

on obtaining oral testimony in four major areas. The first consists in documenting the great changes which have taken place in Indian life and culture since the end of the reservation period. Indian history of the recent period has been almost completely ignored in the tribal histories thus far written, yet the twentieth century is a period for which vital information can yet be obtained from persons who have themselves witnessed these changes. The second area lies in recovering as much information on the traditional, or pre-reservation, way of life as is still possible. Though anthropologists have worked with a few Oklahoma tribes since the late nineteenth century, there is still valuable material to be collected, though much is already gone, and much more will be lost forever when the present older generation has passed away. Third, the Project has aimed at obtaining information on certain phases of contemporary Indian life and culture, for knowledge of the present is necessary if change is to be understood. Furthermore, many traditional behavior patterns and ways of thought still persist, and these will help a great deal in adding to our knowledge of the past. Finally, the fourth area is that of obtaining information on Indian beliefs about the past, the conception of time in a particular Indian culture, the traditional ways of preserving records of past events, and the nature and function of oral tradition in a particular cultural setting.

Of course it has not been possible to explore in detail all of these areas with informants from every tribe represented in the Duke Collection. The materials in the collection are but selected examples of what could be given. However all research is based on samplings, rather than total universes. Historians often must generalize about whole societies from