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# Sidney Lipshires Papers

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Born on April 15, 1919 in Baltimore, Maryland to David and Minnie Lipshires, Sidney was raised in Northampton, Massachusetts where his father owned two shoe stores, David Boot Shop and The Bootery. He attended the Massachusetts State College for one year before transferring to the University of Chicago and was awarded a BA in economics in 1940. His years at the University of

Chicago were transformative, Lipshires became politically active there and joined the Communist Party in 1939. Following graduation in 1941, he married Shirley Dvorin, a student in early childhood education; together they had two sons, Ellis and Bernard. Lipshires returned to western Massachusetts with his young family in the early 1940s, working as a labor organizer. He served in the United States Army from 1943 to 1946 working as a clerk and interpreter with a medical battalion in France for over a year. Returning home, he ran for city alderman in Springfield on the Communist Party ticket in 1947. Lipshires married his second wife, Joann Breen Klein, in 1951 and on May 29, 1956, the same day his daughter Lisa was born, he was arrested under the Smith Act for his Communist Party activities. Before his case was brought to trial, the Smith Act was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. Disillusioned with the Communist Party, he severed his ties with it in 1957, but continued to remain active in organized labor for the rest of his life. Earning his masters in 1965 and Ph.D. in 1971, Lipshires taught history at Manchester Community College in Connecticut for thirty years. During that time he worked with other campus leaders to establish a statewide union for teachers and other community college professionals, an experience he wrote about in his book, *Giving Them Hell: How a College Professor Organized and Led a Successful Statewide Union*. Sidney Lipshires died on January 6, 2011 at the age of 91.

Ranging from an autobiographical account that outlines his development as an activist (prepared in anticipation of a trial for conspiracy charges under the Smith Act) to drafts and notes relating to his book *Giving Them Hell*, the Sidney Lipshires Papers offers an overview of his role in the Communist Party and as a labor organizer. The collection also contains his testimony in a 1955 public hearing before the Special Commission to Study and Investigate Communism and Subversive Activities, photographs, and biographical materials.

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## Background on Sidney Lipshires

Labeled "progressive" at a young age, while advocating for school reform by publishing an alternative high school newspaper, Sidney Lipshires had already discovered the power of organized social pressure and discourse. His interest in activism, and great skill in leading and articulating such causes, offered lifelong opportunities for action and speech about issues of importance to Lipshires. These issues - ethical and equal treatment for all, charity, and respect for education and hard work - trace back to Lipshires' family and community upbringing in a traditional Jewish household and networked community in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Born on April 15, 1919 in Baltimore, Maryland to David M. Lipshires and Minnie S. Alberts Lipshires, Lipshires moved to Northampton at the age of four. David Lipshires and the extended Alberts' family were active in the growing Jewish community in Northampton, and David Lipshires was a successful and respected businessman, owning and operating two shoe stores, David Boot Shop and The Bootery. A good student and son, Lipshires was influenced by the cultural particularities of his household, including Jewish ethics, linguistics, history, and stories, and by lessons he later ascribed to his father and to years working in the shoe business, such as valuing hard work, physical presentation, outreach efforts, and strong self-confidence and identity.



Sidney Lipshires

After spending his childhood and teenaged years in Northampton, in the conservative and Republican environment of his household, Lipshires spent one year at the Massachusetts State College (now the University of Massachusetts), and then transferred to the University of Chicago, where he switched his academic interests to the social sciences, and met and became involved with student activists. While helping to protest a rise in student tuition, Lipshires met several Communists, and was inspired by their activism and political intelligence. He joined the Communist Party in 1939, when he was also made head of the American Student Union chapter at the University. After earning

his BA in economics in 1940, Lipshires returned home to Northampton, joined his father in shoe sales, continued his involvements in the Communist Party and the American Student Union in western Massachusetts, and married Shirley F. Dvorin, a student in early childhood education, with whom he had two sons, Ellis and Bernard.

Lipshires was drafted and joined the United States Army in June 1943, serving for two and a half years, working as a clerk and interpreter with a medical battalion in France for over a year. While abroad, Lipshires stayed true to his values of charity and equality, persuading his superior officers to provide a midday meal for the malnourished French workers who were under his supervision. Returning from duty in France in 1946, Lipshires was asked to be the Secretary (the top leader) of the Communist Party of western Massachusetts, a post in which he was extremely active and held until 1951. He ran for city alderman in Springfield on the Communist Party ticket in 1947, and although he was not elected, Lipshires garnered lots of press during his campaign and afterwards, and communicated his and the Party's reasons for pursuing election as a third party alternative, such as rent and price control and anti-discrimination legislation.

The Korean War altered the political climate in the United States, making public political activity harder for Lipshires and the Communist Party. Due to these political limitations, along with legal difficulties stemming from Lipshires' 1951 marriage to his second wife, Joann Breen Klein, before either of them was divorced from their previous partners under Massachusetts law, the Lipshires decided to move to Rhode Island, and were then asked by the Party to temporarily leave New England. For about a year the pair lived under aliases in Los Angeles, California, halting their activities in the Communist Party.

The couple returned east in 1952, feeling it was both safer and time again to be active in the political community. They were asked to aid Party organization efforts in Providence, Rhode Island, and then later in Boston, where Lipshires became Boston City Secretary in 1953. The couple utilized new aliases in each location, aware that they had both been under F.B.I. surveillance for several years. As an organizer and Secretary, Lipshires arranged and attended meetings, and acquainted himself with the Party organization and personnel. He also wrote internal reports, conducted community surveys, handled outreach and electoral activities, and taught classes on subjects such as anti-white chauvinism and the Farmer Labor Party. Lipshires also acted as a liaison and reporter between various committees and units in Boston, including some "underground" or "unavailable" units which were out of the spotlight for the Party in an attempt to ease the political environment for Communists, and other working groups, such as the packing and textile industries in Boston and nearby areas.

