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Memorial to Wick R. Miller

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Journal

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 19(2)

ISSN

0191-3557

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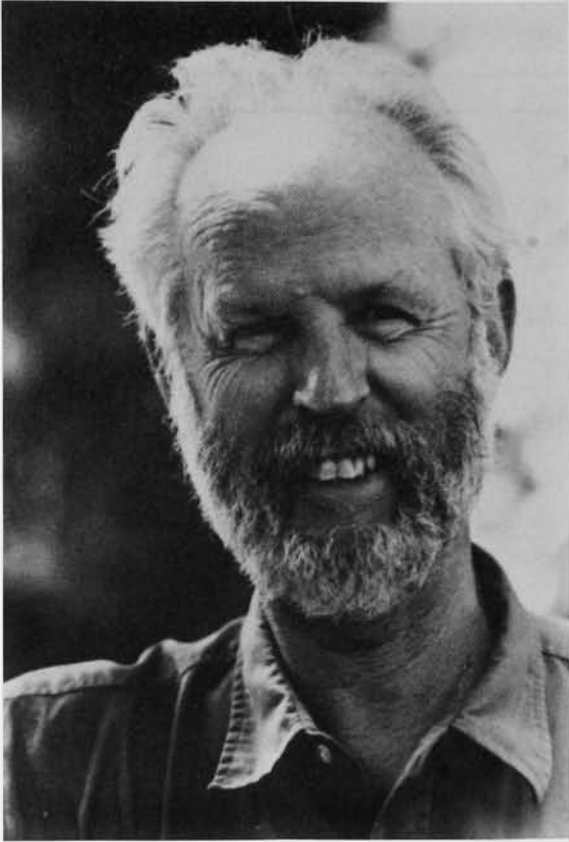
Publication Date

1997-07-01

Peer reviewed

Memorial to Wick R. Miller

(1932 - 1994)



Wick R. Miller, photograph taken ca. 1993.

WICK R. MILLER, widely respected anthropological linguist, pioneer in acquisition studies, and benefactor to our discipline, was gravely injured in a bicycle accident in Hermosillo, Sonora, on Saturday, May 7, 1994. He was flown to a hospital in Phoenix, Arizona, where he died on May 9 at the age of 62. Friends and family gathered to honor his memory in Salt Lake City on Sunday, May 15, 1994.

Wick was born on January 6, 1932, in the small town of San Ysidro, New Mexico, where his father ran a trading post west of Santa Fe, between the Jemez and Zia reservations. His early contacts with native peoples were to have a strong influence on his academic career. In

1953, he received an A.B. degree in Anthropology from the University of New Mexico. He received his doctorate in Linguistics in 1962 from the University of California, Berkeley, as a student of Mary Haas. He joined the faculty of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Utah in 1963, initiating a more than 30-year career there, serving as the Director of the Linguistics Program for eight years and Chairman of the Department of Anthropology for two years. His life and work were a vital and active continuation of the tradition of Franz Boas and Edward Sapir. From the beginning of his career, Wick was known as a gifted and determined analyst, who explained for us immensely complicated aspects of language. His principal field work was with three languages belonging to two language families: Acoma (Keres), and Shoshoni and Guarijfo (both Uto-Aztecan). His publications include reviews, books, and articles on Native American languages, especially linguistics, sociolinguistics, and linguistic acculturation. He also did editorial work in linguistics for the University of Utah Press.

By publishing his own work and encyclopedic reviews of the literature on various topics, Wick greatly facilitated the research of others. A prime example is his Uto-Aztecan lexicon which he carefully updated as more and more material became available. Different stages of this work served as the impetus for subsequent lexical classification papers. His dedication provided us with "state-of-the-art" works on Uto-Aztecan and Numic languages, the "ethnography of speaking," a Shoshoni grammatical sketch, and the Keres language family.

He was instrumental in the founding of, and tirelessly active in nurturing, fora through which his colleagues shared ideas both among themselves and with the discipline at large: the Friends of Uto-Aztecan and the Society for the

Study of Indian Languages of the Americas, for which he was the principal author of the constitution.

Wick felt himself as much an anthropologist as a linguist. This side of his research includes relatively early interest in obsolescing languages, folk tales and historical narratives in Shoshoni, respect speech, taxonomic systems, and lexical borrowing.

He felt a strong debt to his language consultants and their communities, as is amply shown by his constant efforts to repay the debt he felt to them. He served as a consultant to a bilingual education program for the Acoma people and conducted a workshop on Keresan linguistics for native speakers in 1970. Since 1971, he continuously worked in a variety of language and literacy programs among the Shoshoni of Utah, Nevada, and Idaho. Throughout this time, he felt fortunate in having the collaboration of his colleague, Beverly Crum. Their association yielded much literary material in Shoshoni.

Wick enjoyed international standing as a linguist and scholar. The Linguistics Department at the University of Sonora invited him to give lectures to their students and to teach courses there. Former students and university authorities honored his contributions during the *Encuentro Sobre Lingüística en el Noroeste* in 1990. This ongoing conference owes much of its initial impetus to Wick's tireless efforts to foster interest in the Uto-Aztecan languages of northwest Mexico. Wick will be sorely missed by colleagues, friends, and family alike.

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WICK R. MILLER**

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WICK R. MILLER**

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