

THE LIBERAL ARTS HISTORY MAJOR CAREER HANDBOOK

*DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE*

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INTRODUCTION

Why Study History?

There is no single answer to this question. History is a multi-dimensional field that historians and students have approached in myriad ways. At its core, though, history tackles fundamental questions of human society:

- Who we have been in the past—how people lived, loved, governed, fought, and thought in various periods and societies.
- The catalysts, negotiations, and conflict that provoked change in those societies.
- How diverse societies came in contact and influenced one another.
- How and why individuals and societies have exerted power over others.
- How individuals and communities developed their sense of identity.
- How that past continues to share our present.
- And who we hope we will be in the future.

The Liberal Arts History Major and My Calling in Life

Why am I a Liberal Arts History Major? What can I do with my major? Where will I go? These are vital questions that we recurrently ask ourselves. Perhaps these questions can be reduced to one: Why should I not be a Liberal Arts History Major?

The historical implications of our individual lives are enormous. The versatility inherent in a Liberal Arts History Major is extraordinary. Fusing the two is our goal, and here is how we are going to do it. The lists and discussions below should enable you, on your own, to generate your professional calling, to discover the career(s) that are the constituents of it, to grow the self-confidence enabling you to research the information that you seek, to develop the know-how and eventually the expertise to contact pertinent individuals and institutions in order to acquire further information and for getting your foot in the door, and to undertake a winning job search.

This occupational guidebook is intended for our Rhode Island College Department of History Liberal Arts Majors—in other words: YOU! The purpose of this endeavor is to convey to you a sense of what is “out there,” after graduation, for a history major. Through developing your own ideas—with a modicum of hands-on-research—you profitably can use this handbook to determine where your professional destiny lies, be it in the public or private sectors or in academia.

This guidebook is a tool that hopefully will help you (1) map out meaningful lifetime, professional callings (“careers”); (2) conceptualize/envision navigating websites, read germane print literature, and pull together your research in pinpointing where your professional interests might lie; (3) in very practical terms create and implement strategies for contacting individuals within institutions and sub-departments within institutions (be they governmental or private) and follow up and secure the desired professional employment; and (4) through systematic thinking and practice, develop and internalize routines and skills for pursuing your lifelong, professional development through the lens of the history major.

The number of careers stemming from the undergraduate history liberal arts major is legion. There is not a single career that does not have profound historical implications

inherent to it! The material below is segmented into (1) post-baccalaureate graduate academia; (2) federal, state, and local governmental professions; and (3) the private sector. Think in terms of how experience in one area can prepare you for participation in another. Post-baccalaureate education, governmental or other public service, and private-sector employment can together be looked upon as a whole, not as separate units. In preparing yourself for your post-graduate life's calling, utilize your RIC Liberal Arts History Major to the utmost. Think of undertaking a double major or a single major with a single or double minor.

Americans on average change their professions several times during their working life spans. The Liberal Arts History major can confer a versatility, an elasticity, that enables one, with Renaissance scope and insight, to navigate what otherwise might appear to be a confusing and contentious job market. The study of history can impart to one a sense of overview and planning that can permit one to construct sensible strategies for positioning oneself professionally over a lifetime. How might one devise a pathway leading, perhaps, to a self-reinforcing mixture of both private- and public-sector careers, strengthened from time to time by engaging in new academic course work or even obtaining a new degree? How might one create a strategy embracing both academia and the public sector or academia and the private sector or perhaps one involving all three? How might one concentrate one's preoccupations solely in one arena: the private sector, public sector, or academia? And one can go on.

The Liberal Arts History major lets you direct your personal interests and possible career paths in a variety of ways. For example, if you are interested in government service or in private sector employment, here are a number of possible double major and major and minor combinations. For double majors: History and Modern Languages, History and Biology, History and Communications, History and Political Science, History and Psychology, History and Professional Accountancy, History and Justice Studies, History and Women's Studies, History and Geography, History and Economics, etc. For major and minor combinations (one or two minors), any number of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and a few of the School of Management disciplines are feasible.

To better orient yourself in terms of what your Liberal Arts History Major promises for you, see any number of informational descriptions (of which there are large number) on the website of the American Historical Association, <http://historians.org>. See also "Guide to College Majors in History" on WorldWideLearn <http://www.worldwidelearn.com>.

Before turning to the wide range of professionals options at your disposal, let us first review the skills demonstrated by History degree recipients.