From 1953 to 1955, the Special Commission to Study and Investigate Communism and Subversive Activities and Related Matters in the Commonwealth, also known as the Bowker Commission or the Massachusetts Commission on Communism, summoned Communists and others to testify in public hearings as a part of its investigations. These hearings were events of both significance and spectacle in the lives of those summoned and in local press coverage. Lipshires, along with his wife and mother-in-law, was called before the Commission on September 14, 1955, where they appeared without attorneys. By then, Lipshires had become the acting District Organizer of the Communist Party of New England, a region that excluded Connecticut. Lipshires presented his general opinions on Communism, freedom of speech, and non-violence during his testimony, but refused to discuss, under coercion, the specifics he would later discuss in a Springfield media interview.

Returning to work, Lipshires continued to rise through the Party ranks, becoming the Secretary of the Communist Party of New England in October of 1955. Lipshires was especially concerned about the United States Communist reaction to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February 1956, where breaking with prior practice, Khrushchev critiqued the cult of personality, dictatorship, and violence of Joseph Stalin. Lipshires organized his own report and discussion group on this topic, but it was halted, when on May 29, 1956, the same day his daughter Lisa was born, Lipshires was arrested under the Alien Registration Act of 1940, or the Smith Act, for his Communist Party activities.

After a week in jail, Lipshires continued some Party activities, participating in national debates through published opinion pieces, but mostly withdrawing from political activity to work fulltime on his self-defense and on that of his co-defendants. He became the executive secretary of the Massachusetts Smith Act Defendants Committee, publishing a pamphlet introducing the group of defendants and outlining the law and questionable tactics used under the Smith Act. Lipshires also produced a detailed autobiography in preparation for trial. This document would not get used in his defense, however, for before his case was brought to trial, the United States Supreme Court ruled the Smith Act unconstitutional. Growing frustration with the Communist Party's stagnancy and slow reaction to the revelations about Stalin, and disillusionment with politics in general, led Lipshires to officially resign from the Party in March 1957. He took a position as the manager of a shoe store that his father had helped him establish in New Britain, Connecticut, and eventually returned to school.

Lipshires earned his Masters from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, 1965, and his Ph.D. in history from the University of Connecticut in 1971, while already employed as a professor at Manchester Community College (MCC) in Connecticut, where he was hired in 1966. A storyteller with a flare for both comedy (although sometimes admittedly corny comedy) and drama, Lipshires found another natural fit as a lecturer and teacher in his new environment at MCC, where he taught classes on European history and Western civilization.

Lipshires continued to stay active in organized labor, and was instrumental in the establishment of a statewide union for teachers

and community college professionals, the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges, or CCCC, or the 4C's. Lipshires joined with music professor and friend, Bob Vater, to enlist support for the union, first at MCC, and then on other community college campuses. The union was established in 1973, with Vater as its first president. Lipshires would be its next president, leading the union for eighteen years as it managed new affiliations, followed and drove trends in Connecticut and higher education, and worked to serve its community and increase membership. Lipshires' experience growing and leading the union is narrated in his self-published 2007 book, *Giving Them Hell: How a College Professor Organized and Led a Successful Statewide Union*.

Lipshires interests and connections in organized labor and activism helped him have influence beyond MCC and 4C's, often working on behalf of employees or for progressive causes in general in Connecticut and New England. He was involved with the Connecticut State Employee Association, and was a member of the "Colt 45," during a civil-disobedience sit-in at Colt Firearms factory in 1986. Lipshires' retirement from MCC in 1992 was met with a celebration of his services to the college, including an official last lecture and a large retirement party. He would retire from the 4C's three years later, at the same time as his longtime friend and the 4C's first professional staff member, Sonia Berke. Both were instrumental in the history and actions of the organization, and were recognized and deeply respected by friends and colleagues for their service and vision.

After retirement, Lipshires passions for political thought and commentary did not abate, and were funneled into his writing. His unpublished book, *Tired of Waiting for Lefty?*, is a critique of, and advice book for, labor and the Left, offering analysis of past movements and decisions, and outlining solutions for more social justice and political achievements. Lipshires stayed connected with family throughout the years, and had a work relationship with Lisa Lipshires, who helped him research, write, and distribute *Giving Them Hell*. Lipshires died on January 6, 2011, at the age of 91. At his request, Lipshires was buried in the cemetery of Congregation B'nai Israel, the synagogue his father and family had helped to establish in Northampton, Massachusetts, with his headstone projecting boldly his life's commitments: "Solidarity Forever."

## Scope of collection

The Sidney Lipshires collection is organized into three series, and covers eight decades of history in Lipshires' life and professional, political, and activist issues in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and the rest of New England. Although divided by theme and material, the series, understood within the whole, reveal deep-rooted interconnections between the personal and public in Lipshires' life and passions. The biographical aspects of Lipshires' upbringing and environment, his family, culture, education, and progressive inclinations, run strongly throughout his professional life and his activism, whether political or organizational in nature.

The first series, Personal, Professional, and Family Materials, contains biographical records relating to Lipshires and his academic and professional life, as well as materials from and about his family members. Legal, professional, financial, and military documents and certificates, as well as newspaper clippings and other print materials, limited correspondence, and especially various typescripts, speeches, and condolences by and about Lipshires provide information about his biography, personality, and personal and social commitments to equality, education, labor politics, and activism.

