

**Walter Dyk Collection**  
**1931-1956**  
**Mss.497.3.H998m**

American Philosophical Society  
3/2003  
105 South Fifth Street  
Philadelphia, PA, 19106  
215-440-3400  
[manuscripts@amphilsoc.org](mailto:manuscripts@amphilsoc.org)

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	American Philosophical Society
<b>Creator</b>	Dyk, Walter, 1899-1972
<b>Title</b>	Walter Dyk Collection
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1931-1956
<b>Call number</b>	Mss.497.3.H998m
<b>Extent</b>	0.4 Linear feet
<b>Extent</b>	0.4 linear feet
<b>Location</b>	LH-MV-B-9; LH-MV-E-8
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>The linguist Walter Dyk (1899-1972) began his career as a graduate student under Edward Sapir studying the Wishram language. Following his MA thesis "Verb types in Wishram" (Chicago, 1931) and dissertation "A Grammar of Wishram" (Yale, 1933), Dyk turned to the study of Navajo language and culture, publishing his best known works, "autobiographies" of two of his consultants, Left Handed (1938) and Old Mexican (1948).</p> <p>The Dyk Collection consists of copies of Dyk's MA thesis and dissertation, some fields notes and related publications on Wishram, and commentary by Mary Haas, C. F. Voegelin, and Dell Hymes (who assembled the collection). Among the more interesting items are a particularly long and informative letter from Sapir commenting on Dyk's dissertation, and a series of letters between Pete McGuff and Sapir,</p>

written while the former was doing fieldwork on Wasco at Fort Simcoe, Washington, 1906-1908.

**Preferred Citation**

Cite as: Walter Dyk Collection, American Philosophical Society.

## Background note

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Born in Germany on September 30, 1899, the linguist Walter Dyk emigrated to Gloversville, N.Y., as a young child. After receiving his bachelor's degree at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1928, he pursued graduate work in linguistics under Edward Sapir, receiving his MA at Chicago for "Verb Types in Wishram" (1931) and his dissertation at Yale for "A Grammar of Wishram" (1933).

Following completion of his doctorate, Dyk turned from Chinookan languages to Navajo, doing intensive fieldwork in Arizona in 1934 on a grant from the National Research Council that he had secured with the support of Sapir. His analysis of clan and kinship informed his two most influential works, *Son of Old Man Hat* (New York, 1938), an "autobiographical" narrative written with his consultant Left Handed, and *A Navaho Autobiography* (New York, 1948), concerning Old Mexican. Dyk's *Notes and Illustrations of Navaho Sex Behavior* was similarly influential in its discussion of incest.

Dyk served as a fellow at the Harvard Psychological Clinic and taught at Simmons College and, after 1942, at Brooklyn College. However the progressive effects of Parkinson's disease began increasingly to take effect. Although able to return to Arizona for research in 1947-1948, he was ultimately forced to retire from teaching in 1962. He died in 1972, leaving a wife and two children.

## Scope & content

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The Walter Dyk Collection consists of 9 folders and two notebooks relating to Dyk's dissertation research on Wishram, 1931-1933. It includes copies of his MS thesis (Chicago, 1931) and dissertation (Yale, 1933), as well as papers and notes sent to Dell Hymes in the mid-1950s, when Hymes was working on Wishram-Wasco. Of particular interest are a very long and detailed letter from Edward Sapir commenting on phonology in Dyk's dissertation, which sheds light on Sapir's thinking about linguistics, as well as his mentoring, and a series of letters between Pete McGuff and Sapir, when McGuff was doing fieldwork on Wasco at Fort Simcoe, Washington, in 1906-1908.

## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

American Philosophical Society 3/2003

## Provenance

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### Acquisition Information

Gift of Dell H. Hymes, 1988.

### Processing Information

Catalogued rsc 2003.

## Related Materials

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### Related Material

Additional material by Walter Dyk is located in the [Collection of the American Council of Learned Societies Committee of Native American Languages \(Mss.497.3.B63c\)](#): Wasco (Pn4a.10) and Wishram (Pn4a.5, Pn 4a6, Pn4a10), and there is Dyk correspondence with Gordonm Marsh (x4a.2).

The [Franz Boas Papers \(Mss.B.B61\)](#) contains a small correspondence with Dyk, and Dyk is mentioned in several letters between Boas and Sapir.

## Indexing Terms

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### Genre(s)

- Dissertations.
- Field notes.
- Masters theses

## Personal Name(s)

- Haas, Mary R. , (Mary Rosamond), 1910-1996
- Hymes, Dell H.
- McGuff, Peter
- Sapir, Edward, 1884-1939
- Voegelin, C.F. (Charles Frederick), 1906-1986
- Wolf, J. G.

