalbert (Paris, 1888). Reprinted in Coe.