

personnel, after much experience in obtaining oral testimony from many different Indian informants, is that the persons who have contributed to this Project have done so truthfully, with a high degree of accuracy in reporting, and an honest desire to add to the understanding of Indian history. The background material furnished by field workers, described above, should help researchers in evaluating the informant and his testimony.

The materials in the Duke Indian Oral History Collection will, it is felt, be valuable for a number of research purposes, including the following three levels of historical approach: (1) historiography, or the integration of historical facts and events into coherent narrative form; (2) social history or culture history where the focus is upon institutions or culture traits and the ultimate objective is to generalize about processes of change; (3) the study of folk history, or the beliefs which Indian people hold about their past, and the study of the function of these beliefs in a given cultural setting.

The strong point of any oral history material is that it is the product of the persons who have participated in or witnessed the particular historical events under study, and thus reflects the thoughts and feelings of the actors themselves. It is the insiders' point of view, and, as such, may contain statements of motives, attitudes, beliefs and values which should make understandable much behavior which otherwise seems inscrutable. As the demand for a new kind of Indian history grows, it is anticipated that many researchers will turn their attention to this new collection of materials on Indian history. Already many people have used the collection in spite of the difficulties attendant upon working