## Subject(s)

- Indians of North America--Languages
- Wasco language

## Bibliography

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*American Anthropologist* 74 (1976).

Dyk, Walter, *Son Of Old Man Hat*.(Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1938).



## Collection Inventory

Walter Dyk Collection	1931-1956	
<b>Dyk, Walter, 1899-1972</b> A Grammar of Wishram  Dissertation, Yale University, 1933.	1933	TMsS, 157p., Box 1 7p. notes
<b>Dyk, Walter, 1899-1972</b> Stress Accent in Wishram  Two versions of a paper, with TMs comments (1p.) by Dell Hymes, 1955. Published in <i>IJAL</i> 22 (1956): 238-241.	1933	TMsS, 4p. (2 Box 1 copies), 7p.
<b>Dyk, Walter, 1899-1972</b> Theme Verbs  Marginal notes by Edward Sapir.	1933	TMsS, 7p. Box 1
<b>Dyk, Walter, 1899-1972</b> Verb Types in Wishram  MS thesis, University of Chicago, 1931, with accompanying notes by Dell Hymes, ca.1955.	1931	TMsS, 55p., Box 1 4p. notes
<b>Dyk, Walter, 1899-1972</b> Wishram Notes	n.d.	AMsS, 46p. Box 1
<b>Haas, Mary R. , (Mary Rosamond), 1910-1996</b> Wishram notes  Notes taken by Haas on Dyk's talk in Sapir's seminar, Yale, ca.1933-34. Includes Mary Haas ALS to Dell Hymes, n.d., 1p.	ca.1933-1934	AMsS, 74p., Box 1 TMs 6p.

## Walter Dyk Collection

Includes a copy of the Oedipal myth of Diabixwáxwas, "the only record in the Wishram-Wasco language of a major Chinookan myth, recorded in Kathlamet by Boas and in Clackamas by Jacobs, and in English from a Wishram speaker by Edward Curtis' team."

<b>Hymes, Dell H.</b> Sketch of a plan to combine data of Dyk, Frenchy, and Hymes  Dissertation, Yale University, 1933.	ca.1955	TMsS and AMs, 7p.	Box 1
<b>Sapir, Edward, 1884-1939</b> ALS to Walter Dyk  Detailed commentary on Dyk's dissertation, phonology.	1933 Aug. 29	ALS, 42p.	Box 1
<b>McGuff, Peter</b> Correspondence with Edward Sapir  Correspondence regarding McGuff's fieldwork on Wasco at Fort Simcoe, Washington, 1906-1908.	1906-1908	TMsS, 157p., 7p. notes	Box 1
<b>Sapir, Edward, 1884-1939</b> ALS to Pete McGuff	1906 June 13	4p.	Box 1
<b>McGuff, Peter</b> ALS to Edward Sapir	1906 August 17	3p.	Box 1
<b>Sapir, Edward, 1884-1939</b> ALS to Pete McGuff	1907 September 17	3p.	Box 1
<b>Sapir, Edward, 1884-1939</b> ALS to Pete McGuff	1907 December 4	7p.	Box 1
<b>McGuff, Peter</b> ALS to Edward Sapir	1907 December 20	1p.	Box 1
<b>McGuff, Peter</b> ALS to Edward Sapir	[1907 December]	4p.	Box 1
<b>McGuff, Peter</b>	[1907 December]	17p.	Box 1

## Walter Dyk Collection

Wasco-Wishram notes

<b>McGuff, Peter</b> ALS to Edward Sapir	1908 June 15	4p.	Box 1
<b>Sapir, Edward, 1884-1939</b> Wasco notes marginal to Boas'; Chinook vocabulary	[ca.1907-1908]	AMs, 26p.	Box 1
<b>Voegelin, C.F. (Charles Frederick), 1906-1986</b> Abstract of Walter Dyk's Dissertation, A Grammar of Wishram  Prepared "as an aid to Dell Hymes, who was to work with Wasco (i.e. Wishram) at Warm Springs, Oregon that summer, under the supervision of David French."	1951	TMsS, 12p.	Box 1
<b>Wolf, J. G.</b> Wishram dictionary  "Compiled by Dr. J. G. Wolf from E. Sapir's matierlas, edited by E. Sapir."	ca.1955-1956	TMsS, 38p.	Box 1
<b>Dyk, Walter, 1899-1972</b> Wishram fieldnotes	ca.1931-1933	Notebook, 54p.	Volume 1
<b>Dyk, Walter, 1899-1972</b> Wishram fieldnotes	ca.1931-1933	Notebook, 6p., 15p. loose notes	Volume 1