Gardner wrote a lot (even an autobiographical novel), but he read even more. He read the books of Frank Baum, the author of *The Wizard of Oz*, and eventually made a contribution to the bibliography of Oz. He enjoyed publishing annotated versions of the major works of his favorite writers, like Lewis Caroll.

The literary movement *Oulipo* -- characterized by radical word play mixed with the literary production -- was also a theme of his columns in *Scientific American*. He also published selections of the poems he most appreciated.