

# Guide to the John Willis Photographs of Arizona, Connecticut, New Mexico, and South Dakota

WA Photos Folio 155



Matthew Daniel Mason

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P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** WA Photos Folio 155

**CREATOR:** Willis, John, 1957- , photographer

**TITLE:** Photographs of Arizona, Connecticut, New Mexico, and South Dakota

**DATES:** 2010-2011

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 5 linear feet (3 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** Inscriptions in English.

**SUMMARY:** Inkjet prints of photographs by John Willis that document sites, events, and persons in Arizona, Connecticut, New Mexico, and South Dakota in 2010-2011.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.waphotosfolio155>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.waphotosfolio155>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from John Willis on the Walter McClintock Memorial Fund, 2012.

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### Conditions Governing Use

This collection is open for research.

## Preferred Citation

John Willis, Photographs of Arizona, Connecticut, New Mexico, and South Dakota. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

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## John Willis (born 1957)

John Willis is a documentary photographer and instructor of photography at Marlboro College in Marlboro, Vermont. His monographs include *Recycled Realities*, co-authored with Tom Young (Center for American Places, 2002) and *Views from the Reservation* (Center for American Places, 2010). Willis has photographs in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, among others. He is also a co-founder with Bill Ledger of the In-Sight Photography Project, a photography outreach project to youth in Brattleboro, Vermont.

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## Content Description

Inkjet prints of photographs by John Willis that document sites, events, and persons in Arizona, Connecticut, New Mexico, and South Dakota in 2010-2011.

Photographs of Arizona include views of Canyon de Chelly and Winslow as well as communities at Navajo Nation including Chinle, Kayenta, and Tuba City, as well as discrete groups of images in Window Rock of the Navajo Military Graveyard and "wheatpaste" photographic poster murals by physician photographer James Edward Thomas, also known as Chip Thomas or "jetsonorama." Other images include views of the Navajo Generating Station, a coal-fired power plant located near Page.

A single view in Connecticut documents a billboard near Waterbury.

Photographs of New Mexico include views of El Santuario de Chimayó in Chimayo, Edgewood, El Morro National Monument, Penitentiary of New Mexico, Silver City, Truth or Consequences, and Zuni Indian Reservation.

Photographs of South Dakota document sites at Interior as well as documenting the town's Interior Frontier Days, a rodeo held on Independence Day weekend.

The inkjet prints in this series measure 28.8 x 43.2 centimeters on paper of various sizes approximately 33 x 48 centimeters.

Signed by photographer and manuscript titles on verso of most prints.

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## Arrangement

Organized into three series: I. Arizona, 2010-2011, II. New Mexico, 2011, III. South Dakota, 2011.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Arizona, 2010–2011

Series I is organized into six subseries: Canyon de Chelly, Chinle, Navajo Indian Reservation, Navajo Generating Station, Navajo Veterans' Cemetery, and Winslow.

Canyon de Chelly		
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 1-4	Untitled <i>4 inkjet prints</i>	2011
Chinle		
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 5	<i>Navajo Reservation</i>	2011
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 6	Untitled	2011
Navajo Indian Reservation		
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 7-13	<i>Navajo Elder, Bird Springs Housing</i> <i>7 inkjet prints</i>  Portraits made at a senior center in Tsidi To'ii (known as Blue Springs before 2012), which is a Chapter, a semi-self autonomous local government, in the Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico & Utah.	2010
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 14	<i>Empty Phone Booth</i>	2011
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 15	<i>Graffiti on Water Tower</i>	2011
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 16-20	<i>Jetsonorama, Navajo Graffiti Artist</i> <i>5 inkjet prints</i>	2011
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 21	<i>Jetsonorama, Navajo Graffiti Artist's Work on Site</i>	2011
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 22	<i>Little Miss and Mr. Singer, Little Singer Community School</i>	2010
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 23	<i>Navajo Housing</i>	2011
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 24	<i>Navajo Tree Garden</i>	2011
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 25	<i>Roadside</i>	2011
Navajo Generating Station		
Navajo Generating Station is a coal-fired powerplant located on the Navajo Nation, near Page, Arizona.		
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 26-27	Untitled <i>2 inkjet prints</i>	2011

## Navajo Veterans' Cemetery

Chiefly Detail views of weathered United States flags at Navajo Veterans' Cemetery at Window Rock, Arizona.