Lipshires' youth is least covered, but his participation in the military, abroad in France during World War II, as a young man is documented in government and correspondence records. His other professional activities are noted in the second series, as well as in several professional documents and a late curriculum vita in the collection. While Lipshires' career as a professor of history at Manchester Community College is documented by only a few items in this collection, his academic interests in social, intellectual, and political modern European history, especially in Marx, Freud, and Marcuse, are revealed in detail in his academic work, research, and writing during the time of his doctorate, in 1971.

Family materials in the collection offer a broader vision of locations, events, and issues impacting Lipshires' and others' lives during these periods. A scrapbook and speech draft by David Lipshires, Lipshires' father, provides a history and commentary on his shoe businesses in Northampton, Massachusetts, revealing not only the ethics of work and practice in which Lipshires was raised, but also sound theory on business policy and publicity, and specifics of women's retail in a community connected to Smith College and the WAVE officers. David Lipshires and his business partner, Leonard Alberts, (Lipshires' uncle and elder by only a few years,) are also noted in several local newspaper clippings and obituaries, documenting the ties of the Lipshires family to the larger Northampton community, and especially its importance to the Jewish community there. Several folders of materials relate to Lipshires' second wife, Joann Breen Lipshires, many biographical in nature, including a birth certificate and obituary, and various employment, academic, and military records. Correspondence from and to Breen Lipshires, along with an essay about her by daughter Lisa Lipshires, are highlights.

Series 2. Activism, Labor, and Leadership, is the heart of this collection, and documents the issues that were ever at the heart and mind of Lipshires. Fliers, broadsides, pamphlets, and newspaper clippings, along with Lipshires' Bowker Commission testimony transcript, FBI file, and incredibly detailed autobiography and accompanying research notes and materials, document his involvement and connections with leftist politics and the Communist Party, and his eventual arrest under the Alien Registration Act of 1940, or the Smith Act, in 1956.

The assorted materials reveal the internal and external discourses of the Communist Party in America, and specifically New England, during these times, as Lipshires, a paid employee of the Party, grew from running for office in Springfield on the Communist ticket, to leading and critiquing the Party's organization, interests, and effectiveness. Reports, shop papers, and other print material and news coverage document the research, outreach and critiques of the Communist Party and other leftists and labor organizers in New England during the 1940s and 1950s. Lipshires was connected with a number of Communist and activist workers, including the six others arrested as the Massachusetts Smith Act Defendants: Otis Archer Hood, Anne Burlak Timpson, Edward Strong, Daniel Boone Schirmer, Michael A. Russo, and Geoffrey Warner White. Information on the opinions and practices of these individuals and others can be found within the collection as well.

In parallel with the depth of resources on the Communist Party in western Massachusetts and New England, are the materials documenting the establishment of the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges, or CCCC or the 4C's, a unified labor union for Connecticut community college professors and professionals initiated by Lipshires, Bob Vater, and others at MCC, and led by Lipshires as president for over 18 years. The history of the union, from before its official inception in 1973, to its ongoing influence and interests, includes coverage of its various forms, struggles, affiliations, members, leaders, and local and state connections.

These issues are documented in numerous ways within the collection, which includes over fifteen years of the 4C's newsletter, the "Congress Chronicles," other official 4C's print materials, Lipshires' presidential correspondence, and a detailed binder of research on the history and organization of the 4C's put together by Lisa Lipshires. In his self-published text, *Giving Them Hell: How a College Professor Organized and Led a Successful Statewide Union*, Lipshires uses the strength of the 4C's story to illustrate and comment on the larger issues of activism, labor, and leadership that were catalysts for him and so many others. Other writings by Lipshires, especially his unpublished book manuscript, *Tired of Waiting for Lefty?*, demonstrate his critical and creative take on the political, economic, and social issues in the United States later in his life, from the mid-1990s to 2006, and offer glimpses into leftist discourses on American leaders and issues during these times.

The third and final series in this collection, Photographs, consists of photographs of Lipshires and his friends and family, arranged by size, and then in rough chronological order, including photograph albums from the 1995 4C's retirements of Lipshires and Sonia Berke, respectively. Lipshires' personal and professional lives, including many photographs with his children, at work at MCC, and 4C's events, are well documented. Several family photographs, including ones of David Lipshires' stores, are included. Some of the most striking shots concern Lipshires' involvement with the military and his connections with the Communist Party in New England.

## Series descriptions

### Series 1. Personal, Professional and Family Materials

1932-2012

This series contains a number of biographical materials of Sidney Lipshires', including certificates, correspondence, personal items, newspaper clippings and legal, professional, financial, and military records. While much of the correspondence are short holiday and travel cards, there are some items offering more depth, especially a 1945 letter from the French workers Lipshires oversaw during World War II as a member of the United States Army. His compassion and ability to forge deep connections with others are evidenced in this letter, and in records throughout this series and collection. The obituaries, condolences, and memorial materials offer not only more biographical information and notes on Lipshires' lifelong passions and commitments to equality, education, labor politics, and activism, but also reveal him as a man deeply respected and enjoyed by others. Lipshires as a friend, teacher, and captivating speaker is revealed in a touching memorial speech of his for friend and colleague Art Guinness, and even in his charming standup comedy act, performed at the age of 78. His life-long identification with Jewish culture and stories is also evidenced in these materials.

