

Charlie Chan Encyclopedia Article

Charlie Chan

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.



Contents

Charlie Chan Encyclopedia Article.....	1
Contents.....	2
Charlie Chan.....	3

Charlie Chan

The Chinese detective Charlie Chan remains author Earl Derr Biggers' (1884-1933) greatest legacy. Biggers based his fictional Asian sleuth on Chang Apana, a Chinese American police detective who lived in Honolulu. Biggers' introduced Chan in *The House without a Key* in 1925, the first of six Chan novels. Beginning in 1926, the Chan character hit the silver screen and was eventually featured in more than thirty films. Three different actors portrayed Chan in films: Warner Oland, Sidney Toler, and Roland Winters. While Chan's character was based on an Asian person, his resemblance to Chinese Americans was remote. White actors played Chan as a rotund, slow-moving detective who spoke pithy sentences made to sound like Confucian proverbs. In contrast to the evil Fu Manchu (another film character), Chan was a hero. But ultimately, his depiction created a new stereotype of Asian Americans as smart, yet inscrutable and inassimilable.