

Guide to the Dial Press Records

YCAL MSS 253



by Molly Wheeler

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: YCAL MSS 253

CREATOR: Dial Press

TITLE: Dial Press records

DATES: 1924-1983

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 9.5 linear feet (19 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The Dial Press Records contain publicity files, catalogs, photographs, and other materials that document the workings of this twentieth-century press.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.dialpress>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.dialpress>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Gift of Donna A. Schrader, 1987.

Information about Access

This collection is open for research.

Ownership & Copyright

The Dial Press Records are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Cite As

Dial Press Records. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Dial Press

Founded in 1923, the Dial Press was a distinctly separate entity from the *Dial Magazine* although they were housed in the same building and Scofield Thayer worked with both. Many accounts state 1924 as the founding date, but this was the year of the Press's first imprint. The Dial Press logo design was based on the signet ring of founder Lincoln MacVeagh. Early ads were headlined "At the sign of the cupid and the Lion" and later just the logo was used. Early authors included Elizabeth Bowen, W.R. Burnett and Glenway Wescott. After MacVeagh sold the Press in 1933, it was fairly inactive until 1938, when it changed ownership again. Under B.C. Hoffman, the character of the firm changed to include books of more popular appeal. In 1945, two popular titles were Gladys Schmitt's *David, The King* and Frank Yerby's *The Foxes of Harrow*. Between 1963 and 1965, the Press published several popular books, including James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*, Herbert Gold's *Salt*, Thomas Berger's *Little Big Man*, and Norman Mailer's *An American Dream*.

The following chronology provides dates for key events:

1923: The Dial Press was founded by Lincoln MacVeagh at 461 Park Avenue South in Manhattan. Scofield Thayer, publisher of the *Dial Magazine*, was the its first editor.

1933: MacVeagh sold Dial Press to Max Solap.

1938: Max Solap sold Dial Press to B.C. Hoffman.

1961: Dial Press Books for Young Readers was created.

1963: Dell Publishing Company acquired 60% of the Dial Press stock but the Press remained an independent subsidiary.

1964: Dial Press moved to 750 Third Avenue.

1969: The Dial Press became wholly owned by Dell Publishing Company.

1973: Dial Press made another move to Dag Hammarskjold Plaza.

1976: Doubleday bought Dell Publishing .

1985: Doubleday dissolved Dial Press on April 16.

Description of the Papers

The Dial Press Records document the workings of this twentieth-century press and consist primarily of publicity files. Author biographies, bibliographies, and book synopses reveal the way in which Dial Press publicized its authors and titles. Also included are catalogs listing all Dial Press publications. The Records span the years 1924 to 1984.

Arrangement

The Dial Press Records are organized into two Series: Publicity Files and Catalogs.

Collection Contents

Series I: Publicity Files, 1924-1983

7.5 linear feet (15 boxes)

General Publicity Files consists of biographies, bibliographies, book synopses, and ephemera used in book jackets, press releases and in disseminating information to press, libraries, and bookstores. The files document publications for each year between 1951 and 1983 and the files for most years begin with a typescript list of published titles and prices.

Author Biography Files contains brief biographies of Dial Press authors that were used as sources for publicity information.

Index Cards consists of three card indices to Dial Press publications. The first indexes, by author, pre-1962 titles stored in a warehouse; each card contains only author, title, date, and warehouse location. The second is a title index, 1962-1982, which lists the author, price, and publication date, and for some titles also includes information about the editor, agent, serial rights, illustrations, and contents. The third index, "Special Authors," contains cards for a small selection of authors such as James Baldwin, Robert Ludlum, and Norman Mailer, which seem to have been culled from the title index.

Other Papers includes documentation of author publication receptions and publicity tours, Dial Press logo samples and stamp, guest books, stationery, and reviews of Dial Press titles. Of particular interest is a collection of correspondence and printed materials documenting the history of the Dial Press.

The series is organized into five subseries: General Publicity Files; Author Biography Files; Index Cards; Photographs and Slides; and Other Papers.

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| | General Publicity Files | 1924-1983 |
| | General Publicity Files is arranged chronologically. The bulk of the material was originally housed in three-ring binders, arranged by year and then alphabetically by author. The binders were disassembled during processing but the foldered files remain in original order. | |
| b. 1, f. 1-14 | 1951-1964 | |
| b. 2, f. 15-22 | 1965-1967 | |
| b. 3, f. 23-28 | 1968-1970 | |
| b. 4, f. 29-34 | 1970-1972 | |
| b. 5, f. 35-42 | 1973-1976 | |
| b. 6, f. 43-48 | 1977-1979 | |
| b. 7, f. 49-54 | 1979-1981 | |
| b. 8, f. 55-60 | 1981-1983 | |
| b. 9, f. 61 | 1983 | |
| | Author Biography Files | 1961-1983 |
| b. 9, f. 62-70 | A-O | circa 1961-1983 |
| b. 10, f. 71-73 | P-Z | circa 1961-1983 |