The small amount of materials representing Lipshires' professional life as a professor at Manchester Community College (MCC) also convey his love for teaching and public speaking. Official college print material and personal correspondence concerning his formal lectures given at the college, along with a draft of his retirement speech, suggest the importance of the school and his career for Lipshires, and offer limited insights into the MCC environment and community at the time. While Lipshires' academic interests in modern European intellectual and social history are made obvious in the MCC materials, they are detailed in Lipshires' earlier academic work, including his doctoral thesis, "Herbert Marcuse - from Marx to Freud and Beyond," which was published by Schenkman Publishing Company in 1974, and in several other articles on these thinkers and their histories, influences, and legacies.

Several family materials are perhaps the highlights of this series. Lipshires was in possession of a large scrapbook and speech draft, "My Shoe Story," of his father's, David Lipshires, which document the beginning and rise of David Lipshires' shoe stores in Northampton, Massachusetts and later in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, covering roughly 1946 to 1956. David Boot Shop sold handbags and dressy footwear for women, while The Bootery carried footwear for men and children, along with practical, low-heeled footwear for women. The history of the stores includes the vital connection to Smith College as an ever-present community of fashion conscious, and fashion forward, women, and also the impact of the Navy WAVE program established in

Northampton. During the war, the Lipshires' stores and staff provided footwear for WAVE officers, and after the war, David Lipshires used lessons learned as well as his new client base to begin a mail order business.

In addition to documenting the impact of these geographical and historical events on women's fashion retail, the scrapbook documents in detail the business and outreach policies of the stores, including an ever-present focus on brands, marketing, and the importance of connections to local community events and social and business groups. Other business policies, such as staff training, industry knowledge, sales, branding, free giveaways, and calculated risks (such as branching out into fashionable women's shoes in larger sizes) are also covered and documented by newspaper clippings and accompanying notes.

Several items concerning Sidney's second wife, Joann Breen Lipshires, are also of note. A touching and courageous 1948 letter written by Joann Lipshires to her father concerns her reasons for being a communist, a point of view and lifestyle with which he did not agree. She states her beliefs with passion and no regrets, but also credits many of her father's convictions as related to her own moral and political compass, attempting to find an equal, or at least empathetic, ground between them from which to foster mutual respect, and familial love. A later letter to Joann Lipshires is from an employer at the time when Sidney Lipshires was arrested under the Smith Act. Her request for bail money for Lipshires is declined, with various political and personal reasons listed. An essay written by Lisa Lipshires, recounts Joann Lipshires' story of survival and travel as she moved alone and "penniless" to Florida in 1951 in order to seek a divorce from her first husband so that she could marry Sidney Lipshires. Lessons about divorce, small town employment, living in poverty, business savvy, and the importance of labor unions are described.

## **Series 2. Activism, Labor, and Leadership**

1932-2011 (*bulk*1947-2006)

This series covers Sidney Lipshires' involvements with activism and labor organization, especially the Communist Party and other leftist political movements, and his eventual role in establishing and leading the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges, a union for college professors and professionals. These political and labor materials were kept in a series together, as they reflect lifelong interests and passions of Lipshires', which should be taken in context together. While Lipshires' beliefs and associations transitioned as he matured and changed settings, he remained a lifelong activist, both in convictions and actions.

The earliest materials, including fliers, broadsides, and newspaper clippings, concern his connection to the Communist Party, covering his 1947 campaign under the Communist Party for city alderman in Ward 4 of Springfield, Massachusetts. Lipshires' platform presents the Communist Party as a people's alternative to the two party system, and demonstrates the Left's urban concerns at the time: affordable housing, rent control, and anti-discrimination legislation. At that point, Lipshires was already under federal investigation, and his FBI file, covering thirty years of investigations, documents the intelligence patterns and concerns of the FBI and Massachusetts citizens during this period, and offers a unique view into Lipshires' various movements, aliases, and connections.

A selection of newspaper clippings and print material covers the arrest, trial, and testimony of Lipshires and others under the Smith Act. The case, prosecution, defense, and seven defendants are introduced and summarized in a pamphlet produced by the Massachusetts Smith Act Defendants' Committee and written by Lipshires. A transcript of Lipshires' testimony at the "Public Hearing before the Special Commission to Study and Investigate Communism and Subversive Activities and Related Matters in the Commonwealth," on September 14, 1955, provides insight into the transactions and tactics of the Bowker Commission, and into Lipshires' character, convictions, and preparation. Lipshires' belief in free expression and thought, and his objections to the coercion of speech, come through, as do some of his early positions concerning the founding fathers of communism, the Korean War, and the political situations in communist Europe and Asia. His thorough advocacy for non-violence is also apparent, despite attempts to indicate the contrary, and while not combative, Lipshires' did not shy away from outright disagreements with the Commission nor from issuing several somewhat lengthy lectures while under oath.

Even amongst these early riches, the gems of the series in relation to the Communist Party of New England are the extremely detailed autobiography and accompanying documents arranged by Lipshires in preparation for his defense under the Smith Act. The autobiography is a lengthy typescript with newspaper clippings and fliers placed within context, and according to Lipshires' preface, the record and the associated documents prove "the peaceful and constitutional methods employed by the Party."

Covering Lipshires' history as an activist, including progressive activities in high school, and his introduction to the Communist Party and American Student Union in college, the majority of the text outlines his activities in western Massachusetts and New England. The period covered includes first his years as a paid full-time Secretary of the Communist Party in western Massachusetts from 1947 through the spring of 1951, and, after a period away from New England and the Communist Party in California, his and Joann Lipshires' later work for the Party under various titles in Rhode Island and New England, including Lipshires' time as Communist Party Boston City Secretary, New England District Organizer and Secretary of the Communist Party of New England. It concludes with Lipshires' Bowker Commission testimony, arrest, and growing disillusionment with communism after the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party in 1956, and his 1957 resignation after the unsatisfactory response of the Communist Party in the United States and New England.

