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2. I am occasionally surprised at what I have to explain to Evelyn.  
Well, to start out I should explain to something about my

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appearance, since it probably would become clear from this article anyway and I might as well get it out of the way. As you might be able to tell by looking at my Web page I have what is generally called "rugged good looks." I have a beard but parts of it are prematurely gray, giving me a rather distinguished look. On top, my hair has given up the battle to hold back all the good things that are going on underneath and has made way for my head to push its way up and through. Now, I rarely actually see the effects of this movement since first of all, in most things I do in the day I do not see the top of my head. Occasionally I look in a mirror, of course. And while I am impressed by what I see, I am not getting the whole picture. You see there is still some thatching up there and when I look on straight in a mirror it looks like I still have all the hair I ever did. One has to actually look down on my head from above to recognize that, in fact, there are parts of my scalp exposed to the sunshine. And, not surprisingly, looking down on my head from above is something that I rarely do. It requires either two mirrors or an out-of-body experience.

Anyway, it has occurred to Evelyn to wonder why it is that there is gray hair in my beard, but none on the top of my head. I mean, there still is hair up there and none of it is gray. Now, after she has been in this business environment for all these years, she still does not understand what is going on and how things work. Obviously conditions on the top of my head do not support the expenditures of protein that are required to keep an entire head of hair. Conditions were a lot better in the Boom of the 60s and 70s, but since that time they have changed and a certain amount of right-sizing has become necessary. My scalp can no longer maintain the staff of hairs it once did and although I had on my head some of the best hairs available anywhere, in order for my head to stay competitive I have had to lay off a certain number of hairs and make do with a smaller staff. Because of quality initiatives and because, as I have said, I have some of the best hairs in the

business, a smaller staff has been able to make do where a much larger one has before. Now if I am going to be laying off hairs from the top of my head, which ones should I choose? I could say that the older and grayer hairs have seniority, but such a policy on my head would be shooting myself in the foot, so to speak. Of course the idea is to lay off the older grayer hairs that are approaching pension age and hold on to the younger and more vibrant hairs that have newer and fresher ideas. They obviously are making more of a contribution. I have told my gray hairs that I have really valued their contribution but that, conditions being as they were, their services were no longer required in their present position. I gave them what was a decidedly generous sixty days to find someplace else on my body where I needed hair and to where I would be willing to go to the expense of transplanting them, but those gray hairs that could not find employment elsewhere on my body were terminated. Actually, I have to admit some surprise that more gray hairs did not take me up on my magnanimous gesture, but

then I suppose they felt that they were more or less rooted in their present position. Well, I guess it serves him right for being so narrow. The future belongs to the versatile.

And how well has all this right-sizing of my head worked out? Well, under normal conditions the hairs that I had left were doing quite nicely, thank you. Of course last year, on my trip to the Southwest, the top of my head sunburned rather badly. Luckily my scalp recognized what was the proper thing to do in the situation. Obviously another right-sizing became necessary and now I am getting by with even less hair on the top of my head. This means this summer more head has to be protected by fewer hairs, but as I say, these are the best hairs available anyplace and it is time for them to start proving it. If they fall out, let them be trod into the carpet; they let me down. And I am well on my way from having a shiny, vibrant head of hair, to a shiny vibrant head without hair. [-mrl]

ISBN 0-312-14037-1, 1996, 337pp, US\$24.95) (a book review by Evelyn C. Leeper):

In the introduction to this anthology, it is explained that notes from several unwritten Sherlock Holmes adventures were discovered and that consequently, various famous authors were commissioned to write up the stories from these notes. Given that the authors were supposedly asked to imitate Watson's (Doyle's) style as closely as possible, one wonders why such a variety of famous authors were needed and, in any case, each author's style breaks through. That shouldn't surprise the reader--that's obviously the point.

The first story is "The Adventure of the Amateur Mendicant Society" by John Gregory Betancourt (supposedly H. G. Wells), and does have a very similar style to Doyle's. The story itself has promise, although the resolution leaves one moderately unsatisfied as being a bit contrived in regards to Holmes's position.

But "Victor Lynch the Forger" by Terry McGarry (Theodore Dreiser) is more what one expects: a story with Holmes written in a style different than Doyle's. And here is where the first flicker of doubt begins. While it is possible to do this style shift successfully, it is usually in humorous pieces (Sherlock Holmes as told by Dr. Seuss--that sort of thing). Done as a serious work, it has interest from a literary standpoint perhaps, but the story no longer has much of the appeal the originals did, which is their style. Recounting the plot of a Holmes story in bland prose would not have captivated generations of readers. Without Doyle's style, something is missing.

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"The Case of the Notorious Canary Trainer" by Henry Slesar (W. Somerset Maugham), "The Repulsive Story of the Red Leech" by Morgan Llewelyn (Ernest Hemingway), and "Holmes and the Loss of the British Barque Sophy Anderson" by Peter Cannon (C. S. Forester) seem more matched with their purported authors because of subject matter than style, at least that I can detect, which I suppose is the stated plan.

With "Sherlock Holmes, Dragon-Slayer" (The Singular Case of the Grice Pattersons in the Island of Uffa) by Darrell Schweitzer (Lord

Dunsany) we return to stories whose style is definitely that of their purported authors. These include "The Adventure of Ricoletti of the Club Foot" (and his abominable wife) by Roberta Rogow (P. G. Wodehouse), "The Giant Rat of Sumatra" by Paula Volsky (H. P. Lovecraft), and "Mrs. Vamberry Takes a Trip (Vamberry the Wine Merchant)" by Mike Resnick (J. Thorne Smith). The Volsky is one of the better stories, with the style working with the Holmesian atmosphere rather than against it. The Resnick, on the other hand, may be Smith's style, but this only shows that Smith should not have written Sherlock Holmes stories. (By the by, the biographical paragraph about Resnick in the back seems to go out of its way to list such obscure books that fans won't even recognize that this is the same man who has twelve Hugo nominations.)

"The Adventure of the Boulevard Assassin" by Richard A. Lupoff (Jack Kerouac) is certainly in the style of Kerouac. However, it is not a style I like and because of this, this was my least favorite story in the book. "The Madness of Colonel Warburton" by Carole Bugg (Dashiell Hammett) is also definitely in the style of its purported author, even without the ending, but only serves to show that Holmes is not a hard-boiled detective--nor is Watson.

"The Manor House Case" by Edward D. Hoch (Ellery Queen) is much more in the Ellery Queen style than Sherlock Holmes, with the usual "obvious" clue. (Doyle didn't always "play fair" with the reader, often having Holmes make his deductions based on information not given to the reader until the very end when Holmes explained everything.)

"The Adventure of the Cripple Parade (The Singular Affair of the Aluminium Crutch)" by William L. DeAndrea (Mickey Spillane) and "Too Many Stains (The Adventure of the Second Stain)" by Marvin Kaye (Rex Stout) are two more hard-boiled stories, again reinforcing my earlier statement about how Holmes and this style do not mix.

Although there are a few good stories here, on the whole I cannot recommend this anthology. [-ecl]

Mark Leeper  
MT 3F-434 908-957-5619  
mleeper@lucent.com