

Careers *for* Students of History

Why history? History illuminates the human condition. As a field of study, history provides the context with which to define one's relationship with the world, a structure within which to study other disciplines. In portraying continuity and change, history offers a basis for understanding one's culture, one's community, and one's self. Without historical perspective, learning is incomplete.

While knowledge of the past provides a foundation for careers in any field, students would be advised to undertake the study of history for its own sake, not simply to acquire a vocational tool. Nor should the value of skills be distorted. History is a substantive discipline; while analytic skills are required for balanced reflection, past experience cannot be put to use without knowledge of details on which to reflect.

Why history at work? The study of history prepares a student for the dynamics of business, government, or nonprofit careers. Historical scholarship trains the mind to think on many levels, to deal with partial evidence and with ambiguity. Historical knowledge provides details of past experience with which to test the feasibility of new solutions. It enhances the ability to recognize patterns in voluminous data; it supports valid comparisons and connections.

Managing any organization requires the establishment of objectives, directing their accomplishment, then measuring the results. Objectives cannot be set without reference to past experience; measurement cannot be accurate without objective review of past events. Thus organizations depend upon memory and minds trained to relate past experience with present needs.

History practiced, history applied: In considering your career, one of the first decisions to make is whether you wish to practice history directly, or whether you wish to apply the knowledge and skills you have learned in the study of history to any one of many fields.

Distinctions between such choices are highly personal: you might gain more career satisfaction from, say, being a feature writer for an international affairs monthly than from teaching high school history — or the reverse. Thoughtful reflection on your career goals is mandatory at this stage. Study the range of opportunities suggested by the chart. Do not consider them all-inclusive; your imagination, your qualifications and your abilities may well set new agendas.

Several key decisions will be required once you have set a tentative goal. Examine the positions outlined on the following pages. Your choice can lead to a career. Further education may well be required at either master's or doctorate level, as may professional accreditation. Representative position titles and duties are outlined in this chart. As requirements for similarly titled positions both vary and shift rapidly, you must research potential choices with care.

Value history — in your professional, civic, and personal life!

The mission of the Serenus Press is to promote the study and use of history and the liberal arts, demonstrating their application in nonacademic settings. We also encourage employers in all sectors of the economy to provide insight on how to strengthen education that connects good scholarship with professional success. To this end we publish Road Map Publications, freely downloadable material for educational distribution.

Serenus publications have many applications. They help students choose a college major, reinforce reasons for diligent study, and provide concrete career options. They also aid college administrators in recruiting high school students, and show parents as well as teachers the value of their children's liberal arts education. To date, our material has been used in nearly half the colleges throughout the United States, as well as numerous schools, historical associations, and libraries.

While many of our publications deal with history, we believe that history — rigorous history — can not be written, studied, or applied, without due regard to other core subjects: English, science, mathematics, and geography. Nor can mastery be achieved of English, science, mathematics, or geography without an attentive focus on history.

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OPPORTUNITIES

Practicing History: Here is where history is taught, written, recorded, filmed, preserved, interpreted and reenacted.

A teaching career may be at a public, private, or parochial school, at a community college, a four-year college, or a university. Teaching history also takes place in less formal settings in museums, historical organizations, and government agencies.

Researching, writing, editing, and recording history will probably be part of an academic career, especially at college level, but it also can be part of a public history career as an editor or publisher of historic documents, a consultant producing multimedia histories, or providing litigation support and expert testimonies.

Historic preservation and cultural resource management careers are possible in many private, nonprofit, and public entities. They range from hands-on restoring of artifacts to state and national planning roles.

Interpreting and reenacting history may typically be practiced in a museum, an historical society or in a public agency such as the Interior Department. Archival, manuscript, and records management careers may also be found at these institutions.

Administering historical organizations, museums, or agencies is a specialty that offers opportunity in all economic sectors.

To prepare for such careers, an advanced degree will be needed, undoubtedly an MA, very possibly a PhD. For specifics see your faculty and/or career advisor.

~ Teacher ~

History teacher. Develops curriculum, lesson plans, and classroom materials; prepares, gives, and grades examinations; counsels students.

Primary/secondary schools. Teaches history and other social studies classes. Participates in parent conferences; supervises study hall; coaches athletics and advises clubs; tutors students.

