

Deirdre Bair:

A Preliminary Inventory of Her Collection of Samuel Beckett and Brian Coffey at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Bair, Deirdre, 1935-
Title:	Deirdre Bair Collection of Samuel Beckett and Brian Coffey
Dates:	1971-1992
Extent:	1 document box (.42 linear feet)
Abstract:	Consisting primarily of materials related to Deirdre Bair's National Book Award winning biography of Samuel Beckett (1978), this collection contains correspondence between Bair and Beckett, Brian Coffey, Henry Miller, Octavio Paz, David L. Diamond, and Peggy Guggenheim, among others, and Bair's notes of eighty-two interviews with Beckett and some of his family and acquaintances such as Ann Beckett, Edward Beckett, Brian Coffey, Man Ray, and Kay Boyle.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-5124
Language:	English
Access:	Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition:	Purchases, 2006 (R16494); 2009 (09-02-007-P)
Processed by:	Stephen Cooper, 2011 Note: This brief description is an accession record. The collection is not fully processed or cataloged; no biographical sketch, descriptions of series, or indexes are available.
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Scope and Contents

Consisting primarily of materials related to Deirdre Bair's National Book Award winning biography of Samuel Beckett (1978), this collection contains twenty-one letters (1971-1977) between Bair and Beckett. The correspondence begins with Bair's introduction of herself and the scope of her proposed project and ends near to the completion of her research when, after a short time of seemingly ending his cooperation, Beckett agrees to let Bair include most of the original source material she sought his permission to publish.

Bair's correspondence with Beckett acquaintances includes approximately sixty letters (1972-1980) with Brian Coffey in which he discusses subjects including Beckett and old Dublin, his own work and family, and Bair's work and personal life. In other notable correspondence (1973-1992), all single and often short letters, Henry Miller, Octavio Paz, David L. Diamond, and Peggy Guggenheim, among others, recount their relationship with Beckett or lack thereof. Miller recalls he "hardly knew Beckett at all," and that the second time they met he found him "shy, reserved" and they "had little to say to one another."

Bair's notes of eighty-two interviews (1971-1977) consist of typed and handwritten transcriptions that also record her perceptions of the subjects and the context of their interviews. The interviewees include Beckett, Ann Beckett, Edward Beckett, Brian Coffey, Man Ray, and Kay Boyle, among many others.

Series I. Correspondence 1971-1992, undated

Deirdre Bair to Samuel Beckett, 1971-1972, undated

Container 1.1

Samuel Beckett to Deirdre Bair, 1971-1977

Container 1.2

Brian Coffey to Deirdre Bair, 1972-1980, undated

Container
1.3-1.4

Various recipients and correspondents, 1973-1992, undated

Container 1.5

Series II. Interview Notes 1971-1977

'B-F,' 1971-1975	Container 1.6
'G-L,' 1971-1974	Container 1.7
'O-R,' 1971-1976	Container 1.8
'S-W,' 1971-1977	Container 1.9