Robert Staughton Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2010

Contact information: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact

Catalog Record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78051664

Additional search options available at: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010315

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Revised 2014 November
Collection Summary

Title: Robert Staughton Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd Papers
Span Dates: 1895-1968
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1922-1968)
ID No.: MSS51664
Creator: Lynd, Robert Staughton, 1892-1970
Creator: Lynd, Helen Merrell Lynd, 1896-1982
Extent: 4,000 items
Extent: 15 containers
Extent: 6 linear feet
Extent: 8 microfilm reels
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mn78051664
Summary: Sociologist and educator (Robert Staughton Lynd). Sociologist (Helen Merrell Lynd). Family and general correspondence, writings and lectures, notes, research material, student papers, and miscellaneous biographical and genealogical material chiefly relating to the Lynds' sociological research and writings, especially their study of "Middletown," Muncie, Indiana.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People
Brinton, Crane, 1898-1968--Correspondence.
Diamond, Sigmund--Correspondence.
Erikson, Erik H. (Erik Homburger), 1902-1994--Correspondence.
Lynd, Robert Staughton, 1892-1970.
Lynn family.
Merton, Robert King, 1910-2003--Correspondence.
Riesman, David, 1909-2002--Correspondence.

Organizations
Columbia University.
Sarah Lawrence College.
Social Science Research Council (U.S.)

Subjects
Academic freedom.
Internal security.
Social sciences.
Sociology.
Universities and colleges--New York (State)

Titles
Helen Merrell Lynd papers
Robert Staughton Lynd papers

Occupations
Educators.
Sociologists.
Provenance
The papers of Robert Staughton Lynd, sociologist and educator, and Helen Merrell Lynd, sociologist, were given to the Library of Congress by Helen Merrell Lynd in 1969.

Processing History
The collection was processed in 1969 and revised in 1981. The finding aid was revised again in 2010.

Copyright Status
Copyright in the unpublished writings of Robert Staughton Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions
The Lynd Papers are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Microfilm
A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on eight reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition as available.

Preferred Citation
Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Robert Staughton Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note
Robert Staughton Lynd

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1892, Sept. 26</td>
<td>Born, New Albany, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>B.A. Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-1918</td>
<td>Editor, <em>Publishers' Weekly</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Manager, advertising and publicity, Charles Scribner's Sons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Assistant publisher, B. W. Huebsch, Inc., and the <em>Freeman</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Married Helen Merrell (died 1982)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Missionary and writer, Elk Basin, Wyo., oil fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>B.D., Union Theological Seminary, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923-1926</td>
<td>Director, Small City Study, Institute of Social and Religious Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-1927</td>
<td>Assistant director, Division of Educational Research, Commonwealth Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-1931</td>
<td>Assistant to chairman, later permanent secretary, Social Sciences Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Published with Helen Merrell Lynd <em>Middletown, a Study in Contemporary American Culture</em>. New York: Harcourt, Brace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Ph.D., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helen Merrell Lynd

Date | Event
--- | ---
1896, Mar. 17 | Born, La Grange, Ill.
1921 | M.A., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
| Married Robert Staughton Lynd (died 1970)
1929 | Published with Robert Staughton Lynd *Middletown, a Study in Contemporary American Culture*. New York: Harcourt, Brace
1929-1964 | Engaged in research and writing
| Lecturer, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y, and Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, N.Y.
1944 | Ph.D., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
| Published *Field Work in College Education*. New York: Columbia University Press
1958 | Published *On Shame and the Search for Identity*. New York: Harcourt, Brace
1965 | Published *Toward Discovery*. Bronxville, N.Y.: Sarah Lawrence College
1982 | Died, Warren, Ohio

**Scope and Content Note**

The papers of Robert Staughton Lynd (1892-1970) and Helen Merrell Lynd (1896-1982), husband and wife, span the years 1895-1968, with the bulk of the items concentrated in the period 1922-1968. Included in the collection is a small *Correspondence* series containing some family letters plus a larger number of personal and professional letters. The Lynds apparently kept few copies of outgoing correspondence; most of the letters in this series date from 1950 onward and nearly all were written by others.

Also in the Lynd papers is a *Writings* file treating selected examples of their production as authors, lecturers, teachers, and reviewers. Material concerning "Middletown," a sociological study of Muncie, Indiana, comprises the largest portion of the Writings and is mainly devoted to background research data the pair gathered while surveying the city. There are, in addition, numerous reviews of both the 1929 *Middletown* volume and the follow-up study, *Middletown in Transition*, published eight years later. Popular reaction to the books was strong in Muncie, and samples of the response can be found in the general correspondence of this part of the Writings.

Besides "Middletown," some of the main topics in this collection are academic and educational affairs at Columbia University and Sarah Lawrence College, where the Lynds taught; national security questions and academic freedom; the sociological discipline; and Robert Lynd's work as permanent secretary of the Social Science Research Council between 1927 and 1931. Important correspondents include Crane Brinton, Sigmund Diamond, Erik H. Erikson, Robert King Merton, and David Riesman.