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 28	<i>Navajo Veteran's Flag #1</i>	2011
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 29	<i>Navajo Veteran's Flag #2</i>	2011
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 30	<i>Navajo Veteran's Flag #3, Navajo Military Graveyard</i>	2011
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 31	<i>Veteran's Graveyard</i>	2011
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## Winslow

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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 32-33	<i>Site of Pueblo Ruins 2 inkjet prints</i>	2011
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## Series II: Connecticut

Waterbury

b. 2 (Oversize), f.  
34

*After You Die*

2011

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**Series III: New Mexico, 2011**

Series III is organized into eight subseries: Chimayo, Edgewood, El Morro National Monument, Penitentiary of New Mexico, Silver City, Truth or Consequences, Zuni Indian Reservation, and Unidentified Sites.

Chimayo		
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 35-36	<i>El Santuario de Chimayó</i> 2 inkjet prints Willis identifies the locality as Esperanza, New Mexico.	2011
Edgewood		
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 37	Untitled	2011
El Morro National Monument		
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 38	<i>The Wall Petroglyphs from Pueblo People and Carvings from Spanish Explorers</i> Detail of carved inscriptions on El Morro, a sandstone promontory also known as A'ts'ina (Zuni for "place of writings on the rock") and Inscription Rock.	2011
New Mexico State Penitentiary		
The New Mexico State Penitentiary is a men's maximum-security prison located in unincorporated Santa Fe County. In 1980, Cell Block 4 of the prison was the scene of one of the most violent prison riots in the correctional history of the United States. This section of the prison was closed in 1998 and is now referred to as the "Old Main."		
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 39	<i>Cell</i>	2010
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 40	<i>Site of 1980 Riot</i>	2011
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 41-43	Untitled 3 inkjet prints	2010
Silver City		
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 44	<i>Glad Tidings Church</i>	2011
Truth or Consequences		
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 45	<i>Even on the Right Track</i>	2010
Zuni Indian Reservation		
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 46	<i>Road to Zuni Reservation</i>	2011
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 47-49	Untitled 3 inkjet prints	2010



## Unidentified Sites

b. 3 (Oversize), f. 50	<i>Biking Sign</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 51	<i>Power Plant</i>	2010
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 52	<i>Roadside Altar</i>	2010
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 53	<i>Roadside Altar by the Rio Grande</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 54	<i>Under the Highway</i>	2010

**Series IV: South Dakota, 2011**

Series IV is organized into two subseries: Interior and Interior Frontier Days.

Interior		
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 55	<i>Annie, Budget Hotel Pool</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 56	<i>Cowboy Corner</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 57	<i>Gas Station</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 58	<i>Interior Business District</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 59	<i>Interior City Jail</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 60	<i>Largest House in Interior</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 61	<i>Looming Storm</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 62	<i>Motel Owner</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 63	<i>Tourist Sleeping, Interior Church</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 64	<i>Welcome Sign</i>	2011
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 65-71	Untitled <i>7 inkjet prints</i>	2011
Interior Frontier Days		
Rodeo held on Independence Day weekend at the Interior Frontier Days Rodeo Grounds in Interior, South Dakota. Identified by Willis as "Freedom Days, 4th of July Rodeo."		
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 72	<i>Learning the Rules</i>	2011 July
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 73	<i>Reservation Border Town</i>	2011 July
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 74-75	Untitled <i>2 inkjet prints</i>	2011 July

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### Subjects

Fourth of July -- South Dakota -- Interior -- Pictorial works  
Indians of North America -- Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico & Utah -- Pictorial works  
Indians of North America -- Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico & Utah -- Portraits  
Navajo Indians -- Pictorial works  
Rodeos -- South Dakota -- Interior -- Pictorial works

### Acquired From

John Willis, bookseller

### Geographic Names

Arizona -- Pictorial works  
Chelly, Canyon de (Ariz.) -- Pictorial works  
Chimayo (N.M.) -- Pictorial works  
Chinle (Ariz.) -- Pictorial works  
Connecticut -- Pictorial works  
Edgewood (N.M.) -- Pictorial works  
El Morro National Monument (N.M.) -- Pictorial works  
Interior (S.D.) -- Pictorial works  
Navajo Indian Reservation -- Pictorial works  
Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico & Utah -- Pictorial works  
New Mexico -- Pictorial works  
Silver City (N.M.) -- Pictorial works  
South Dakota -- Pictorial works  
Truth or Consequences (N.M.) -- Pictorial works  
Waterbury (Conn.) -- Pictorial works  
Window Rock (Ariz.) -- Pictorial works  
Winslow (Ariz.) -- Pictorial works  
Zuni Indian Reservation (N.M.) -- Pictorial works

### Genres / Formats

Inkjet prints  
Photographs

### Names

Thomas, James Edward, 1957-