College/university. Teaches history and interdisciplinary history-related programs. Participates in academic administration. Conducts research, writes, and publishes. Consults and tutors students.

For details on teaching requirements and duties, see individual institution in question, school boards, and/or state Departments of Education.

~ Historian/Public Historian ~

Historian (corporate). Researches, documents, preserves, analyzes, and publicizes the history of a corporation, including its antecedents, subsidiaries, affiliates, and stakeholders. Performs oral interviews of employees and retirees. Produces book-length corporate history and on-demand material for public relations, newsletters, annual reports. Establishes, services, and assures the integrity of the corporate archives. Serves as communications center for scholars and the public.

Historian (government entity). Appraises, arranges, and describes source material. Preserves and rehabilitates unit records, assuring compliance with retention and preservation regulations. Prepares scholarly works on institutional and policy history for publication, making certain inclusion of comprehensive legislative history. Assists in preparation of archival exhibits and museum displays. Prepares electronic finding aids and services Web site. Answers inquiries from federal agencies as well as the general public. See also "Public Sector" below.

Historian (freelance). Conceives of topics, researches, interviews, organizes, and writes history for print and electronic media, as well as TV, films, and radio.

~ Consulting/Public Historian ~

Archives and records management. Assesses, appraises, inventories, arranges, describes, and archives records. Manages and services collections; develops retention, handling, and disposition schedules. Provides security, accessibility, control, and finding aids.

Business research. Provides economic, political, and social research to businesses. Offers analytic services such as the assessment of events over time, causal relationships, analysis of historical accounts, and verification of stated facts. Advises on the use of business records and archives to derive positive commercial results.

Cultural resource management. Identifies, researches, and evaluates historic resources; assists in preparation of environmental impact reports. Nominates resources for legal protection. Offers specialized services for museum administration, historic site interpretation, history of buildings, landscape history.

Historical research/writing/editing. Writes, edits, indexes, and produces a variety of historical works. Provides historical research, interviewing and oral history services for biographical, genealogical, and family history projects. Supervises pre-publication of printed works as well as content for electronic media.

Historical interpretation services. Produces materials to support the interpretation of historical sites and artifacts. Trains and monitors interpreters, guides, and docents.

Legal and litigation research. Researches, analyzes, and documents evidence. Provides litigation support, preparation of legal briefs, as well as services for interviewing and transcription.

Media production. Researches and produces documentaries, dramatic films, and educational programs based on historical events. Checks references and details for historical accuracy. Recruits historians for interviews. Advises on choice of costumes, scenery, props, locations, casting, dialect, as well as accuracy of content.

Museum services. Provides research and curatorial services for exhibit preparation and production. Repairs and provides preventive care for collections.

Preservation/land use. Researches, surveys, evaluates, and proposes potential sites for nomination to review boards such as the National Register of Historic Places. Prepares briefs for zoning boards, guidelines for local architectural design standards, as well as advice for public celebrations. Publicizes preservation issues, laws, and tax incentives.

Services to history associations. Provides management and administrative support such as marketing, public relations, finance, legal, and personnel services.

Other historical services. Let your imagination—supported by rigorous market surveys—guide you to new offerings of historical services.

~ Public History Administration ~

Director/program manager. Executive positions generally require PhDs, as well as managerial experience. Duties include management and administration of organizations, assessing and servicing the needs of constituent members, new program development, supervision of financial control, budgeting, public outreach, legislative lobbying, fundraising. Reports to Board of Directors.

Administrative support. In addition to understanding the value of history, association administrative positions require skills and knowledge in business-oriented areas such as:

- **Finance**
- **Marketing**
- **External Relations**
- **Information Resource Management**
- **Human Resource Management**
- **Legal**

Managing the activities of historians — historical associations and societies, historical consultancies, preservationists, archivists, museum specialists, librarians, and all others who further the study and use of history — offers a wide range of career opportunities for history graduates.

Public policy research associate. Gathers data both supporting and opposing current issues. Analyzes the development of issues over time, determining statistical significance and trends. Prepares timely reports on cause and effect of pending legislation. Coordinates interdisciplinary studies employing historical perspective.