Lipshires offers commentary on his various responsibilities and activities, as well as on the shifting political conditions affecting the Party and its organization, policies, practices, membership, and concerns throughout the years. As a writer, speaker, and leader, Lipshires often served the role of articulating Party policies, commenting upon social and political issues as framed by the Left, and working as an internal reporter on Party organization and effectiveness. Lipshires' connection with various Communist Party affiliates, including Mike Russo, Geoffrey White, Joseph Starobin, Mike Schirmer, Daniel Boone Schirmer, Junius Sides and Armando Penha (whom Lipshires identified as an informer against him) are established.

The autobiography covers the Communist Party's interest in industrial workers and factory unions, noting Lipshires' production of several shop papers, "The Westinghouse Worker" and "Fisk Worker," copies of which appear in the collection and were itemized by Lipshires for his defense. Later involvements with unions and strikes in the packing and textile industries are also covered, as are Communist Party positions on Party history, labor unity, the Geneva Convention, the atomic bomb, African American rights and white chauvinism. These last issues, of race and rights, are discussed both broadly and in connection to specific events, such as educational classes, projects with the western Massachusetts railroad utilities, and the East Union Street School in Springfield. Political reactions to the Democratic and Republican parties, as well as to the Soviet Union Communist Party, especially its Twentieth Congress in 1956, are also covered by Lipshires, both personally and as a Party reporter.

All folders marked "Smith Act defense," contain materials collected by Lipshires in his defense preparation, and represent a large variety of materials and topics. Beyond his autobiography, there are typescripts, typed and handwritten research notes and outlines, class syllabi, and other printed material that cover Lipshires' activities and the Communist Party in New England, as well as Lipshires' research on assumed informants. These materials also include the statistical data Lipshires collected on various trips and for reports, including local election results and environments, lists of unions by industry, name, and employee numbers, and town community records, such as the data collected on the greater New Bedford area, including notes on the NAACP and Young Democrats organizations there.

Later records within this series represent Lipshires' activism after his resignation from the Communist Party, particularly his prominent role in forming and leading the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges, or CCCC or the 4C's. Lipshires narrates the story of the 4C's in his self-published text, *Giving Them Hell: How a College Professor Organized and Led a Successful Statewide Union*. Lipshires devotes a chapter to his personal history, entitled "How Even Smart People Can Be Fooled," revealing his later thoughts on the Communist Party. Other sections of the book cover the importance of his childhood, and the influence of his parents, especially his father, and the Jewish community of Northampton on his ideals and organizational intuition and skills.

The majority of the text covers the 4C's and labor organizing, and Lipshires moves from the first labor action at Manchester Community College (MCC) in 1967, a year after his arrival as a professor, to the creation of a Faculty Senate and the development of the Higher Education Legal Program and Connecticut Higher Education Coalition, which worked to gain leverage and finances for a statewide coalition and political possibilities. Lipshires and faculty colleague Bob Vater were partners in these efforts, and the text offers much insight into the environment and staff community at MCC and other Connecticut higher education schools at the time. Lipshires, Vater, and their colleagues, succeeding in convincing first MCC staff, and then others, that a single labor organization would best unify and serve community college professionals in the state, and the 4C's was eventually established in 1973, with Vater as its first president.

The history of the 4C's, its ratification, its first affiliation with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and later with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees (District 1199) as well as its interests and actions on behalf of its members are covered in Lipshires' book and in a number of other 4C's materials. Over fifteen years of the 4C's newsletter, the "Congress Chronicles," is available, along with a binder on the history of the 4C's accumulated by Lisa Lipshires while assisting Lipshires with the research and writing of *Giving Them Hell*. Other print materials, such as official Congress letters, advertisements, and election, speech, and retirement materials of Lipshires', offer additional insights into the activities, membership, and convictions of the 4C's, and of Lipshires during his eighteen years as 4C's president. Lipshires' roles in larger labor and organizational groups, such as the State Employees' Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC), Connecticut State Employees Association (CSEA), Connecticut State Employee Unions, and the Legislative Electoral Action Program (LEAP) are also documented. Work and friendships with many individuals are covered, including Frederick Lowe, Robert Fenn, Art Guinness, Bob Vater, Sonia Berke, Kay Bergin, and Don Pogue.

In addition to the Communist Party materials, and those on the 4C's union and other groups, Lipshires' lifelong passions for activism and political involvement are evidenced in the series in still other items. His participation as a member of the "Colt 45," a group of activists that held a civil-disobedience sit-in at the Colt Firearms factory in West Hartford, Connecticut in May 1986 to support the strike by the workers' union, is documented in this series. Lipshires' own writing, mostly completed after his retirement from his political and professional careers, demonstrates his shifting and later perspectives on activism, labor, politics, communist practice and theory, and on his own history and beliefs as a young man.

