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### **The Journal of California Anthropology**

#### **Title**

Langacker: *Review of Non-Distinctive Arguments in Uto-Aztecan*

#### **Permalink**

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#### **Author**

Miller, Wick R

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Peer reviewed

California Indian population, published in 1976 and reviewed in this issue, has more than doubled this figure.

Despite subsequent elaboration on certain of the ideas set forth in the original six essays, taken together they will almost certainly remain as one of the towering landmarks in studies pertaining to California Indians in the Historic Period.



***Review of Non-Distinctive Arguments in Uto-Aztec.*** Ronald Langacker. Berkeley: University of California Publications in Linguistics, Vol. 82. 1976. xiii + 241 pp. \$7.50.

*Reviewed by* WICK R. MILLER  
University of Utah

This is an important contribution to both linguistic theory and Uto-Aztec linguistics.

Langacker is concerned with the historical development of four kinds of sentences: passives, impersonals, reflexives (including reciprocals), and unspecified arguments. These sentence types are semantically related, and in many languages, including most of the Uto-Aztec languages, they are also syntactically related. Using the theoretical framework of generative semantics, along with insight, imagination, and lots of data, he offers suggestions for their source and historical development. One can always quibble with some of the details, but I find myself in agreement with his basic arguments and proposals.

Langacker combed the literature, both published and unpublished, for this study. Twenty Uto-Aztec languages are treated. This was a herculean task, particularly when

one considers the varied nature and quality of the source material. After having pulled all this material together, Langacker is in an excellent position to do historical grammar in a number of areas, and he promises us that this work is just the first in a series. If the following contributions are of this high quality, Uto-Aztec studies will indeed be in a fortunate and enviable position.

An extremely valuable byproduct of this study is an extensive bibliography. If any published items of linguistic importance are missing, I have not found them. Additionally, many unpublished items and published works that are of secondary linguistic importance are listed. The bibliography is not limited to items cited in this monograph, nor to the twenty languages used in this study. The bibliography is especially useful because it is arranged by language and language branch. It will be valued by all of us who work in the Uto-Aztec field.



***Ishi in Two Worlds: A Biography of the Last Wild Indian in North America.*** Theodora Kroeber. Deluxe, Illustrated Edition. Berkeley: University of California Press. 259 pp. \$14.95 (cloth).

*Reviewed by* A.B. ELSASSER  
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Attempts to account for the popularity of books or exhibits about Ishi may lead anyone into the region of deep psychological speculation. Surely there is something extraordinarily compelling about Theodora Kroeber's elegant prose concerning this apparently simple-living