The following index lists the major topics in the audio recording and the approximate point when they occur in the recording according to an analog cassette recorder’s tape counter. This tape counter index (TCI) has not been edited for accuracy by Archives and Special Collections.
Introduction to the radio program.

Bevis recaps what he talked about in his first lecture. He talks about how American's have always looked east to the seat of their culture. It used to be Europe and now it is the Eastern part of the US. Bevis restates that Western culture is not inferior to Eastern culture because culture is not materialistic, it is a state of mind.

In this program Bevis states that we are more interested to see Garcia's book as a piece of history. He introduces Ed Gallagher and K. Ross Toole who are here to discuss the book as a work of history. Bevis starts by asking Ed Gallagher whether the book is true or not. Gallagher says that the book is definitely true, although a few things were lost because of the great span between when the events occurred and when they were written about. Toole says that it is a good resource but cautions about reminiscences like this because the human mind is fallible and it has been a long time in between the events and writing about them.

Toole talks about getting confused about what you know to have happened in an incident and what you read had happened about it some time later. They talk about an incident in Garcia's book that is missing. It concerns a startling event with the Nez Perce Indians and which Garcia's wife had been at. So big events like this that are missing from books are the sorts of things that one must watch for in reminiscences like this book.

Ed Gallagher brings up a problem that he has run across with one of the photos in the book. He talks about the picture and that it seems to have been taken 15 years after the events in the book happened and Garcia's wife is in one of the pictures. Ross Toole talks about another photo in the book that puzzles him. Bevis talks about the three photos and asks whether this is another part of the book that is not truly as it happened.

Bevis says that the book as a whole does have a few things misleading about it. He says that if he had read the book without knowing anything about Montana in the 1870s he would have thought Montana to still be a very wild country. There is no clue in the book about the Indians already being on reservations. Bevis quotes a passage from Garcia's book. Bevis asks Toole
whether this book gives a false picture about some of the events that happened in Montana's history. Toole says that it doesn't falsely represent Montana because although it is true that booming towns like Butte and Missoula did exist, if you were to travel as little as 10 miles away you would be in wilderness.

351-400 Toole reminds everyone that at the time the book is set, the Custer defeat had been only one year old. Toole also notes that the reservations were not like they are today. The Indians were still nomadic in those days. Toole does say that you would get a distorted view of Montana if its the only book you read because Garcia wrote about one very small area of Montana away from most of the action.

401-450 Toole notes that the part in the book about the buffalo hunters is still true because the buffalo were still around and it wasn't until 1883 until the railroad came in and the buffalo fast went out. Gallagher agrees that the book is quite a good representation of one small area in Montana's history.

451-500 Toole continues to talk about Garcia's candidness. He remembered those days of his life that he felt the most important to him. They talk about Garcia's life after the period of time that the book encompasses. Garcia felt that after the experience of being an Indian trader, his life went downhill.

501-550 Toole goes on to say that Garcia's book was done to show the high points of his life because of his dislike for the rest of his life. Toole comments that he is very surprised that Garcia did such a book because no one, no matter how literarily inclined, would normally take on such a task.

551-600 Bevis talks about the picture of Garcia, taken in 1930, in what Bevis describes as "Mountain Man garb". Toole and Gallagher surprise Bevis when they tell him that the outfit that Garcia is wearing is from the 1930s because the woolly chaps and the saddle were products of the "Tom Mix syndrome", no one actually wore those type of cloths during the 1800s. They talk about the white angora chaps, which really aren't very practical.

601-650 Bevis talks about the historians love to discuss the uncouth and savage nature that some writers portray in their books. Bevis comments that Garcia really wasn't much of a trader and trapper but there are very few accounts written down by trappers of their lifestyle. He asks Gallagher to how he views Garcia as a representational character.

651-700 Gallagher doesn't think that Garcia is typical at all
of the mountain man. Gallagher comments that Garcia was well educated because he makes reference to Horatio and Napoleon and to Hannibal crossing the Alps. He says that Garcia is obviously a very sensitive man because every person he meets up with seems to be ruthless. So Garcia certainly isn't the typical rough, ruthless, trapper that everyone thinks about.

Toole talks about one of the men that Garcia travelled with. The guy was hung in Wyoming in 1881 and Garcia doesn't mention this. Toole wants to make the point that the guy after being hanged, was skinned and made into a doctors bag, two razor straps and two pairs of women's shoes. If you don't believe it go to the Rollins Museum in Rollins, Wyoming where they are today.

Toole talks about Garcia meeting this man in the Musslesshell and not really knowing how dangerous the guy was. So this also leads credence to the book. Toole doesn't think that Garcia is typical either. He says that all of the mountain men did tend to exhibit some sort of roughness about them, possibly because if they didn't have it they wouldn't survive but Garcia didn't have this quality.

Bevis raises the question of whether we might find other traders leaving a more sensitive view of their life if they were to have written about it. Toole gives a couple of examples, Granville Stuart and James Fergus, both of whom expressed great sensitivity in their writings.

Toole agrees that there were other sensitive traders out here but he was thinking more of the 1820s and 1830s when he thinks that the men were more rugged. Toole continues to talk about the differences of the people from the 1830s and then from Garcia's time of the late 1870s. Bevis talks about reading some of the first person accounts of traders from the 1830s and he has never seen any of the macho brutality that one would think would be exposed.

[END OF SIDE A]

[SIDE B]

Toole cautions about them generalizing because it certainly isn't true that everyone from the 1830s was brutal. Toole notes that if the person wrote it, it is likely that there is a sensitivity there. Toole doesn't think that the people were really evil but they also didn't go around "spreading sunlight".

Gallagher talks about the squaws. Most people forget
about them but he notes that they were very important and that they all had feelings. He gives an example from one of C. M. Russell's writings that squaws would walk away from camp and never return because they had been pledged to marry a man and they didn't want to. However, you never seem to hear much about these things.

101-150 Bevis asks Toole whether he would use Garcia's book in a course or not. Toole says that he would use it but the major reason he doesn't use it is because he doesn't have enough time. Toole objects to people questioning whether something is history or not. He doesn't like the idea of history being something that has to be proven and have the documents at hand to show it. Toole feels that a novelist can contribute very much to history because historians can only deal with what they know and not what is inside the head of trappers, traders etc..

151-200 Bevis and Toole continue to talk about what is history in a book and what is not. Toole again objects to the statement by some people that there is no historical validity in any other work except for documented history. Bevis asks Gallagher what he likes about the book. Gallagher likes the fact that Garcia was actually there and wrote the book on the basis of a first hand experience.

201-290 They talk about Stein and his editing of the book. Gallagher thinks that Stein did an excellent job because he had to go through the manuscript, which wasn't in very good order, and make something readable out of it. They give Bevis a couple of questions to ask Ben Stein when he is interviewed in one of the later programs. Bevis thanks Toole and Gallagher for being on the show.

291-350 Bevis wishes to point out what the difference is for a novel to be a document in history and an interest in a novel as a novel. Bevis reads a passage from Garcia's book illustrating his point of the different ways you would think about the passage whether considering it as a novel or as a historical document.

351-410 Bevis says that when a historian reads a passage he wants to know how typical it is of a time and place. The interest, for a historian, in Garcia would be as a representative of his particular culture but as readers we would be more interested in how Garcia's character is formed. Readers seek to know character and what motivates it to a behavioral pattern. Bevis runs out of time and signs off.

[END OF TAPE]