Research analyst. Conducts research of concepts, products, and services. Collects, compiles, edits, analyzes, and tracks survey data to identify characteristics and trends. Monitors data quality; compiles, illustrates, and proofreads reports. Draws up and presents conclusions and recommendations.

Careers devoted specifically to research generally require advanced degrees and established expertise. But note that the process of research is an essential component of every job cited on this chart.

~ Research ~

Historic Preservation

Historic preservation environmental specialist. Gathers data, analyzes, and monitors environmental preservation issues. Reviews compliance grant applications; assures and implements compliance with federal environmental laws. Trains personnel and provides technical assistance for consistent application of environmental policy.

Historic restoration specialist. Produces historically accurate external and internal restorations and renovations including millwork, molding, and period details for mantels, corbels, turning posts, capitals, windows, and doors. Provides oversight of carpentry, painting, masonry, plastering, and roofing, restoration of wood, stone, metal, plaster, and masonry.

~ Preservation & Conservation ~

Historical landscape architect. Scopes, plans, and implements preservation planning and management for historic sites and parks. Provides technical guidance and support in landscape preservation. Prepares contract specifications for fieldwork.

Preservation program assistant. Assists with administration, marketing, and training of preservation programs. Provides accurate, timely, and useful information and support for Website visitors to maximize use of Internet resources.

Preservation program officer. Provides advice, advocacy, on-site assistance, public presentations, testimony, workshops, and conferences for historic preservation projects. Identifies and develops special initiatives directed at regional preservation issues. Reviews and comments on legislation, grant proposals, and environmental reviews.

Preservation educator. Supervises education programs and interpretive personnel; networks with teachers and educators; develops new programs, holds teacher training workshops and institutes, and creates lesson plans.

Preservation planner. Researches neighborhoods, collecting and analyzing data to identify potential historic preservation projects. Reviews applications for property improvement; processes site plan and subdivision proposals. Monitors ongoing activities for compliance with policies and standards. Prepares and submits applications for grants and tax credits.

Multidisciplinary

Architectural historian. Researches, evaluates, inspects, documents, and manages historic structures, sites, and landscapes. Conducts historic architecture surveys and produces survey reports. Assures compliance with related government standards, tax codes, and regulations.

Historical archaeologist. Performs archaeological field investigations including surveys, mapping, recording, excavating, site protection and conservation. Researches lives of descendants of site inhabitants, applying scientific and historical methods for interpretation. Prepares documentation as required by federal and state ordinances.

Historical anthropologist. Conducts field studies to measure and explain human behavior, culture, and relationships. Gathers and organizes data; develops computer models and statistical applications to enhance interpretations. Writes reports and grant proposals.

Preservation attorney. Provides in-house legal services to preservation organizations. Advocates ways and means to preserve historic resources and their environmental settings on private and public land. Advises on zoning, planning, land-use law, taxation, and other matters pertaining to property issues.

Historic real estate specialist. Assists in the sale and purchase of historically significant buildings. Educates clients and the public to recognize, appreciate, and assure the historic value of properties.

Heritage travel agent. Informs the public about the history of people, places, and material objects. Facilitates travel to historic sites. Plans conferences; guides tours. Promotes the educational value of tourism.

Dealers in historic property. Includes antique and antiquarian book dealers, antiquarian property appraisers, auctioneers. Requires broad knowledge of effects' history, provenance, and restoration needs, as well as current and potential market value.

Archival & Related

Archivist. Identifies, appraises, arranges, and preserves significant documents. Plans and selects archival acquisitions. Prepares reference aids; publicizes archival resources. Collects, organizes, maintains control, preserves, and assures easy retrieval of information. Prepares exhibits of document and manuscript collections.

Records analyst. Evaluates, inventories, and processes historical records. Prepares retention and disposal schedules. Assures compliance with records retention guidelines. Assists in creation of forms, manuals, and finding aids.

Museums & Historical Sites

Curator. Researches, collects, documents, analyzes, authenticates, preserves, displays, and interprets historical material. Plans acquisitions, exhibits, and storage. Conducts education programs and produces informative supporting material. Provides advice and information to the public. Assists in fundraising and promotion.

Conservator. Manages, cares for, preserves, treats, and documents artifacts, specimens, and works of art. Assures ambient environment. Preserves artifacts from physical deterioration; conserves collections.

