Sidney Kingsley

The following is an annotated, secondary bibliography of publications on the drama of Sidney Kingsley. The scope is inclusive of material published in the U.S. after 1970, a time when social concerns brought renewed interest in Kingsley's plays, particularly *Men in White*, *Dead End*, and *Detective Story*. To date, one important primary and secondary bibliography is available. Michael L. Counts' bio-bibliographical essay and checklist provides a survey of important books, interviews, articles, and reviews published during the 1930s, '40s, '50s and the early '60s, thereby covering the period when Kingsley's plays were being produced for the stage (Counts 1995).

The purpose of this compilation was to extend and update Counts' work and other secondary bibliography. It accomplishes that by providing a survey of new scholarship and commentary, covering interviews, film reviews, and dissertations after 1970. It also provides documentation of significant festivals and revival productions in the U.S. Students and interested researchers should also consult Nena Couch's scholarly edition of prizewinning plays (1995). Couch gives us authoritative editions complemented with the context that surrounded Kingsley's life and work.

This compilation begins with general reference and bibliographical sources, followed by interviews, dissertations and theses. Plays having received critical attention and or significant revival productions follow. Of note: I discovered revivals only for *Dead End* and *Detective Story*. Entries for these plays are primarily composed of newspaper pieces offering commentary or review. *Men in White*, on the other hand, had no revivals of note, but received a good amount of critical attention. Entries for this play consist of articles and essays bringing critical treatment and or useful context on the play's writing and production. Those entries are arranged alphabetically by author with a separate section titled "Other Related" made up of articles and essays that focus on themes in *Men in White* or reference the play in broad treatment on the portrayal of medical doctors in popular media.

A list of the sources I consulted in the process of compiling this bibliography, other than those listed in the "Reference and Bibliography" section, are noted on pages 7-8.


Reference and Bibliography


Bio-bibliographical essay. Primary sources and selected list of secondary sources.


Consists of plays awarded one or more of five prizes including the Pulitzer. Arranged chronologically
by theatre season, plays are described with commentary. Included are scene synopses, brief histories, bibliographical overviews describing critical reception, and a listing of characters in each play. Covers *Men in White, The Patriots, and Darkness at Noon.*


Contains transcripts of discussions and interviews that took place over several years in symposia sponsored by the Dramatists Guild. Divided into three parts, the first features discussions among original participants of on-and-off Broadway landmark hits; part two features interviews with established dramatists, Sidney Kingsley included; and part 3 contains discussions on authorship in play and musical theatre.


Consists of four citations, arranged (by) and (about), not duplicated in Counts' bibliography (1995).


Cites studio information, release dates and directors for Kingsley's plays made into film: *Dead End, Detective Story, Men in White, and The Patriots.*


Opens with a synopsis of the play with excerpts from commentary and reviews. Contains details of stage, screen, and television productions, including facts on openings, number of performances, names of directors and producers, cast members, and sets.


Critical essay on Kingsley's career and influence in the "the theatre of realism."


Discusses the writing and staging of *Men in White, Dead End, Ten Million Ghosts, The World We Make, and The Patriots.*


Details opening productions with selected reviews for *Darkness at Noon, Dead End, Detective Story, Lunatics and Lovers, Men in White, Night Life, The Patriots, Ten Million Ghosts, and The World We Make.*

Bio-bibliographical essay and analysis of Kingsley's major plays. Includes bibliography.


Brief biography followed with a list of productions each linked to performance and production details. Includes credits and cast.

**Interview**


Transcript from 1984 Dramatists Guild program series titled "Conversations With" a symposia that provided dramatists an opportunity to interview prominent playwrights. Discussion focuses on Kingsley's work in the Group Theatre and the development of his plays *Men in White, Dead End, Detective Story,* and *Darkness at Noon.*

**Dissertations and Theses**


**Men in White**


Describes the development of *Men in White* as produced by the Group Theatre. Contains excerpts of comments from producers and actors.