**Arrangement of the Papers**

This collection is arranged in three series:

- *Correspondence, 1923-1967*
• Writings, 1895-1967
• Miscellany, 1918-1968
Description of Series

Container       Series                                  
BOX 1 REEL 1    Correspondence, 1923-1967              
                Family and general correspondence, mostly received, and related matter.  
                The general correspondence is arranged separately for Robert Staughton Lynd and Helen  
                Merrell Lynd and therein chronologically.  

BOX 2-13 REEL 1-8  Writings, 1895-1967                    
                Holograph, typewritten, and near-print and printed articles, lectures, book material, interview  
                surveys, outlines, notes, reviews, and miscellaneous research data.  
                Arranged in separate files for Robert Staughton Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd as well as a joint  
                file of both their material, and therein alphabetically by type of material or title.  

BOX 14-15 REEL 8   Miscellany, 1918-1968                   
                Biographical and genealogical material, and student papers.  
                Arranged alphabetically by type of material. The papers of students have not been microfilmed.
## Container List

Microfilm shelf no. 18,297

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</table>
| BOX 1 REEL 1 | **Correspondence, 1923-1967**  
Family and general correspondence, mostly received, and related matter.  
The general correspondence is arranged separately for Robert Staughton Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd and therein chronologically. |
| BOX 1 REEL 1 | Family, 1939-1964, undated |
| BOX 1 REEL 1 | General |
| BOX 1 REEL 1 | Lynd, Robert Staughton, 1923-1967  
(3 folders) |
| BOX 1 REEL 1 | Lynd, Helen Merrell, 1937-1965, undated  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 2-13 REEL 1-8 | **Writings, 1895-1967**  
Holograph, typewritten, and near-print and printed articles, lectures, book material, interview surveys, outlines, notes, reviews, and miscellaneous research data.  
Arranged in separate files for Robert Staughton Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd as well as a joint file of both their material, and therein alphabetically by type of material or title. |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | Lynd, Robert Staughton, 1922-1965, undated |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | Articles and papers |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | Book reviews |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | By Lynd |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | By others regarding *Lynd's Knowledge for What?* (1939) |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | Lectures, outlines, and notes  
(3 folders) |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | Reminiscences |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | Research projects |
| BOX 2 REEL 1-2 | Social Science Research Council, 1927-1933  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 3 REEL 2 | Survey schedules, Montclair, N.J. |
| BOX 3 REEL 2 | Seminar topics |
| BOX 3 REEL 2 | Miscellaneous research material and printed matter |
| BOX 3 REEL 2 | Lynd, Helen Merrell, 1933-1967, undated |
| BOX 3 REEL 2 | Articles, talks, and miscellaneous  
1933-1967  
(6 folders) |
| BOX 4 REEL 3 | Undated  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 4 REEL 3 | Book manuscripts |
| BOX 4 REEL 3 | *On Shame and the Search for Identity*  
(5 folders) |
<p>| BOX 5 | (4 folders) |</p>
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<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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<tr>
<td>REEL 3-4</td>
<td>Book notes</td>
</tr>
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| BOX 5 REEL 3 | Book reviews  
England in the Eighteen-Eighties  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 5 REEL 3 | Miscellaneous notes, research material, and printed matter  
(3 folders) |
| BOX 6 REEL 3-4 | England in the Eighteen-Eighties  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 6 REEL 3-4 | On Shame and the Search for Identity |
| BOX 6 REEL 3-4 | Miscellaneous notes, research material, and printed matter  
(3 folders) |
| BOX 7 REEL 4 | Lynd, Robert Staughton, and Helen Merrell Lynd, 1895-1967, undated  
Middletown |
| BOX 7 REEL 4 | Comments on manuscript  
General correspondence, 1923-1960  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 7 REEL 4 | Research files  
Background, 1895-1947  
Clubs  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 8 REEL 5 | General notes |
| BOX 8 REEL 5 | Individual biographies  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 9 REEL 5-6 | Interview schedules  
(4 folders) |
| BOX 9 REEL 5-6 | Ku Klux Klan  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 10 REEL 6 | Leisure activities  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 10 REEL 6 | Ministerial Association |
| BOX 10 REEL 6 | Organized labor |
| BOX 10 REEL 6 | Working conditions  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 11 REEL 6-7 | Reviews, 1929-1967, undated  
(3 folders) |
| BOX 12 REEL 7-8 |  
(5 folders) |
| BOX 13 REEL 8 | Middletown in Transition |
| BOX 13 REEL 8 | Corrected galley |
| BOX 13 REEL 8 | General correspondence, 1937-1941 |
(5 folders) |
### Writings, 1895-1967

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 13 REEL 8</td>
<td>Talk to Rotary Club, Muncie, Ind., 1935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| BOX 14-15 REEL 8 | **Miscellany, 1918-1968**  
Biographical and genealogical material, and student papers.  
Arranged alphabetically by type of material. The papers of students have not been microfilmed. |
| BOX 14 REEL 8 | Biographical and genealogical data, 1918-1968 |
| BOX 14 not filmed | Student papers  
(6 folders) |
| BOX 15 | (6 folders) |