Skills Demonstrated by History Degree Recipients:

1. Effective writing skills. Rhode Island College history majors demonstrate the ability to effectively and persuasively communicate to others concepts, arguments, and ideas. This is a fundamental skill that has enormous application in any profession that a history major may pursue.
2. Critical thinking skills. History majors have been trained to critically analyze documents and other sources of information in order to evaluate the strengths and limitations of their arguments. This skill is essential for all individuals, both professionally and in order to be truly informed citizens.

3. Research skills. Imagination, discipline, and initiative are three qualities that are developed by conducting independent research projects. History majors know how to use archival resources critically and to analytically reconcile contradictory accounts of complex historical events. These skills translate into many applications in both the academic and the non academic worlds.

4. Oral communication skills. History graduates have been trained to present complex concepts and arguments effectively and persuasively in oral presentations. The ability to explain complex ideas clearly and forcefully is a skill of the utmost importance and has great relevance in every conceivable occupation.

THE PROFESSIONS

I. *PUBLIC SECTOR: PROFESSIONS IN FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT*

Why work for the government? There is an extraordinary range of answers to this question. For one, government work provides a certain job security not ordinarily encountered in the private sector. What is the mentality of federal, state, and local governmental workers? How does one go about mapping out careers in governmental service and in scanning for positions in it? How does one contact a government department or agency? How does one find out about a government job vacancy and fill out an application? Answers to these and many other questions can be found in the explanations and literature presented below.

There are over 70 cities and towns in Rhode Island. All of these have their own governmental structures. All have their own websites and have easy drop-in locations—better known as town halls or city halls—where it is possible to go, meet with officials, and ask questions. Never forego phoning out of the blue and saying you want to meet with someone in order to learn about public service. People are willing to meet and assist in responding to your informational questions.

Then, there is the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations (<http://www.ric.gov>) as well as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (<http://www.mass.gov>) and the State of Connecticut (<http://www.ct.gov>). Likewise, it is a real plus if you can step forward, take the initiative, and contact people in state government in order to find out more about state governmental careers. It never hurts to get in touch with members of local town and city council and board of education members to inquire of careers in local government. Furthermore, if state government interests you, do not hesitate to phone, e-mail, or write your local assemblyperson or senator in order to express your desire to learn more about state government professional careers.

Eighty percent (80%) of all federal jobs are located outside of Washington, D.C. Even if one does not wish to move to the capital, there are large numbers of federal jobs in the southern New England states.

U.S. Government Websites

Government websites are incredibly useful!

The U.S. Government website is www.usa.gov. Utilizing it, one can navigate to general informational lists, separate departments and agencies, GS (Government Service) pay scales, resumes, job vacancy notices and job descriptions, resume forms, and to so much more information. Individual government departments and agencies have their own websites as well for example, www.commerce.gov for the Department of Commerce, www.state.gov for the Department of State, www.dol.gov for the Department of Labor, www.doi.gov for the Department of the Interior, www.nsa.gov for the National Security Agency, www.cia.gov for the Central Intelligence Agency, www.adf.gov for the U.S. African Development Foundation, www.loc.gov for the Library of Congress, www.gpo.gov for the U.S. Government Printing Office, www.doi.gov/bureau-indian-affairs.html for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, www.archives.gov/index.html for the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, www.peacecorps.gov for the Peace Corps, and <http://www.uscis.gov> for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, www.voanews.com. These are but a few examples; the total quantity of federal departments and agencies is much higher.

In the lower right-hand corner of the www.usa.gov website, find “Government Agencies” and underneath that title click on “A-Z Agency Index.” All U.S. Government departments, agencies, committees, and commissions are listed there. Go through this list at your leisure in order to familiarize yourself with the names. Through repeated usage comes familiarity, with familiarity comes knowledge and experience, and more of a sense of which institutions you genuinely like and will best fit you .

State and Local Government Websites

The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations website is www.ri.gov. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts website is www.mass.gov. The State of Connecticut website is www.ct.gov. All three state websites have links to city and town governments, e.g., www.lincolnri.com for Lincoln, Rhode Island or www.seekonk.info/ for Seekonk, Massachusetts. States that are not contiguous to Rhode Island have their own websites (e.g., New York, www.ny.gov, New Jersey, www.nj.gov)

II. PRIVATE SECTOR

Introduction

The RI and U.S. private sector (non-governmental sector) consists of:

- (1) large- and medium-sized corporations that are publicly traded on stock exchanges and have a large degree of internal complexity and many different departments;
- (2) smaller companies, that are essentially privately owned and consist of several owners and many employees, but organized as Title-S corporations for tax purposes;
- (3) small companies that are privately owned, i.e., proprietorships comprise the American private sector.