Collections specialist. Assures the upkeep and restoration of artifact collections. Researches restoration and repair needs of acquisitions. Inventories and assists in annual audit of collections. Supervises restoration volunteers.

Diorama model maker. Researches historical sites for preparation of dioramas illustrating appearance, functions, and historical importance of physical details. Designs, creates and installs diorama.

Education specialist. Develops and monitors education programs and online, Web-based initiatives. Creates and supervises docent and interpreter training programs and teacher workshops, assuring adherence to curriculum standards. Arranges tour schedules; produces and presents lectures and multimedia shows.

Exhibit technician. Designs, installs, and maintains exhibits. Prepares galleries for exhibitions; monitors security and environmental controls. Supervises storage, packing, crating and shipping of artifacts.

Events officer. Plans and organizes celebratory programs. Coordinates the theme, organization, and administration of public and in-house events, emphasizing historic importance. Recruits and supervises volunteers.

Interpreter–historic site/museum. Interprets and narrates the history of people, places, events, and objects to the public. Presents lectures, exhibits, photographic and electronic projections; writes guides, brochures, and creates signage. Assists in upkeep of collections, buildings, gardens, living history farms, urban sites, battlefields.

Museum registrar. Responsible for developing policies and procedures for museum collections. Supervises the record keeping, cataloging, care, maintenance, storage, and security of all holdings. Coordinates with museum administrator and curator's exhibitions, loans, and acquisitions.

Museum specialist (history). Organizes, documents, and manages collections, assuring relevance to exhibitions' themes. Provides for objects' conservation, handling, storage, and security. Coordinates plans for borrowing and lending of objects. Researches value and provenance of objects for potential donors and the public.

Property manager. Ensures historical integrity of buildings, furnishings, and other property. Conducts research on the collections and site architecture. Oversees property preservation, manages maintenance, purchasing, inventory control. Registers and catalogs new objects.

Publication specialist. Researches, writes, edits, designs, and produces scholarly catalogs, interpretive histories, reports, guidebooks, newsletters, brochures, audiovisual products, and direct mailings.

Public relations specialist. Promotes the public's appreciation and patronage of the organization. Fosters positive publicity; writes press releases; stages media and public events. Responds to public queries; writes and produces public service announcements.

Survey manager. Coordinates surveys and inventories of historic property; oversees the direction of survey data standards. Provides leadership regarding policy, procedures, and guidelines for historic resource surveys.

Libraries

Catalog librarian. Catalogs and classifies digital and print material; performs quality control of data. Develops collection's accessibility and Web presence. Produces finding aids and promotes use of facilities.

Instruction librarian. Provides instruction in use of facilities, identifying sources of information and technology resources. Offers research and reference assistance to the public. Prepares and maintains search and bibliographic retrieval applications. Promotes use of facilities.

Reference librarian. Serves the public by providing information on collections. Develops and promotes use of bibliographies and electronic finding aids. Recommends purchases of library materials.

Research librarian. Provides research services to public and to reference librarians. Conducts literature search on card catalogs and electronic databases. Compiles bibliographies.

Technical librarian. Recommends acquisition of specialized library material. Implements and automates bibliographic systems, providing technical assistance for their implementation.

Planning Agencies/Programs

Main Street Program Associate. Participates in National Trust Main Street Program. Provides administrative services including budgeting, record keeping, and financial control. Recruits members; develops business retention programs, identifying practical uses of historical resources. Educates property and business owners about the importance of historic preservation. Works with zoning officials; prepares grant proposals.

Urban/regional planner. Processes applications for rezoning, platting, amendments and variances. Prepares supporting reports, documentation, and maps. Drafts and files ordinances. Creates and maintains department files, reports, agendas, minutes and related documents. Defends policies and positions in public forums.

~ Media Presentation ~

Publishing

Agent (historical works). Solicits manuscripts and literary proposals from the public. Selects, edits, and assists in the revision of promising works. Concludes and manages intellectual property rights, and contracts with authors and publishers.

Editor (book). Evaluates manuscripts submitted for publication. Checks facts for accuracy; corrects grammar, revising for consistent style. Assures clarity, thoroughness, organization of writing. Secures publication rights; negotiates contracts. Researches market to test publication's utility and demand.

