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ONLINE ARTICLE

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Dorothy L. Sayers's Writings about Work, the Economy and Social Conditions

An Annotated Bibliography

This bibliography is an appendix to Christine Fletcher's article "Vocation in Work: Dorothy L. Sayers and Economic Issues" which appears in Volume 26 of *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review*.

Dorothy L. Sayers's writing and life show a unity in her interest in good work. The idea of what constitutes good and bad work, especially for women, is an underlying theme in many of the detective novels and becomes the central theme in *Gaudy Night*. The works in this appendix contain significant content related to the theme of work, the economy and social conditions.

Essential texts

The Mind of the Maker. London: Methuen, 1947.

The essential text which illuminates Trinitarian theology through literary criticism while critiquing the social problem of work in an industrial economy. Recommended reprint: New York: HarperCollins, 1987.

Unpopular Opinions. London: Victor Gollancz, 1946.

In particular:

"Towards a Christian Aesthetic." 29-43.

"Creative Mind." 43-58.

"Are Women Human?" 106-116.

"The Human-not-quite-human." 116-127.

(The two preceding essays are republished in *Are Women Human?*
Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971.)

"Living to work." 122-127.

Creed or Chaos? and other Essays in popular Theology. London: Methuen, 1947.

In particular:

"Creed or Chaos?" 25-46.

"'Why Work?' An Address delivered at Eastbourne, April 23, 1942." 47-64.

"'The Other Six Deadly Sins' An Address delivered at Westminster, October 23, 1941" 65-88.

Other books of interest

Begin Here. London: Victor Gollancz, 1939. (Sayers's wartime message to the nation that examines the false concept of Economic Man.)

Even the Parrot: Exemplary Conversations for Enlightened Children. (2nd Edition) London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1944. (Satirical essays that will give as much pleasure to adults as to children. Sayers discusses such diverse topics as gender, sleeping conditions, and underground house building.)

**Sayers writing about the work of the writer
(in chronological order)**

- "Trials and Sorrows of a Mystery Writer." *The Listener* 6 Jan. 1932: 26.
"The present state of the mystery story." *London Mercury* XXIII (Nov 1930): 47-52.
"Aristotle on Detective Fiction." *English: the magazine of the English Association* Vol. I, No. 1 (1936): 23-25.
"Gaudy Night." Ed. D.K. Roberts. *Titles to Fame*. London: Nelson, 1937. 75-95.
"Ink of Poppies." *The Spectator* 14 May 1937: 897-898.
"Plain English." *Nash's Magazine* July 1937: 86-88.
"The Psychology of Advertising." *The Spectator* 19 November 1937: 896-898.
"Writing a Local Play." *The Farmers Weekly* 26 Aug 1938: 42-43.
"Nativity Play." *Radio Times* 23 December 1938: 13.
"How to enjoy the dark nights." *The Star* Sept 14 1939: 2.
"Mormops is a Nice Word." *John O'London's Weekly* 6 August 1948: 374.
"Playwrights are not Evangelists." *World Theatre* Vol. 5 (1955-1956): 61-66.
"Sacred Plays Part 1." *Episcopal Churchnews* 9 January 1955: 20-22, 35.
"Sacred Plays Part 2." *Episcopal Churchnews* 23 January 1955: 24-25, 34.
"Sacred Plays Part 3." *Episcopal Churchnews* 6 February 1955: 24, 31-33.

Plays

Dale, A.S. *Love All & Busman's Honeymoon*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State UP, 1984. (*Love All*, like *Busman's Honeymoon*, deals with work and gender; however, it is satiric rather than serious. Compare it to the *Cats' Cradle* manuscript at the Wade Center and "Cat O'Mary" (listed below) for similarity of theme.)

The Zeal of Thy House. Four Sacred Plays. London: Victor Gollancz, 1948. 7-103. (Sayers's Canterbury Festival play about the rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral by architect William of Sens.)

Unfinished novel

"Cat O'Mary" in Reynolds, Barbara. *Dorothy L. Sayers: Child and Woman of her Time*. Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex: The Dorothy L. Sayers Society, 2002. 25-159. (The story of Katherine Lammas, a woman who is unhappy in her marriage and finds fulfilment in work.)

Especially relevant material from the Wade collections (in alphabetical order)

"Address to undergraduates." MS-3.

"Cats' Cradle." MS-41. (An early version of the play that became *Love All*.)

"Christian Faith and the Theatre." MS-43

"Craft of Detective Fiction." MS-48. (Mentions *Busman's Honeymoon*.)

"Creed or Chaos." MS-51.

"Declaration of Intentions." MS-64.

"Do Writers Work?" MS-69.

Letters folders 11; 12a; 15a; 17a and 17b; 181 (correspondence between DLS & Bishop Bell (see especially 181/27, 181/88, 181/90, and 181/92)); 188; 235a and 235b; 296, 341, 347, 348, 409 and 507.

Letter to Dr. J.H. Oldman. 11 June 1941. Dorothy L. Sayers Papers Folder 341/30.

"Mind of the Maker." MS-134.

"The Condition of the World." MS-47.

"The Economy of War and the Economy of Waste." MS-73.

"Toast to the University of Oxford." MS-221.

"War and Post-War Screwtapery." MS-236.

"What is Man?" MS-237.