The unpublished book manuscript, *Tired of Waiting for Lefty?*, is in Lipshires' own words a "fundamental critique from a sympathetic point of view of both labor and the Left seeking to answer the question: why did they not achieve their full potential?" It includes "numerous non-utopian suggestions for how they could do it better...and the role of thought in efforts to bring about more social justice." Set up from the beginning as a non-partisan book of advice on bringing more social justice to the United States, Lipshires shares a bit of his personal history, and critiques the political situation and social apathy of the time (c. 2001), the reactions of both labor and the Left to these circumstances, all the while hoping to stir readers to action with his critique and outlined suggestions. Several shorter essays written between 2000 and 2006 reveal Lipshires' often critical and alarmed stance towards the health care, economic, social, and political situations and leaders, particularly Presidents Clinton and George W. Bush, during that time. News headlines or figures are usually clipped or quoted in these articles, revealing coverage of these topics and the inspiration for Lipshires' own commentaries.

### Series 3. Photographs

1943-2000

This series consists of photographs of Sidney Lipshires and his friends and family, arranged into four folders. The first two folders are arranged first by size, and then in rough chronological order, and the second two folders are each complete photograph albums from the 1995 Congress of Connecticut Community College (the 4C's) retirements of Lipshires and Sonia Berke, respectively.

There are many photographs of Lipshires in his personal and professional life, sitting reading, at the beach or hiking with family, or often in a classroom teaching or on the campus of Manchester Community College. Earlier photographs document Lipshires' involvement with the army, including a 1943 shot of the Northampton, Massachusetts inductees waiting for their train to Camp Devens, two army group photographs, including one from Fort Dix, New Jersey, as well as a shot of Lipshires alone in uniform.

Photographs of the Lipshires family cover multiple years, featuring Lipshires and his children when they are young, teenaged, and grown, and also Lipshires later with a grandson. David Lipshires and his shoe stores are documented in several photographs, revealing both the internal makeup of his stores as well as external shots of downtown Northampton, Massachusetts circa 1955. Lipshires and Lisa Lipshires are also shown at a Cooley Dickinson Hospital event honoring David Lipshires after his death in 1981. All of the photographs reveal Lipshires' keen sense of fashion, a trait displayed even in his later years at events and birthday parties in his eighties.

Lipshires' early life as an activist and his time with the Communist Party are also captured, including a striking photograph of Joseph Starobin giving a speech to a group gathered outside in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1950, a photograph of Lipshires with Manny Bloom, the head of the New England Communist Party, and group shot of the Massachusetts Smith Act Defendants in 1957 after winning their case. Lipshires' long career with the 4C's is also documented, often at formal events and parties throughout the years. His retirement from the 4C's in 1995, along with the retirement of his longtime friend and colleague Sonia Berke, offer two full albums of photographs to accompany the material coverage and retirement wishes in Series 2.

## Inventory

Series 1. Personal, Professional and Family Materials

1932-2012

Birthdays: print materials, correspondence

1998, 2003, 2005

Box 1: 1

Certificates: biographical

1943 Feb 18, 2011 Jan 11

Box 1: 2

Certificates: professional

1984, 1986, 1995

Box 7: 1

Correspondence, from: personal cards, letter to advisor Marks, Harry J.

1969-1978, 1994

Box 1: 3

Correspondence, to: personal cards, promotional mail

Box 1: 4

Curriculum vita

ca. 1996

Box 1: 5



Death: obituaries, correspondence, memorial, condolences

2011 Jan-2011 Aug

Box 1: 6

Death: will, legal and financial papers, estate donations and inventories, material on attempted suicide

2006-2010

Box 1: 7

Donation receipts

1994-2005 (*bulk*1997)

Box 1: 8

Edmonds, Zoe: "We are Both Minorities," typescript

1994 Mar 12

Box 1: 9

Evening of Jewish Humor: comedy show video recording, invoice

1997 Oct 26

Box 1: 10

Finances: mortgage, tax forms

2000 Jun

Box 1: 11

Guinness, Arthur: funeral remarks and poem by Lipshires, Sidney, essay by Guinness, Richard

1989 May 17, 1985, 1994 May 8

Box 1: 12

Letter to the Editor: *New York Review of Books*

1968 Oct 24

Box 7: 2

Lipshires, David: speech draft

ca. 1955

Box 1: 13

Lipshires, David: store scrapbook

ca. 1955

Box 6: 1

Lipshires, Joann Breen: academic and employment materials

1948, 1966-1985

Box 1: 14

Lipshires, Joann Breen: birth certificate, military service, copies of newspaper clippings (copies)

1939, 1943-44, 2004

Box 1: 15

Lipshires, Joann Breen: correspondence

ca. 1948, 1956 Jun 6

Box 1: 16

Lipshires, Lisa: correspondence, letters of reference for Lipshires, Sidney's caretakers

2009, 2011

Box 1: 17

Lipshires, Lisa: printed research materials

2006, 2012

Box 1: 18

Lipshires, Lisa: "Survival Story," essay about Lipshires, Joann Breen (copy)

1978 Dec 4

Box 1: 19

Manchester Community College: Lipshires, Sidney formal lectures; print material, correspondence

1989 Nov, 1995 Nov

Box 1: 20

Manchester Community College: Lipshires, Sidney; retirement party speech

1992 Apr 30

Box 1: 21

Manchester Community College: "Live Wire;" coverage of "Lipshires' Last Lecture"

1995 Dec 7

Box 1: 22

Military service: correspondence, letter from French workers, inc. 2011 translation

1945 Feb 10

Box 1: 23

Military service: records

1946 Jan 12, 1994

Box 1: 24

Newspaper clippings: Lipshires family events, obituaries

1937, 1981 Jul, 2004 Dec

Box 1: 25

This folder includes an article about the high school graduation of Lipshires, three articles about David Lipshires, including two obituaries, and three articles concerning the Alberts family and their connection to the Congregation B'nai Israel in Northampton, Massachusetts. Leonard Alberts was Lipshires' uncle. The two were close while growing up, and worked together in the shoe business of David Lipshires, where Leonard was a junior partner.