Editor (magazine). Researches, writes, and edits articles based on historical events. Reviews unsolicited manuscripts; seeks new ideas for publications. Produces written instructions, standard operating procedures, policies. Hosts press conferences.

Freelance writer (historian, biographer, historical novelist). Writes and markets works requiring historical details and accuracy. Maintains network of potential agents and publishers.

Media: Radio, Film, and TV

Communications media reporter. Researches news; checks and verifies facts assuring appropriate references to historical context. Generates flow of stories from sources among business community, lawmakers, regulators, and other policy makers.

Copy editor. Produces lead pages, edits copy, writes headlines, recommends graphics. Applies news judgment and knowledge of history. Writes and rewrites stories for style and content.

Filmmaker. Plans, develops, and carries out all elements of film making. Assumes major role from pre-production to final editing, assuring the film's quality and historical accuracy.

Film research assistant. Researches locale, costumes, props, verbal exchanges and other background details for production of films and TV programs. Assures accuracy and quality of historical details.

News analyst. Identifies stories of interest and importance. Writes and edits interpretive broadcast scripts. Conducts interviews in person and by phone. Presents on-air stories and live transmissions from correspondents.

News assistant. Researches, gathers, and prepares news stories. Searches Web for data, cross-checking for accuracy. Makes beat calls; runs teleprompter and coordinates production material.

Radio and TV producer. Responsible for research, formulation, development, and final editions of program content. Works with writers, reporters, and editors on stories. Assures accuracy of facts and of historical context. Prepares budgets; negotiates contracts.

Set designer. Designs historically accurate sets with appropriate period style and setting.

Electronic/Multimedia

Content specialist. Provides specialized knowledge required for development of product. Identifies sources of information, assuring access and effective working relationships to permit work to be produced on schedule and within budget. Ensures integrity of historical details. Reviews scripts, providing corrections and revisions.

Educational media producer. Develops product requirements and specifications. Identifies and addresses issues that affect production cycles. Creates design documents; reviews storyboards for style, format, instructional design, and appropriateness of content. Creates and maintains documentation for work flow. Performs end-user testing to ensure integration of new content.

Media producer—career education.

Manages development and implementation of projects from content creation through quality assurance. Manages media product team. Works with editors and content specialists to ensure timely submission of materials. Prepares budgets; establishes project schedules.

Media writer. Conceptualizes, researches, and writes interpretive media content for history-based productions. Conducts original research and develops copy from a variety of source materials.

A well-grounded historical perspective and command of the English language are essential for media careers. Also, skill in word processing, proofreading, copyediting, printing and production techniques, and page layout, editing and indexing software.

Information Management

Database search specialist. Provides Internet searches for legal, political, economic, and social information relating to institution's goals. Analyzes and extracts pertinent information, determining cause and effect.

Information researcher. Designs and conducts research on organization's information needs and sources. Analyzes how required information is generated, stored, and transformed from its original source to a format appropriate to end user.

Information consultant. Recommends development, organization, marketing, and expansion of organizational information systems. Designs and monitors implementation of systems. Produces user guides and manuals; trains users.

Online search specialist. Determines users' information needs for reference tools, databases, and indexes. Prepares manuals, user guides, annotated bibliographies, and other finding aids. Trains systems users.

Research coordinator. Manages research resources; coordinates activities with information technology staff. Monitors data quality and assures suitability of application packages for end-user needs. Trains staff in use of search techniques.

Web developer. Develops and maintains Web site to support organization's mission. Researches historically appropriate material for inclusion of content. Provides technical advice and support to staff and customers.

Given appropriate knowledge of information science and technology, historians can indeed be quintessential information managers.

~ Other Private & Nonprofit ~

Opportunities for graduates in history to apply their knowledge and skills selectively exist throughout the private and nonprofit sectors. Here are a few areas of special interest.

General Qualifications for All Positions

Knowledge. Familiarity with the history of the organization—its products, technologies, market, competition, regulation, and goals. Knowledge of terms and definitions common to chosen organization.

Skills. Proficiency in research, in planning and prioritizing work, selecting sources, and analyzing intent and meaning of content.

Communications. Ability to read, analyze, and interpret business periodicals and journals. Understanding of basic managerial accounting terms and concepts, including capability to interpret and analyze financial statements.