Discusses the influence of the plays and the historical, social, and economic conditions that informed their dramatic portrayal of the American doctor as seen in medical dramas today. It also looks at the still relevant tensions between science and medicine, profit and practice, and social concerns such as abortion and government sponsored healthcare.


Provides an account of the history and background of the Group Theatre, its period of decline and subsequent renewal brought about by the staging of *Men in White*. Portrays the people involved and the decisions involved in acquiring the script, the tensions between actors and directors, and the play's ultimate success.


Discusses the influence of *Men in White* and other films that portray physicians as self-sacrificing heroes and central focus in hospital drama.

Other Related


A study on the portrayal of doctors in drama beginning with the sixteenth century and their emergence over time as a central dramatic character. Contains a brief analysis of *Men in White* in this context.


This article looks at the intersections of theatre and medicine in modern drama with a focus on realism.


Describes the influence of the Motion Picture Production Code Administration (PCA) and the monitoring of the film industry. Focuses on acceptable content in hospital drama of the 1930's as portrayed in such plays as *Men in White*.


An essay looking back from today's medical reality TV to early medical dramas. Treatment is given of Kingsley's Broadway hit, MGM's version in film, and the Three Stooges' parody, *Men in Black*. 
Detective Story


Studies the portrayal of three immigrant groups in major plays of the period. Offers analysis on both Dead End and Detective Story.


Dead End

Brantley, Ben. "When Poor were Perky as if Life were Swell." The New York Times 15 July 1997, late ed: sec. C. ProQuest Historical Newspapers. Web. 2 Sept. 2009.


Studies the portrayal of three immigrant groups in major plays of the period. Includes analysis for both *Dead End* and *Detective Story*.


Offers critical analysis on *Dead End* and a discussion of its influence in the development of social drama. Describes critical and audience reception.

Center Theatre Production of *Dead End* at the Ahmanson Theatre, Los Angeles. Sept. 7-Oct. 16, 2005.


*Dead End* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival July 14-20, 1997.


Sommer, Elyse. "'Dead End.'" *Curtain Up: The Internet Theater Magazine of Reviews, Features,*

A substantive review of the play directed by Nicholas Martin. Includes interesting facts on its 1935 Broadway opening performance including an excerpt from Kingsley's stage directions.

Huntington Theatre Company's Production of Dead End, Boston, September 8-October 16, 2001.


The following is a listing of sources I consulted during the process of constructing this bibliography.

Online Databases

1. Books and Parts of Books
   - Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (ABELL)
   - Global Books in Print
   - Google Scholar—Advanced Scholar Search
   - MLA International Bibliography of Books and Articles on the Modern Languages and Literatures
   - WorldCat and WorldCat Dissertations and Theses

2. Articles
   - Academic OneFile
   - Academic Search Premier
   - Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (ABELL)
   - Arts & Humanities Citation Index
   - Film & Television Literature Index
   - Google Scholar—Advanced Scholar Search
   - Humanities International Complete (includes American Humanities Index)
   - International Bibliography of Periodical Literature (IBZ)
   - International Bibliography of Theatre and Dance
   - International Index to the Performing Arts
   - JSTOR: The Scholarly Journal Archive
   - Literature Resource Center
   - MLA International Bibliography of Books and Articles on the Modern Languages and Literatures
Periodical Archives
Periodicals Index

3. Newspaper Pieces
   Historical Newspapers (Times London 1906-1980)
   Lexis Nexis (1999-2009)
   Newspaper Source (1995-2009)

Sources in Print
   Annual Checklists in Modern Drama (1991-1999) [continues Modern Drama Scholarship]
   Humanities Index (1974-2004)
   International Bibliography of Theatre (1982-1999)
   Modern Drama Scholarship and Criticism, 1981-1990
   Theatre History Studies: A Twenty-Year Index, 1981-2000 (TRI)
   Theatre Record (1981-2009)