"Work [Sword of the Spirit speech notes]." MS-243.

"Work and workers." MS-244.

Sayers writing on Social questions in the popular press (in chronological order)

"Wimsey Papers" *The Spectator* 17 November 1939: 672-674.

"Wimsey Papers II." *The Spectator* 24 November 1939: 736-737.

"Wimsey Papers III." *The Spectator* 1 December 1939: 770-771.

"Wimsey Papers IV." *The Spectator* 8 December 1939: 809-810.

"Wimsey Papers V." *The Spectator* 15 December 1939: 859-860.

"Wimsey Papers VI." *The Spectator* 22 December 1939: 894-895.

"Wimsey Papers VII." *The Spectator* 29 December 1939: 925-926.

"The Wimsey Papers VIII." *The Spectator* 5 January 1940: 8-9.

"The Wimsey Papers IX." *The Spectator* 12 January 1940: 38-39.

- "The Wimsey Papers X." *The Spectator* 19 January 1940: 70-71.
- "The Wimsey Papers XI." *The Spectator* 26 January 1940: 104-105.
- "Notes on the Way." *Time and Tide* 15 June 1940: 634.
- "The Church's Responsibility." *Malvern 1941: The Life of the Church and the Order of Society*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1941. 57-80.
- "The Church in the New Age." *World Review* March 1941: 12-14.
- "Christ the Worker: A Dogmatic Approach." *The Catholic Herald* 18 April 1941: 2.
- "Christian Order for Britain." *The Catholic Herald* 16 May 1941: 8.
- "Vocation in Work." *A Christian Basis for the Post-War World*. Ed. A.E. Baker. London: SCM Press, 1942. 88-103.
- "The Cinema." Letter to the editor. *The Church Times* 31 July 1942: 420. (Sayers, responding to a reader, claims live theatre allows audience to influence actors.)
- Why Work?* London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1942.
- "A Plea for Vocation in Work." *Bulletins from Britain* 19 August 1942: 7-10.
- "The Nature of Waste—Our Machine Age Problems." Letter to the editor. *Daily Telegraph* 13 November 1943: 2-f.
- "Introduction." *A Time is Born*. By Gareth Garrett. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1945. v-ix. (Typescript in Wade Letters folder 15/2-9)
- "YOU are 'The Treasury'—also Lord Tomnoddy, the chimney sweep and the factory worker." *Tory Challenge* July 1947: 3-4.
- "Socialism means tyranny." *Evening Standard* 17 February 1950: n.p.

**Reports of Sayers's speeches on work and vocation
(in chronological order)**

- Murray, J., S.J. Editorial. *The Month* Vol. CLXXV, No. 912 (June 1940): 410-411. (Discussion of Sayers's speech, *Creed or Chaos?*)
- "Daily Work and Vocation: Woman's Eloquent Address at Brighton." *Evening Argus* 10 March 1941.
- "Assessing Work at its real worth: Miss Dorothy Sayers' Sparkling Lecture." *Brighton and Hove Gazette* 15 March 1941: 4.
- "Unprecedented All-Christian Rallies." *The Catholic Herald* 16 May 1941: 1.
- "United Christian Rally Urges Govt. to Adopt Pope's Points." *The Catholic Times* 16 May 1941: 1.
- "The Call for a Christian New Order." *The Church Times* 16 May 1941: 282.
- Murray, J., S.J. Editorial. *The Month* (May/June 1941): 193-208. (Discussion of the Sword of the Spirit Meetings; Sayers's speech is discussed on 196-198.)
- Editorial. *The Tablet*. 17 May 1941: 384. (Discussion of the Sword of the Spirit Meetings.)
- "Miss Dorothy Sayers 'Preaches a Sermon.'" *Mid-Sussex Times* 23 September 1941: 1-2.

"Tirade Against Trash." *The Church Times* 13 February 1942: 101. (Speech at St Martin-in-the-Fields, 6th February.)

"Miss Dorothy Sayers at the Winter Garden: Thousand People Hear Her Enthralling Address." *The Eastbourne Herald* 25 April 1942: 1.

"God and the Machine: Attack on Cinema and Press." *The Church Times* 10 July 1942: 384. (Report of meeting in Hertford Sayers spoke on Christianity and Leisure.)

Reviews of Sayers's books on social questions

Begin Here

"Dorothy Sayers Looks to the Future." Review of *Begin Here*, by Dorothy L. Sayers. *The New York Times* 18 May 1941: 8.

"For Christian Civilization." Review of *Begin Here*, by Dorothy L. Sayers. *The Tablet* 17 February 1940: 156.

Vann, G., O.P. Review of *Begin Here*, by Dorothy L. Sayers. *Blackfriars* March 1940: 198.

The Mind of the Maker

"Imaginative Theology: Miss Sayers's Latest Thriller." Review of *The Mind of the Maker*, by Dorothy L. Sayers. *The Church Times* 19 September 1941: 537.

Lewis, C.S. Review of *The Mind of the Maker*, by Dorothy L. Sayers. *Theology* October 1941: 248-249.

Vann, G., O.P. Review of *The Mind of the Maker*, by Dorothy L. Sayers. *Blackfriars* October 1941: 562-563.

Conlan, T.J., S.J. Review of *The Mind of the Maker*, by Dorothy L. Sayers. *The Dublin Review* January 1943: 87-90.