

Valerian Three Irons American Indian Microfiche Collection

Collection Summary

Identifier: MA 104

Title: Valerian Three Irons American Indian Collection

Dates: 1978

Extent: 0.42 linear feet (1 document case), microfiche

Creator: Three Irons, Valerian

Language: English

Repository: South Dakota State University Archives & Special Collections, University Station, Box 2115, 1300 North Campus Drive, Brookings, South Dakota, 57007

Access Note: Open. Materials must be used in-house and do not circulate.

Preferred Citation: Title or description of item, date, MA 104, box number, folder number, Valerian Three Irons American Indian Collection, South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Brookings, South Dakota.

Abstract

Valerian Three Irons is a Native American educator, oral historian, and advocate for Indigenous language preservation. He served as a professor of American Indian Studies and Associate for Diversity at South Dakota State University from 1997 to 2011. He later joined the faculty of Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College in New Town, North Dakota, where he has contributed to Native American Studies and Mandan language revitalization efforts. In 2018, he received a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to develop a publicly accessible archive of Mandan language resources. His work reflects a sustained commitment to Indigenous education, cultural preservation, and community engagement.

The Valerian Three Irons American Indian Collection (Box 1) consists of transcripts from 144 oral history interviews conducted during the 1970s with Native American individuals representing a wide range of tribal affiliations across the United States. The interviews document personal narratives, cultural perspectives, and community experiences, addressing topics such as tribal history, traditions, education, activism, language, and social change. The collection provides a primary source record of Indigenous life and identity during the mid-20th century and offers significant research value through its broad tribal representation and preservation of first-person testimony.

Biography

Valerian Three Irons is a Native American educator, oral historian, and advocate for Indigenous language preservation. He served as a professor of American Indian Studies and Associate for Diversity at South Dakota State University from 1997 to 2011. After leaving SDSU, Three Irons joined the faculty of Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College in New Town, North Dakota, where he has been actively involved in teaching Native American Studies and supporting Mandan language revitalization efforts. In 2018, he received a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to create a publicly accessible archive of Mandan language resources. Throughout his career, he has contributed to tribal education, cultural preservation, and service-learning initiatives.

Scope and Content

The Valerian Three Irons American Indian Collection (Box 1) consists of transcripts from 144 oral history interviews conducted during the 1970s with Native American individuals from a broad range of tribal affiliations across the United States. The interviews document personal narratives, cultural perspectives, and community experiences, capturing voices from tribes including, but not limited to, the Nez Perce, Chippewa, Cherokee, Navajo, Hopi, Choctaw, Sioux, Seminole, Apache, and many others.

This collection serves as a primary source for understanding Native American life, identity, and cultural heritage during the mid-20th century. Conducted during a period of renewed Indigenous activism and cultural assertion, the interviews preserve valuable first-person testimonies on topics such as tribal history, traditions, education, activism, language, and social change. The diversity of tribal representation highlights the complexity and breadth of

Native American experiences and contributes significantly to the historical record of Indigenous communities in the United States.

Access Points

Subjects

- Indians of North America
- Oral history

Names

- Three Irons, Valerian

Genre

- Microfiche
-

Conditions Governing Access

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Container List

| Box | Folder | Description | Date(s) |
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| 1 | 1 | Index | 1978 |
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| 1 | 5 | Wilson, Eugene (Nez Perce) | 1978 |
| 1 | 6 | Wilson, Plesah; Wilson, Cathy; Wilson, Heather (Nez Perce) | 1978 |

| Box | Folder | Description | Date(s) |
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| 1 | 8 | York , Baxter (Choctaw) | 1978 |
| 1 | 9 | Gardner, Jim (Choctaw) | 1978 |
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| 1 | 11 | Kerns, Donald (Cherokee-Sioux) Part 1 | 1978 |
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| 1 | 41 | Chupco, Helen (Seminole-Creek) | 1978 |
| 1 | 42 | Johnson, Herbert (Seminole) | 1978 |
| 1 | 43 | Spinks, Alice (Apache); Spinks, Roy (Klamath) | 1978 |

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| 1 | 100 | Peters, Darlene (Klallum) Part 2 | 1978 |
| 1 | 101 | Folz, John (Klallum) | 1978 |
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| 1 | 104 | Hill, Jackie Wanassay; Hill, Tom; Hill, Tom Jr. (Cowlitz) | 1978 |
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| 1 | 113 | LaClair, Leo (Muckleshoot) | 1978 |
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| 1 | 116 | Walking Bull, Gilbert (Oglala Sioux); Walking Bull, Montana (Cherokee) Part 1 | 1978 |
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| 1 | 119 | Wilson, Terry (Potawatomie) | 1978 |
| 1 | 120 | Reams, Lyle (Pima-Papago-Maricopa) | 1978 |
| 1 | 121 | Arciniega, Florencio (Apache) | 1978 |
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