Collectively, they are the motor for generating a very large amount of annual American GDP. They offer many possibilities for employment of the liberal arts history major in careers where you can utilize the analytic skills learned at college.

A corporation is a business and legal entity that no one person owns. Larger corporations are complex organizations that can have numerous divisions and sub-

divisions of functions and responsibility. Anywhere from hundreds to hundreds of thousands of people can work in a corporation. The numerous sub-divisions within a corporation can be involved in, for example, manufacturing, finance, marketing, sales, law, taxation, human resources, education and training, library and archival work, charity, scientific research, international business, consultancy, and communications.

There are many corporate opportunities for committed individuals with a Liberal Arts History major. Publicly-traded corporations (that is corporations that issue stock that is traded on stock exchanges) and many non-publicly-traded corporations have their own web sites. Explore them!

Here is one way of going about your corporation search. Go to the reference section of your local, public library, and ask if they subscribe to *The Value Line Investment Survey (VLIS)*. VLIS is issued weekly, and four times a year, in 13-week cycles, analyzes the recent performance, broken down into 98 groups, of over 2,000 established American corporations. Each week VLIS presents several groups with one-page summaries of how every company within its group has been performing. Every weekly issue consists of two parts: "Summary & Index" and "Ratings & Reports." "Summary & Index" lists on its front page all 98 groups and which issue contains whatever group. Use the "Summary & Index" to locate particular groups of interest to you. Then, after having located the relevant issues containing the particular groups you want to research, go the targeted issue of "Ratings & Reports." Every page in "Ratings & Reports" contains a brief description of the corporation, its headquarters's address and main phone number, and website.

Here are the 98 VLIS corporate groups (that are also quite handy for scouting out the different categories of local, small businesses!): advertising, aerospace/defense, air transport, apparel, auto and truck, auto parts, banking, banking (Canada), banking (Midwest), beverage, biotechnology, building materials, cable t.v., Canadian energy, basic chemical industry, diversified chemical industry, specialized chemical industry, coal, computers and peripherals industry, computer softwares and services, diversified companies, drug, e-commerce, educational services, electrical equipment, electrical utilities (Central U.S.), electrical utilities (Eastern U.S.), electrical utilities (Western U.S.), electronics, entertainment, entertainment technology, environmental, financial services, food processing, food wholesalers, foreign electronics, furniture and home furnishings, grocery, healthcare information, heavy construction, home appliances, homebuilding, hotel and gaming, household products, human resources, industrial services, information services, life insurance, property and casualty insurance, internet, U.S. investment companies, foreign investment companies, machinery, manufactured housing and recreational vehicles, maritime, medical services, medical supplies, metal fabricating, metals and mining, natural gas utilities, natural gas industry, newspaper, office equipment and supplies, oil and gas distribution, oilfield services and equipment, packaging and container, paper and forest products, petroleum industry, petroleum producing, pharmacy services, power, precious metals, precision instrument, property management, publishing, railroad, real estate investment trust, recreation, reinsurance, restaurant, retail automotive, retail building supply, special lines' retail, retail store, securities brokerage, semiconductor, semiconductor equipment, shoe, general steel industry, integrated steel industry, telecommunication equipment, telecommunication

services, thrift, tobacco, toiletries and cosmetics, trucking, water utility, and wireless networking.

How do you apply for work in a corporation or, for that matter, in a smaller business? Start with *What Color Is My Parachute?* (see *Take A Look At These Reference Works!*, p. 12). Network and meet with people from a particular corporation or other business. Ask informational questions, display a real focus and interest in what the corporation or other business does, and find out about opportunities that might be there. Do not forget to speak to people you know who work for corporations or smaller businesses.

Below are information and websites for Rhode Island and Massachusetts corporations and other companies. Other states have their own websites listed under rubrics such as “economic development,” “business,” and so on. If you are interested in working outside of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, invest some time to learn what other state governments’ websites have to offer for private-sector career leads.

Rhode Island

There are some 46,000 companies in Rhode Island, and of that number there are over 25,000 corporations, of all types, in Rhode Island. Go to the *Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation* (401-278-9100 website RIEDC.com, and access their information for corporations, of all sizes and activities. Its website will also provide links to the top 100 employers in the State. There are 8,000 businesses in Rhode Island with 20 or more employees.