Information technology. Ability to learn new applications rapidly and effectively and to use, install, and configure word processing, spreadsheet, database, and presentation applications. Skill in use of Internet, especially online searching techniques. Familiarity with major operating systems and office hardware configurations.

Computation. Ability to grasp and work with mathematical concepts including basic statistical techniques.

Reasoning. Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions. Ability to interpret extensive variety of instructions in written and diagrammatic form.

Ethics. Insistence on distinguishing between right and wrong and acting accordingly.

Typical Business Organization

Management

Analyzes economic, political, and social issues using historical models. Tests operating procedures for historical analogies. Employs oral history for organizational diagnosis. Examines policy issues by drawing on historical sources and perspectives.

Finance

Financial analysis. Develops financial models to test projected financial statements, comparing historic with projected values to test for risks, and sensitivity to changes due to various economic scenarios. Prepares and analyzes budgets. Compiles and analyzes time series of data over time for use in testing for cause and effect of economic factors. Researches company financial and management history.

Risk assessment. Determines exposure to foreign political, economic, and social risk. Evaluates overall environment and potential impact on corporate operations. Recommends appropriate action to minimize financial loss.

Actuarial risk analysis. Searches and evaluates historical records to construct insurance case histories. Establishes risk factors based on historical research. Analyzes legislative action relating to industry in depth.

Marketing

Market research. Designs and codes research questionnaires; manages information-gathering process for interviews and surveys. Analyzes qualitative and quantitative data, applying historical, math and statistical techniques. Edits, proofreads, and reports on conclusions to clients.

Research Associate (marketing). Designs surveys to assess consumer preferences. Gathers data on market and competitors; verifies data quality. Performs statistical analyses; produces and proofreads market reports. Maintains and updates data collection via Web site.

Sales-planning. Analyzes market data and develops sales forecasts. Develops and maintains relationships with clients. Assesses market opportunities and tracks performance vs. established standards. Interprets market movements; researches sales histories and recommends strategy shifts.

Advertising. Selects target audience for advertising campaigns; designs surveys; analyzes and interprets results. Reviews raw and published material. Spots trends, determines effect of advertising campaign.

External Relations

Public Relations. Identifies public trends; interprets corporate activities over time. Develops national communications activities. Promotes public policy initiatives. Draws on archival material for organizational promotion, incorporating historical themes in advertising, publicity, and public relations material.

Public Affairs. Provides support for seminars, programs, public events and training. Develops and coordinates community events. Draws on historical resources of institution to support public image. Manages corporate philanthropy program.

Communications specialist. Develops corporate communications strategy. Writes scripts for corporate meetings and press releases, commemorative events. Plans and moderates meetings; delivers variety of oral presentations. Prepares and monitors budgets.

Information Resource Management

Information resource services—general. Organize databases, archives, and records to serve as integral part of corporate information system. Develop retention, storage, and retrieval policies. Exhibit archival material and memorabilia to promote corporate mission. Provide staff full range of technical information and reference services, index and abstract reports.

Human Resources

Staff training. Incorporates corporate history within staff training programs. Relates the history of clients, cultures, and domestic and foreign markets to institutional goals and operating policies.

Manpower planning & development. Plans and implements organizational diagnosis through oral interviews and reviews organization's history. Analyzes organizational strengths and weaknesses. Plans staff and skills inventory; links data to corporate strategic plans.

Legal

Legal & paralegal. Investigates, collects, organizes, and manages corporate legal data. Researches laws, legal writings, and precedents. Develops and maintains information system of pertinent federal, state and local government legislation, regulations. Interviews clients; performs trial fact analysis.

Philanthropic & Religious Organizations

Various positions. Apply historical studies to enrich an understanding of the organization's mission at all levels, whether managerial or professional. Analyze issues over time, defining needs and programs with reference to historical context; encourage colleagues and clients to study and apply history.

~ Other Public Sector ~

Opportunities for graduates in history exist in numerous areas of the public sector. Here are a few of special interest.

Federal Historical Offices

Historical Offices are established in the U.S. government's executive, legislative, and judicial branches. These include—but are not limited to—Departments of State, Labor, Transportation, Interior, the U.S. Senate, as well as the Air Force History Support Office, the Coast Guard's Historian Office, the U.S. Army Center of Military History, and the U.S. Naval Historical Center.