Author Biography Files (continued)

| | | |
|-----------------|---|------------------------|
| b. 10, f. 74 | Baldwin, James | 1971-1979 |
| b. 10, f. 75 | Bourjaily, Vance | 1970-1982 |
| b. 10, f. 76-77 | Brokhin, Yuri Includes printed material regarding Brokhin's 1983 murder | 1981-1983 |
| b. 10, f. 78 | Condon, Richard | 1977 |
| b. 10, f. 79 | Gaines, Ernest J. | 1967-1983 |
| b. 10, f. 80 | Ludlum, Robert | 1977 |
| b. 10, f. 81 | Yerby, Frank | 1979, 1982 |
| | Index cards | Before 1962– 1980 |
| b. 11 | "Old Dial Books, Filed By Author, Stored in Warehouse" | Before 1962 |
| b. 12 | "Dial titles filed by title" | 1962-1982 |
| b. 13, f. 82-83 | "Special Authors" index | 1958-1980 |
| | Photographs and slides | circa 1970, undated |
| b. 13, f. 84-85 | Slides of various publicity materials | undated |
| | Photographs Stored in: Oversize, Box 19, Folders 121-123 Photographs of James Baldwin, H. Rap Brown, Robert Condon, Herbert Gold, Julius Lester, and Frank Yerby | circa 1970, undated |
| | Other Papers Other Papers is chiefly arranged by material format and then alphabetically or chronologically within each format group. | 1924-1980, undated |
| | Dial Press logo | |
| b. 13, f. 86 | Dial Press logo, printed materials | undated |
| b. 13, f. 87 | Dial Press logo stamp | undated |
| b. 13, f. 88-90 | History of Dial Press, correspondence and printed materials | 1924-1983 |
| b. 13, f. 91 | Guest book | 1965, 1977 |
| b. 13, f. 92 | Guest book | 1966-1982 |
| b. 14, f. 93 | Blank invitations for author publication receptions and Dial Press holiday cards | 1966-1980 |
| b. 14, f. 94 | Publicity stationery | undated |
| b. 14, f. 95 | <i>Oh, Promised Land</i> by James Street, publicity announcement | 1940 |

Other Papers (continued)

| | | |
|--------------|--|-----------|
| b. 14, f. 96 | <i>Publisher's Weekly</i> Volume 148 Number 24 December 1946 Includes Dial Press titles | 1946 |
| b. 14, f. 97 | <i>Dial Souvenir Sampler</i> | 1964 |
| | National Book Award certificate to Martin E. Marty for <i>Righteous Empire</i> Stored in: Oversize, Box 19, Folder 124 | 1972 |
| | Book reviews | 1963-1974 |
| | Baldwin, James, <i>The Fire Next Time</i> Stored in: Oversize, Box 19, Folder 125 | 1963 |
| | Baldwin, James, <i>If Beale Street Could Talk</i> Stored in: Oversize, Box 19, Folder 126 | 1974 |
| | Baldwin, James, <i>Little Man, Little Man</i> Stored in: Oversize, Box 19, Folder 126a | 1977 |
| | Condon, Richard, <i>Mile High</i> Stored in: Oversize, Box 19, Folder 127 | 1969 |
| | Mintz, Morton and Jerry S. Cohen, <i>America, Inc.: Who Owns and Operates the United States</i> Stored in: Oversize, Box 19, Folder 128 | 1971 |

Series II: Catalogs, 1924-1983*1.38 linear feet (4 boxes)*

This series contains catalogs listing the Dial Press Adult Books and Books for Young Readers publications.

Catalogs are arranged chronologically under headings for each publication series.

Dial Press Adult Books and Books for Young Readers

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| b. 15, f. 98-104 | 1924-1949 |
| | 1924 catalog is a photocopy |

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| b. 16, f. 105-108 | 1949-1966 |
|-------------------|-----------|

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| b. 17, f. 109-114 | 1966-1979 |
|-------------------|-----------|

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| b. 18, f. 115-117 | 1979-1983 |
|-------------------|-----------|

Dial Press Books for Young Readers

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| b. 18, f. 118-120 | 1953-1982, undated posters |
|-------------------|----------------------------|

Oversize

| | | |
|-------------------|---|------------------------|
| b. 19, f. 121-123 | Photographs (Series I) | circa 1970, undated |
| b. 19, f. 124 | National Book Award certificate to Martin E. Marty for <i>Righteous Empire</i> (Series I) | 1972 |
| b. 19, f. 125 | Book review: Baldwin, James, <i>The Fire Next Time</i> (Series I) | 1963 |
| b. 19, f. 126 | Book review: Baldwin, James, <i>If Beale Street Could Talk</i> (Series I) | 1974 |
| b. 19, f. 126a | Book review: Baldwin, James, <i>Little Man, Little Man</i> (Series I) | 1977 |
| b. 19, f. 127 | Book review: Condon, Richard, <i>Mile High</i> (Series I) | 1969 |
| b. 19, f. 128 | Book review: Mintz, Morton and Jerry S. Cohen, <i>America, Inc.: Who Owns and Operates the United States</i> (Series I) | 1971 |

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

American fiction -- 20th Century
Authors, American -- 20th Century
Publishers and publishing

Names

Baldwin, James, 1924-1987
Bourjaily, Vance, 1922-2010
Brokhin, Yuri, 1934-
Brown, Raphael, 1912-
Cohen, Jerry S., 1925-
Condon, Richard, 1915-1996
Gaines, Ernest J., 1933-
Gold, Herbert, 1924-
Lester, Julius, 1939-2018
Ludlum, Robert, 1927-2001
MacVeagh, Lincoln, 1890-1972
Mailer, Norman, 1923-2007
Marty, Martin E., 1928-
Mintz, Morton, 1922-
Thayer, Scofield, 1889-1982
Yerby, Frank, 1916-1991

Corporate Bodies

Dell Publishing Company
Dial Books for Young Readers
Dial Press