

Hammerstein, Oscar Andrew. *The Hammersteins: A Musical Theatre Family*. New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 2010.

See also: Broadway musicals; Ferber, Edna; Hart, Lorenz; Kern, Jerome; Romberg, Sigmund; *Show Boat*

■ Hammett, Dashiell

Identification: American fiction writer

Born: May 27, 1894, St. Mary's County, Maryland

Died: January 10, 1961, New York, New York

Dashiell Hammett was the most influential pioneer of the hard-boiled school of detective fiction that emerged in the 1920s. His stories and novels transformed the genre by shifting its focus from drawing-room puzzles to gritty real-life settings, in which the motives and actions of the purported heroes are often difficult to distinguish from those of the criminals they pursue.

In 1922, when lingering health issues from a bout of Spanish influenza and tuberculosis made it impossible for Hammett to continue working as an operative for the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, he turned to mystery writing, using his experience as a detective for reference. He published his short stories in the pulp magazines of the day, notably *Black Mask*, which became closely associated with the tough style exemplified by Hammett's work. His early stories are narrated by the unnamed Continental Op, a character who moves easily, if warily, among the underworld figures he investigates, adhering to a personal code of conduct whose connection to the law is tenuous at best. The Op served as a model for later hard-boiled detective characters, including Hammett's own Sam Spade.

After gaining some acclaim for his short stories, Hammett started writing novels. His first was *Red Harvest*, published in February 1929, and featured the Continental Op. Just a few months later, he published *The Dain Curse*, also starring the Op. His most famous work is *The Maltese Falcon* (1930), which introduced the world to private eye Sam Spade. Hammett's prose style is clipped, lean, and rich in observational detail. Thematically, his stories reveal the author's view that social institutions tend to corruption and the individual must rely on his own moral convictions to guide him, qualities that make his

work comparable to that of Ernest Hemingway and other writers of the Lost Generation.

After *The Maltese Falcon*, Hammett published only two more novels and a handful of stories in his lifetime. Instead, he wrote for movies, radio, and the stage, and created a comic strip called *Secret Agent X-9*. Later in his life, he would become involved with Communism and left-wing activism.

Impact

As novelist Raymond Chandler famously wrote, "Hammett gave murder back to the kind of people that commit it for reasons, not just to provide a corpse." In doing so, he helped establish a style that would inspire such stalwarts of the genre as Chandler, John D. MacDonald, Robert B. Parker, and Walter Mosley, among many others. His influence also extends to movies, radio, and television, where the tough, hard-boiled detective remains a staple of American popular culture.

John C. Hajduk

Further Reading

Hammett, Dashiell. *Complete Novels: Red Harvest, The Dain Curse, The Maltese Falcon, The Glass Key, The Thin Man*. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1999.

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Johnson, Diane. *Dashiell Hammett: A Life*. New York: Random House, 1983.

See also: Book publishing; Comic strips; Hemingway, Ernest; Literature in the United States; Lost Generation; Magazines

■ Hardin, Lillian

Identification: American pianist, composer, singer, and bandleader

Also known as: Lil Armstrong, Lil Hardin Armstrong, Lil Hot Miss

Born: February 3, 1898, Memphis, Tennessee

Died: August 27, 1971, Chicago, Illinois

Lillian Hardin was one of the first women to be a part of a major jazz band. She performed, composed, and arranged music for some of the leading jazz orchestras from New Orleans. Hardin had significant influence in shaping jazz trumpeter Louis Armstrong's career.

Hardin was an educated and talented jazz pianist. She studied at Fisk University but decided to abandon her college career when she discovered the music that surrounded her while living in Chicago. She encountered the rhythmic and colorful jazz music of pianist Jelly Roll Morton as he played at Jones's Music Store in Chicago, where she worked as a sheet music demonstrator. Deeply influenced by Morton's jazz style, Hardin incorporated elements from his playing into her own; joined various all-male, African American jazz bands at the age of twenty; and soon became known as Lil Hot Miss.

Hardin first met Louis Armstrong while playing at Dreamland with King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band. She was not attracted to him at first, but she soon realized his musical potential and became romantically interested in him. Hardin and Armstrong were married on February 24, 1924. Hardin was very influential in Armstrong's career. She convinced him to leave the Creole Jazz Band to begin a solo career and helped him make more fashionable wardrobe choices. Hardin formed a band named Lil's Dreamland Syncopators, featuring Armstrong as the lead trumpet player.

Hardin was involved in producing the first recording of King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band. She and Armstrong also recorded together with Okeh Records. Hardin made sure that Armstrong was the featured trumpet player in the recording session. She organized a band called the Hot Fives, which was one of the most successful jazz bands in early jazz history. Hardin later promoted the group as Louis Armstrong and the Hot Fives.

Throughout her career, Hardin composed major songs that featured both her and Armstrong. Some of these songs include "Just for a Thrill" (1936), "Struttin' With Some Barbeque" (1927), "King of the Zulus" (1926), and "Lonesome Blues" (1926).

Impact

Lillian Hardin is considered one of the most prominent women in early jazz. She is known as one of the world's greatest jazz pianists. However, she is best known for the impact she had on Louis Armstrong's musical career and for her compositions that were covered by later musicians, including Ringo Starr and Ray Charles.

Monica T. Tripp-Roberson

Further Reading

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strong, First Lady of Jazz. New York: Cooper Square Press, 2002.

Terkel, Studs. *And They All Sang: Adventures of an Eclectic Disc Jockey.* New York: New Press, 2006.

See also: Armstrong Louis; Jazz; Morton, Jelly Roll; Music, popular; Oliver, Joe "King"

■ Harding, Warren G.

Identification: Twenty-ninth president of the United States

Born: November 2, 1865, Blooming Grove, Ohio

Died: August 2, 1923, San Francisco, California

Warren G. Harding led the United States into the 1920s and contributed to an era of peace and prosperity. He was widely honored at his premature death, but subsequent scandals concerning the malfeasance of some of his appointees and sensationalized allegations about his personal life severely damaged his reputation. Years of bad press have resulted in Harding being regarded as one of the weakest presidents in American history.

Warren Gamaliel Harding was born on a farm, the eldest of eight children. He graduated from Ohio Central College at the age of sixteen and moved to Marion, Ohio, where he briefly tried teaching, selling insurance, and studying law before forming a partnership to buy a local newspaper, the *Marion Daily Star*. By 1886, Harding was sole owner of the paper, which he turned into a popular success.

Early Political Career

Harding, a gregarious man who made friends easily, had a gift for public speaking. He was elected to the Ohio state senate as a Republican in 1899 and served two terms before becoming lieutenant governor. When he was denied the Republican gubernatorial nomination in 1906, he bided his time and won the nomination in 1910. His success was tempered by the fact that the Republican Party was divided between conservatives and Progressives, however, and Harding was ultimately defeated by the Democratic incumbent.

Harding aligned himself with the conservatives in the Republican Party rather than the Progressives, and gave the speech at the 1912 Republican National Convention nominating Ohio native son William