Military Services

Military historians. Prepare institutional histories and policy related studies; lecture on military history. Direct historical editing projects; manage archival and records centers, museums, and artifact collections. Engage in military intelligence. As civil affairs officers, rebuild political structures.

Military intelligence. Acquire, consolidate, evaluate, produce, and disseminate strategic and operational intelligence.

Civil affairs officers and specialists. Assess political, economic, social, cultural, historical, and psychological aspects of foreign civil and military organizations to foster positive relations between foreign civil authorities and U.S. forces.

Public and legislative affairs officers and specialists. Conduct research, assess risk, plan and implement public affairs campaigns. Promote constructive relationships with foreign media and government agencies. Advise senior military personnel on congressional affairs.

Other military positions include: Military cultural resource management specialists, oral history specialists, architectural historians, museum curators, conservators, librarians, archivists, and records analysts.

Selected Preservation Offices

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Promotes the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of U.S. historic resources. Advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy. Coordinates the federal agency's activities under provisions of National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

State Historic Preservation Officers. Plan state preservation efforts; educate public concerning preservation. Conduct cultural resource surveys, nominate properties to National Register of Historic Places, administer historic, archaeological properties, and provide guidance on preservation legislation.

National Park Service. Manages historical sites and structures, researching and studying their history, administering them, and promoting their use. Conducts tours and classes; interprets site and structure history to public.

National Landscape Conservation System, U.S. Department of the Interior. Designates and manages U.S. land areas to sustain public lands for present and future generations. Units include: national monuments, scenic and historic trails, wild and scenic rivers, wilderness areas, forest reserves, national conservation and recreation areas.

Federal Emergency Management Agency. Prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts; contracts historic preservation specialists.

U.S. Department of State

Office of the Historian. Prepares and publishes the official historical documentary record of U.S. foreign policy, researches and writes historical studies on aspects of U.S. diplomacy for use by policymakers as well as for public information, and recommends to other bureaus regarding the identification, maintenance, and long-term preservation of historical diplomatic records.

Foreign Service Officers. Help formulate and implement the foreign policy of the United States. Analyze and report on foreign country's political, economic, and social conditions. Present U.S. policies and culture, and values to other nations.

Foreign Service Specialists. Provide services in support of foreign policy at posts in Washington, D.C. and in embassies and consulates worldwide.

Student Programs. Enable students to obtain job experience in a foreign affairs environment in Washington, D.C. and in embassies and consulates worldwide.

Archives, Libraries, & Museums

Examples: National Archives and Records Service. State & local archives. Library of Congress. State & local libraries. Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art. State and local museums. National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

Intelligence Services

Department of Homeland Security, Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, other intelligence agencies.

These organizations employ historians' skills to research, gather, evaluate, analyze, and interpret economic, political, and social data; relate trends and precedents of the past to present and future events. Evaluate the goals and motives of foreign governments and entities in relation to their implications for U.S. interests. Produce results under tight deadlines.

Other

Official, Department of Education. Examines long-range trends that influence education at all levels. Drafts budgets; prepares cost/benefit analyses. Examines ways and means to strengthen the curriculum. Promotes public interest in education.

Judicial Clerk. Provides information searches; researches legal references; relates current cases to precedent.

Federal, State, and Local Legislative Branches of Government

Elected Official. Brings historical perspective to legislative decision making process. Applies objective scholarship to the examination of political, social, economic, and military issues. Identifies issues, problems, and solutions drawing on historical precedents.

Legislative Analyst. Provides advice to lawmakers, lobbyists, and nonprofit organizations. Conducts interviews and polls of individuals, focus groups, and selected samples of the U.S. population. Provides market research. Predicts the outcome of legislative initiatives and recommends solutions to current problems.

Administrative Assistant. Researches the history of policies and legislation; analyzes costs and effectiveness. Responds to public inquiries on current political issues, laws, and procedures. Manages institutional records and publishes bibliographic material.

