

# Peter Matthiessen:

## A Preliminary Inventory of an Addition to His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

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### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Matthiessen, Peter, 1927-2014
<b>Title:</b>	Peter Matthiessen Addition to His Papers 1979-1997
<b>Dates:</b>	1979-1997
<b>Extent:</b>	13 boxes (5.46 linear feet)
<b>Abstract:</b>	This addition includes articles on two of Matthiessen's recurring subjects, North American Indians and wildlife, material on his books, <i>Indian Country</i> and <i>Lost Man's River</i> , correspondence, and personal information in the form of articles and interviews.
<b>Access:</b>	Open for research

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### Administrative Information

<b>Acquisition:</b>	Purchase, 2000 (R13525.2)
<b>Processed by:</b>	Suzanne Casey and Liz Murray, 2000
<b>Repository:</b>	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

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## Scope and Contents

This collection of Peter Matthiessen Papers is an addition to a larger accession received in 1995, for which a preliminary inventory is also available. Included are articles on two of Matthiessen's recurring subjects, North American Indians and wildlife, as well as material on two of his books, *Indian Country* and *Lost Man's River*, correspondence, and information about Matthiessen.

The collection is arranged in three Series: Series I. Writings and Research Material, Series II. Correspondence, 1991-1996, and Series III. Personal.

The articles on North American Indians in Series I date from 1979 to 1983. Five articles include drafts and research material, along with the published piece, while the others are represented by solely by the printed article. The theme of these articles is carried forward in Matthiessen's 1984 book *Indian Country* in which he "explores ten important instances where the white man's encroachments upon the sacred grounds of Indian tribes show the tragic effects of a confrontation that is bound to harm both sides." Though the entire manuscript is not present, a portion of the chapter on the Great Basin is included along with extensive research material comprised of articles, theses, documentary reports, Supreme Court and other court rulings, published works, and correspondence. This material complements the drafts, galleys, and reviews for *Indian Country* received in the 1995 accession.

Drafts of Matthiessen's second novel in his Watson trilogy, *Lost Man's River* (1997), complete Series I and brings new book material to his papers. In *Lost Man's River*, Matthiessen "confronts the primal relationship between a dangerous father and his desperate sons and the ways in which his death has shaped their lives." Matthiessen's 1990 novel in this series, *Killing Mister Watson*, is well-represented in numerous drafts in the previous accession.

The small amount of recent correspondence in Series II is of a general nature, with the exception of a file on the Yanomamö genocide which contains documents and letters from Napoleon Chagnon and Stephen Corry. Other correspondents include Ramsey Clark, Jim Harrison, John Irving, James Salter, and Gary Snyder. A small group of fan mail and thank you letters from 1996 is also present.

Series III contains information on Matthiessen in the form of articles and interviews as well as a 1996 draft of his entry in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*.

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## I. Writings and Research Material

Articles by PM on North American Indians, in newspapers and magazines, 1979-1983	<b>Box 1 Folder 1-2</b>
"The Battle for Big Mountain," (Navajo and strip mining in Arizona), <i>Geo</i> , vol. 2, March 1980, drafts, proofs, and tearsheets	<b>Folder 3-9</b>
"How to Kill a Valley," (Cherokees and the Tellico Dam), <i>The New York Review</i> , Feb. 7, 1980, drafts, published article, research material, and correspondence	<b>Folder 10</b>
"How to Kill a Valley," cont'd	<b>Box 2 Folder 1-2</b>
"Journeys to Hopi: National Sacrifice Area," <i>Rocky Mountain Magazine</i> July/Aug. 1979, corrected article and research material	<b>Folder 3-5</b>
"Last Stand at the Western Gate," (Tolakwe or Point Concepcion on west coast of California), <i>The Nation</i> , Aug. 25-Sept. 1, 1979, drafts and article	<b>Folder 6</b>
"The Siege of the Mohawks," (Mohawks of the St. Lawrence River), <i>The Washington Post</i> , "Outlook" section, Sept. 14, 1980, drafts and article	<b>Folder 7-8</b>
"The Siege of the Mohawks," cont'd	<b>Box 3 Folder 1-2</b>
Articles by PM on wildlife, 1996-1997	<b>Folder 3</b>
Eulogies for Joseph M. Fox and Sheridan Lord	<b>Folder 4</b>
<i>Indian Country</i>	
Draft of chapter "Great Basin" [incomplete] with research material	<b>Folder 5-6</b>
Research material and later Indian related materials	<b>Folder 7-8</b>
Research material, cont'd	<b>Box 4-5</b>

Research material, cont'd

**Box 6 Folder 1-2**

*Lost Man's River*

Early draft, late 1994-early 1995

**Folder  
3-7**

Early draft, cont'd

**Box 7 Folder 1**

Penultimate drafts, 1995-1996

**Folder  
2-6**

Penultimate drafts, 1995-1996, cont'd

**Box 8-9**

Penultimate drafts, 1995-1996, cont'd

**Box 10 Folder  
1-2**

Second to "last" drafts, June 26, 1996

**Folder  
3-5**

Second to "last" drafts, June 26, 1996, cont'd

**Box 11  
Folder 1**

Draft excerpts

**Folder 2**

Last drafts, Aug. 1996-winter 1997

**Folder  
3-5**

Last drafts, Aug. 1996-winter 1997, cont'd

**Box 12  
Folder 1-5**

Misc. rejected pages, late 1996-early 1997

**Box 13  
Folder 1-3**

## II. Correspondence, 1991-1996

General, 1993-1996, including Ramsey Clark, Jim Harrison, John Irving, James Salter, Gary Snyder	<b>Box 13</b> <b>Folder</b> 4
Chagnon, Napoleon A. and Stephen Corry regarding the Yanomamö genocide, 1991-1994	<b>Folder</b> 5
Fan mail and thank yous, 1996	<b>Folder 6</b>

### III. Personal

Articles about PM, Patsy Southgate's obit with information about PM, 92nd Street Y program featuring PM for Dec. 15, 1997 event

**Box 13**  
**Folder**  
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Draft of Bill Dowie's entry on PM for the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 1996

**Folder**  
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