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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’ 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**


In particular:
(The two preceding essays are republished in *Are Women Human?* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971.)
“Living to work.” 122-127.

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)


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 fulfillment 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.
“Mind of the Maker.” MS-134.
“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 IV.” The Spectator 8 December 1939: 809-810.
“Wimsey Papers VII.” The Spectator 29 December 1939: 925-926.
yers, responding to a reader, claims live theatre allows audience to influ-
ence actors.)

“YOU are ‘The Treasury’—also Lord Tomnoddy, the chimney sweep and the factory worker.” *Tory Challenge* July 1947: 3-4.

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

411. (Discussion of Sayers’s speech, *Creed or Chaos?*)
“Daily Work and Vocation: Woman’s Eloquent Address at Brighton.” *Even-
ing Argus* 10 March 1941.
“Assessing Work at its real worth: Miss Dorothy Sayers’ Sparkling Lec-
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.)


**Reviews of Sayers’s books on social questions**

*Begin Here*


*The Mind of the Maker*