THE AVOCATION OF HISTORY

Just because you do not earn a living "doing" history does not mean you are shut out of the historian's preserve. Amateur historians can — and do — write history, practice historic preservation, monitor history teaching on school boards, participate in historical reenactments, sustain historical societies, collect historic objects and documents, and otherwise support the promotion and use of history.

Similarly, the study of history and historical methods is not bounded by one's past formal education. Opportunities abound to continue learning, by reading, formal courses, online instruction, or volunteering to assist in historical enterprises.

Whatever your goals, history can be your avocation. Ways to participate:

- Read, research, and write history.
- Preserve, restore, and recreate historic resources.
- Teach history as a volunteer.
- Participate in historical reenactments.
- Contribute time, expertise, and funds to historical associations, museums, and libraries.



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study of history *should* teach you to ask the right questions, think critically, analyze dispassionately, and communicate with power and clarity. It also should empower you to better understand the human condition: who we are, where we came from, where we are going.

This won't happen without effort on your part. Nor will the study of history assure you of employment. That's your job. A few suggestions for approaching this task appear below. Planning for your career shouldn't be put off until the last minute. From the time you seriously consider the study of history, be mindful of these points.

1. Take Inventory

You have studied history, now look at your own recent life as an historian would. Compile the main events of your studies and other activities chronologically, in telegraph style. Include specific dates, names of schools, colleges, internships, employers, extracurricular activities, and noteworthy accomplishments.

After each event jot down why these events have suited you for the career of your choice. This list will also serve as source material for the résumé you will have to prepare prior to any job interviews.

Academic scores are important, but by no means the only accomplishment to list. Nor do you necessarily have to be a straight A student to impress potential employers. But you must have positive, distinctive qualities that are in demand.

What did you accomplish during your stay that drew upon your academic knowledge or skills? How have your studies directly improved your usefulness to a future employer? Break your list down into two categories: knowledge of your major subject, and command of skills used in mastering this subject.

Specific historical knowledge: What is it you have learned about a particular people, historic period, or geographic area? How can this knowledge be applied in your chosen career? If you have studied Elizabethan history, what useful analogies can you draw to modern times? How have the incidents you studied changed the course of history – what was their cause, their effect? What useful lessons have you learned from your study of history?

Skills learned from historical methodology: Most jobs involve collecting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and reporting both in writing and orally. Most deal with qualitative as well as quantitative factors. All deal with people; “we are all in sales;” we all have to teach and persuade. What are the research methods you have learned that can be applied at work?

Other academic subjects: As a holder of a liberal arts degree, you

are by definition a generalist, not a specialist. You are expected to have reasonable command of other key subjects. What courses — or activities — have strengthened the following:

- Logical, critical, and analytical thinking.
- The ability to express yourself in written and spoken English.
- Mastery of basic computer skills.
- Familiarity with economic history and microeconomics.
- Understanding of basic managerial accounting.

Personal attributes: Character matters, and personality counts. Worthy employers seek honest and reasonably outgoing associates. Everyone wants self-starting team players, hard-working individuals who are motivated and who can motivate others. Such attributes are under your control. Correct your deficiencies.

2. Research Your Targets

Draw on what you (should) have learned in the study of history: how to research. Call up the organization. If it is publicly held, call the communications/public relations office. Request a copy of the last two Annual Reports. Ask if you could stop by and talk to someone on the professional staff who can give you background information on the organization. Look up their web site on the Internet. Read all their pages carefully, then double check with them and with related sites about job openings.

Get names of other professionals for job or information interviews. Network by asking for names of people – not just organizations — from friends, career counselors, and professionals you have some contact with at your bank, insurance company, newspaper, or Internet chat rooms.

Phone or email for a brief meeting (a letter may well go unanswered). Do not ask for a job interview unless you are thoroughly prepared. By asking to meet for information you will have a greater chance of a friendly reception. If anyone you talk to shows an interest in hiring you, they will let you know.

3. Refit Yourself

If you have difficulty compiling your personal inventory, talk to people in the careers you seek, talk to your teachers, talk to career advisors. Rethink what it is you have to offer employers. In particular consider whether graduate study in history or in some other field is advisable. Remember some employers may accept you in an entry level position and offer an incentive to help you complete your studies. Whatever your level of expertise, be prepared for a lifelong search for knowledge. Whatever your goals, your study of history is an excellent point of departure.

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