Spend time navigating the RIEDC web page. By all means familiarize yourself with the four (4) main categories: (1) **REIDC Focus**, (2) **Business Services**, (3) **Industry Clusters**, and (4) **RI Data Bank** and the multiple links listed under each. Put yourself through the drill to navigate and read the entries. Study your territory!

Above all, click on “Business Data and Resources,” which is in the fourth category, **RI Data Bank**. Then, once you are on the “Business Data and Resources” page, scroll down to “Major Employers,” “Top 100 Employers in Rhode Island,” “International Trade Resources Directory,” and the “Directory of RI Manufacturers,” and click on each of them and scrutinize their contents. This will help propel you along the way. There are also some other sites as well you might tap. Then, go down further on the “Business Data and Resources” page, and you will come to “Additional Information.” Under “Additional Information” are many links; click on “Fortune 1000 Companies in Rhode Island.”

Massachusetts

Massachusetts’s population is approximately six times greater than Rhode Island’s. Not surprisingly, the number of positions potentially available is much greater than in Rhode Island. A good avenue of approach is the Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development. Their website is massecon.com. Click on massecon.com, then click on [Massachusetts](#) and click on the sidebar [Site Selection Resources](#). Under the [Site Selection Resources](#) page click on [Employment, Labor and Training](#). Towards the bottom of the [Employment, Labor and Training](#) page is the heading “Other Resources” and under that click on [Massachusetts Career Resources](#). That will then lead to the page

“Massachusetts Jobs and Careers” with its many categories listed underneath that you should navigate through.

III. POST-BACCALAUREATE GRADUATE ACADEMIA

Graduate School, Law School, Library School, and Business School

For students who have enjoyed and excelled in their undergraduate courses, particularly in the areas of research and historical writing, pursuing a graduate degree in history may be a promising option. A master's or doctoral degree in history can provide career opportunities as a history professor, professional historian, librarian, and archivist, among many others. On a personal and intellectual level, graduate school can be incredibly rewarding; it also can be quite challenging in its intellectual, financial, and time demands. If you are interested in graduate school, the first place to start would be to speak to history professors you've had as instructors. They can help you decide if graduate school is a good option for you, and if so, what to expect and where to apply.

Graduate school

If you are interested in graduate programs in other fields, consult professors in those specialties. Why not take a look at *Get Into Graduate School: a Strategic Approach*. New York: Kaplan Publishing, 2006. i-xiii + 3-306. \$20. This is a general introductory guidebook, in paper. It provides basic information; full-time and part-time study options; practical tips on applications; personal statements; data on financing graduate school; and the names of many, different areas (e.g., the humanities and social sciences, various professional schools (librarian, law, business), education, psychology, counseling, computer sciences).

Law, library studies, and business offer a very large number of interests and sub-specializations that range across science, the humanities (including foreign languages and other cultures), the social sciences, and so on.

Law school

For students who enjoyed the aspects of the history program which emphasized the development of argument and collection of evidence, law school might also be a good option. For more information, contact the professor in charge of the Pre-Law program here at Rhode Island College. See also www.hg.org/schools.html. Two handy, no-bull informational paperback books on law school are *Barron's Guide to Law Schools*, 17th ed. Hauppauge, New York: Barron's Educational Services, Inc., 2007. i-v + 3-596 + i-v. \$18.95 and Anne McGrath, et al. *U.S. News & World Report Ultimate Guide to Law Schools*, 2d ed. Naperville, Illinois: Sourcebooks, Inc., 2006. \$18.95. Both discuss how to apply and finance law school, what are the hardest and easiest law schools, which are the priciest and cheapest, how to obtain financial aid from law schools, what is the relationship between one's law school and future earnings, and where do law graduates work. See also the paperback by Munneke, Gary A., J.D., *How to Succeed in Law School*. 3d ed. Hauppauge, New York: Barron's Educational Services, Inc., 2001. i-x + 1-230. \$11.99. Munneke's nifty book talks about law school curriculum and law course sequences, law school orientation issues, the work load and coping, and law school exams.

Library school

History and libraries always have been inextricably intertwined. One cannot exist without the other. History cannot exist without records. Records are mostly handwritten and printed documents or some such. In large part records could not exist without libraries.

For library school, start with www.hg.org/schools.html. Because there is also an undergraduate library major along with graduate library school, there are no specialized books, currently on sale in bookstores, on graduate library school. Therefore, information on graduate library school would have to be found in literature on undergraduate education.