Personal items: business cards, stationary, contact list, locator book

ca. 2000

Box 1: 26

Personal items: clippings, poems, lists, copies

undated

Box 1: 27

"The Prague Psychoanalytic Study Group"

1991

Box 1: 28

Research material: article on Karl Marx (German), pamphlet "The Irregular Movement of History"

1932, 1957

Box 1: 29

Review of Doctoral thesis, *Canadian Historical Review*

ca. 1973

Box 2: 1

Writing: Doctoral thesis, "Herbert Marcuse - from Marx to Freud and Beyond," draft (copy)

1971

Box 2: 2-4

Writing: "Karl Marx and the Rheinisch Zeitung of 1842-1943," typescript, manuscript, marginalia, research article

1965 May

Box 2: 5

Writing: Karl Marx, untitled article on young Marx, typescript

ca. 1970

Box 2: 6

Writing: "Philosophy and Empiricism: Herbert Marcuse Encounters Behavioral Science," (copy) correspondence

ca. 1972

Box 2: 7

Writing: "Philosophy and Empiricism: Herbert Marcuse Encounters Behavioral Science," copy with marginalia, research articles (copies)

ca. 1972

Box 2: 8

Writing: "Philosophy and Empiricism: Herbert Marcuse Encounters Behavioral Science," bound versions

1972

Box 2: 9

University of Chicago 50th Anniversary Directory

1989 Dec 17

Box 2: 10

Series 2. Activism, Labor, and Leadership

1932-2011 (*bulk*1947-2006)

Board of Trustees of Regional Community Colleges: memorandum, proposals

1978-1979

Box 2: 11

Colt 45 strike: certificate and newspaper clipping

1987 Sep 27

Box 2: 12

Communist Party political campaign: print materials, newspaper clippings

1947 Oct

Box 2: 13

Communist Party political campaign: print materials, newspaper clippings  
1947 Oct  
Box 7: 3  
CCCC: Berke, Sonia; retirement invitation, menu  
1995 Oct 27  
Box 2: 14  
CCCC: "Congress Chronicles"  
1978-1986  
Box 2: 15  
CCCC: "Congress Chronicles"  
1987-1995, 2007  
Box 2: 16  
CCCC: House Debate on Amendment to Restore Funds to the Community College Budget; notes  
1979 Apr 26  
Box 2: 17  
CCCC: Lipshires, Sidney; correspondence (from and to)  
1991  
Box 2: 18  
CCCC: Lipshires, Sidney; re-election campaign  
ca. 1985  
Box 2: 19  
CCCC: Lipshires, Sidney; retirement correspondence, valedictory, menu, tributes  
1995  
Box 3: 1  
CCCC: Lipshires, Sidney; speech typescript with marginalia, note cards  
ca. 1990  
Box 3: 2  
CCCC: Lipshires, Sidney; "Theory of Organization"  
ca. 1981  
Box 3: 3  
CCCC: print materials, advertisements, official letters and updates  
1979-1989  
Box 3: 4  
CCCC: scrapbook (includes copies of Congress Chronicles, 1978-1999)  
1973-1999  
Box 3: 5-7  
CSEA: meeting minutes (copy), flyer with marginalia, Lipshires, Sidney obituary  
2008, 2011  
Box 3: 8  
Connecticut State Employee Unions economic plan proposal  
1991 Feb  
Box 3: 9  
FBI file  
1947 Apr-1977 Nov  
Box 3: 10-11  
FBI file  
1947 Apr-1977 Nov  
Box 4: 1  
LEAP Annual Dinner: programs  
1994 Dec 3  
Box 4: 2  
Massachusetts Commission on Communism: Bowker Commission testimony  
1955 Sep 14  
Box 4: 3  
Smith Act: newspaper clippings, print material  
1955-1957  
Box 4: 4  
Smith Act defense: autobiography  
ca. 1955

Box 4: 5-6

Smith Act defense: Massachusetts Smith Act Defendants' Committee; "The Massachusetts Smith Act Case: the facts...the law...the defendants" pamphlet

1956

Box 4: 7

Smith Act defense: print material, typescripts, notes, research, event program, item label notecards

1947

Box 4: 8

Smith Act defense: shop papers; Westinghouse Worker, Fisk Worker

1934-1950 (*bulk*1949)

Box 4: 9

Smith Act defense: typescripts, marginalia, notes, outlines, research

1946-1956

Box 4: 10

Songbook: "Songs of Struggle"

1932

Box 4: 11

State of Connecticut Investment Advisory Council: monthly meeting binder cover

1992 May 6

Box 4: 12

Writing: *Giving Them Hell*, design copies, invoices

2007 Nov 29

Box 4: 13

Writing: *Giving Them Hell*, promotional material, research

ca. 2007

Box 4: 14

Writing: essay on health care, newspaper clipping copies

2000

Box 4: 15

Writing: essay on economic-social-political situation in U.S.

