



Between Friends: The Correspondence of Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy 1949-1975

By Mary McCarthy, Hannah Arendt

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Selections from the twenty-five-year correspondence between Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy provide an intimate look at two important women of the twentieth century; reflects their ideas on politics, morality, and other topics; and traces the evolution of a unique friendship.

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Download and Read Free Online **Between Friends: The Correspondence of Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy 1949-1975** By **Mary McCarthy, Hannah Arendt**

Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Those who read Brightman's NBCC-winning biography *Writing Dangerously: Mary McCarthy and Her World* will remember the snippets of this correspondence as one of the highlights. Wise, eloquent and loving, the letters chronicled a quarter-century friendship between two women of widely differing backgrounds united by respect and a shared contempt for intellectual fraud. Their characters and their circumstances made for a rich exchange: Based in Europe, the American writer McCarthy (1912-1989) gave the German-born political philosopher Arendt (1906-1975) an earpiece into Europe, while Arendt, based in New York City and Chicago, served a similar function for McCarthy. McCarthy's carefully constructed, wonderfully perceptive letters and Arendt's more studious replies return time and again to moral philosophy, politics and shared friends (including many of the intellectuals of the time). But the letters are also models of the fine art of constructive criticism and the role of friendship. "Workmanly friendship," as McCarthy says, describing Arendt's *Men in Dark Times*, "of apprentices starting out with their bundle on a pole and doing a piece of the road together." That their bundle included a half-dozen important books and their road was an uneven one of critical kudos, unfavorable reviews, the popular success of McCarthy's *The Group* and the intellectual furor over Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* should not obscure the warmth or trueness of this deeply engaging exchange.

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From Library Journal

For three decades, Mary McCarthy (1912-89), the American novelist and literary critic, and Hannah Arendt (1906-75), the German-born American philosopher and political scientist, shared a rare and enviable friendship that spanned the continents. Their long correspondence is fascinating in its revelation of two very different personalities and their views on notable political, philosophical, and literary figures and events of the day, such as Karl Jaspers, Robert Lowell, the Vietnam War, the trial of Adolf Eichmann, Richard Nixon, and Watergate. The two intellectuals share professional and personal concerns and critique each other's works. The collection is uneven, with more letters from McCarthy than Arendt. Contextual notes are placed at the beginning of the correspondence or at the end, with the exception of explanatory terms found in brackets within the letters, a practice that is both helpful and distracting. For all interested readers.

--*Jeris Cassel, Rutgers Univ. Libs., New Brunswick, N.J.*

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About the Author

MARY MCCARTHY (1912-1989) was a short-story writer, bestselling novelist, essayist, and critic. She was the author of *The Stones of Florence* and *Birds of America*, among other books.

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