2004

Box 4: 16

Writing: essay and notes against George W. Bush

2006

Box 4: 17

Writing: *Tired of Waiting for Lefty*, correspondence

2001 Apr 5, 2002 Feb 27

Box 4: 18

Writing: *Tired of Waiting for Lefty*, draft

ca. 2001

Box 4: 19-21

Writing: *Tired of Waiting for Lefty*, later draft (copy)

ca. 2001

Box 4: 22

Writing: *Tired of Waiting for Lefty*, later draft (copy)

ca. 2001

Box 5: 1-2

Series 3. Photographs

1943-2000

Northampton, MA. Inductees waiting for train to Camp Devens. Lipshires back row center

1943

Box 5: 3

Army group photograph. Lipshires third from left, second row from top

ca. 1943

Box 5: 3

Army group photograph. Fort Dix, NJ. Lipshires third from left, top row

ca. 1943

Box 5: 3

Joseph Starobin giving speech in Springfield, MA. Lipshires in foreground

1950 May

Box 5: 3

**Manny Bloom, Secretary of the Communist Party of New England, and Lipshires**

ca. 1950

Box 5: 3

**David Lipshires, center, in one of his shoe stores, with Alcide Dragon and Mrs. Teresa O'Neill**

1955 Mar

Box 5: 3

**Main Street in Northampton, MA, includes sign for David Boot Shop**

ca. 1955

Box 5: 3

**Internal shot in one of David Lipshires' shoe stores**

ca. 1955

Box 5: 3

**Smith Act Defendants, after winning case: Geoffrey Warner White, Daniel Boone Schirmer, Edward Strong, Sidney Lipshires, Michael A. Russo, Anne Burlak Timpson, Otis Archer Hood**

1957

Box 5: 3

**Barney Edmonds, as young man**

ca. 1965

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires in MCC classroom**

ca. 1970

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires in MCC classroom**

ca. 1970

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires on Trinity College campus**

ca. 1970

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires in his living room**

ca. 1970

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires with tree on MCC campus**

ca. 1970

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires, Kay Bergin, and Bob Vater**

ca. 1975

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires and Lisa Lipshires (teenaged)**

ca. 1970

Box 5: 3

**Lisa Lipshires posing on railing, teenaged**

ca. 1970

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires with grandson, Alexander Edmonds, son of Barney Edmonds**

ca. 1970

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires with Ruth Scheer, his long-term girlfriend**

ca. 1985

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires and Ruth Scheer on hike**

ca. 1985

Box 5: 3

**Lisa Lipshires with protest sign, "Fund the contract," standing between two mounted police**

ca. 1990

Box 5: 3

**Lipshires in uniform, posing by bridge**

ca. 1943

Box 5: 4

Lipshires in uniform with baby Ellis Edmonds

ca. 1943

Box 5: 4

Barney and Ellis Edmonds, as children

ca. 1956

Box 5: 4

Lipshires with Ellis Edmonds (child) at beach

1956

Box 5: 4

Lipshires on porch reading

ca. 1980

Box 5: 4

Lipshires sitting and talking

ca. 1980

Box 5: 4

Lipshires outside

ca. 1980

Box 5: 4

New Britain, CT, Lipshires and Joann Lipshires (center, bottom) on porch in group photograph. To right of Joann is her sister, Nancy Grade. Behind Nancy are her children, Mitchell and Casey. The girl holding the cat is Nancy's daughter, Kathy. Behind Lipshires and Joann is Lisa Lipshires

ca. 1980

Box 5: 4

Lisa Lipshires and David Lipshires at family gathering

ca. 1980

Box 5: 4

Lisa Lipshires and David Lipshires at family gathering, with Lipshires in background

ca. 1980

Box 5: 4

Lipshires family gathering. Sidney, Lisa, David, and Minnie Alberts Lipshires are present

ca. 1980

Box 5: 4

Lipshires in board meeting

ca. 1985

Box 5: 4

Lipshires and Lisa Lipshires, at Cooley Dickinson Hospital honoring of David Lipshires

ca. 1982

Box 5: 4

Lipshires and his mother, Minnie Alberts Lipshires

ca. 1982

Box 5: 4

Lipshires giving lecture at MCC

ca. 1995

Box 5: 4

Lipshires performing standup at Gotham City Night Club

1997 Nov 26

Box 5: 4

Lipshires at his eightieth birthday party

1999 Apr

Box 5: 4

Two people at dinner event

1999 May 26

Box 5: 4

Lipshires' friend, Jan Bendall, watching speaker at dinner event

1999 May 26

Box 5: 4

Lipshires at formal event, standing with other man

ca. 2000

Box 5: 4

Barney Edmonds, Sid Lipshires, Ellis Edmonds, at formal event

ca. 2000

Box 5: 4

Lipshires at party, receiving cakes

ca. 2000

Box 5: 4

Andrew DeRocco and Lipshires, in Lipshires' apartment in West Hartford, CT

ca. 2000

Box 5: 4

Lipshires with family and friends on a couch

ca. 2000

Box 5: 4

Lipshires at CCCC Christmas party, in Groucho glasses

ca. 2000

Box 5: 4

Photograph album: Lipshires retirement from CCCC

1995 Oct

Box 5: 5

Photograph album: Berke, Sonia, retirement from CCCC

1995 Oct

Box 5: 6

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## Administrative information

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Acquired from Lisa Lipshires, January 2012.

### Digitized content

Most of the photographs have been digitized and are available for consultation online in Credo.

### Processing Information

Processed by Blake Spitz, 2012.

### Language:

English

### Copyright and Use (More information )

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## Search terms

### Subjects

Communism--United States--History

Communists--Massachusetts

Jews--Massachusetts--Northampton--History

Jews--Political activity--United States--History--20th century

Labor movement--United States--History--20th century

Labor unions--United States--Officials and employees--Biography

### Contributors

Lipshires, Sidney [main entry]

Lipshires, Sidney

Lipshires, Joann B.

Lipshires, David M.

### Genres and formats

Autobiographies

Photographs

Testimonies

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