Business school

The organizational, managerial, and economic implications of historical science are stupendous, and on that note liberal arts history majors might well tap into the business world for their career calling. Although not a hard-and-fast prerequisite (one, for example, can join a security's firm right after college, and there are other such cases, like small businesses), business school, which is two years in duration, is well-nigh a prerequisite.

To speed oneself along the informational way, see www.businessweek.com/bschools and www.allbusinessschools.com. By all means consult this paperback business-school bible: Gilbert, Nedda, et al. *The Princeton Review Best 290 Business Schools 2008 Edition*. New York: Random House, Inc., 2008. ii-vii + 799 + i-viii. \$22.95. Nedda's tome goes over the curriculum, the environment, and admissions and lists business schools. See also Gordon, A.V. *MBA Admissions Strategy. From Profile Building to Essay Writing*. Maidenhead, England: McGraw-Hill, 2005. i-xi + 3-186. \$19.95. Gordon's volume addresses strategy for the admissions's process, profile-building tools, essay management, and writing tools and methods.

Foreign languages

Foreign languages are often an important element in post-baccalaureate training. M.A. history programs involving Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Near East, and Russia most frequently require foreign-language expertise and Ph.D. programs in these areas invariably do. Rhode Island College and nearby-colleges and universities offer a cross-section of foreign languages for regular, academic year instruction. In addition there are intensive summer-language programs in Boston- and New York-area universities, in the Mid-West, and on the West Coast that are most profitable experiences. For further information contact members of the Departments of Modern Languages and History.

Questions to ask yourself

- What fields in the humanities and social sciences might be of interest to me?
- How can I apply graduate training and a graduate degree to my professional calling?
- What degrees should I consider?
- What are the courses of study for degrees of interest to me?

- How do I apply to graduate programs, determine their cost, and, if necessary, receive financial aid?
- How can I use post-baccalaureate training as a professional base for both a non-academic career and an academic career?
- How can I interweave academia and the private and/or governmental sectors into my professional calling in such a way that the two become mutually reinforcing?
- How can I use post-baccalaureate training as a technique for recurrent professional learning and advancement?
- How might I consider law as my calling in life?

List of Universities and Colleges Offering the M.A. and Ph.D. in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts

Use the websites below to learn about post-baccalaureate programs, degrees and careers!!

Below are the universities and colleges in southern New England. For information on universities and colleges outside of southern New England, talk to your history adviser, other history professors, and professors in other departments. Yet another source of information are reference books in Adams Library, other college libraries, and in book stores such as (1) Barnes and Noble and (2) Borders.

Universities, M.A. and Ph.D levels (asterisks designate major research universities)

Rhode Island

- *University of Rhode Island (Kingston) www.uri.edu
- *Brown University (Providence) www.brown.edu
- Bryant University (Smithfield) www.bryant.edu/Bryant/
- Johnson and Wales University (Providence) www.jwu.edu
- Roger Williams University (Bristol) www.rwu.edu
- Salva Regina University (Newport) www.salve.edu

Connecticut

- *University of Connecticut (Storrs) www.uconn.edu
- *Yale University (New Haven) www.yale.edu
- Central Connecticut State University (New Britain) www.ccsu.edu
- Eastern Connecticut State University (Willimantic) www.easternct.edu
- Fairfield University (Fairfield) www.fairfield.edu
- Quinnipiac University (Hamden) www.quinnipiac.edu
- Sacred Heart University (Fairfield) www.sacredheart.edu
- Southern Connecticut State University (New Haven) www.southernct.edu
- University of Hartford (Hartford) www.hartford.edu
- University of New Haven (New Haven) www.newhaven.edu
- Wesleyan University (Middletown) www.wesleyan.edu
- Western Connecticut State University (Danbury) www.wcsu.edu

Massachusetts

- *Boston University (Boston) www.bu.edu

*Brandeis University (Waltham) www.brandeis.edu
*Harvard University (Cambridge) www.harvard.edu
*MIT (Cambridge) www.mit.edu
*Tufts University (Medford) www.tufts.edu
*University of Massachusetts (Amherst) www.umass.edu
Boston College (Boston) www.bc.edu
Clark University (Worcester) www.clarku.edu
Lesley University (Cambridge) www.lesley.edu
Northeastern University (Boston) www.northeastern.edu
Suffolk University (Boston) www.suffolk.edu
University of Massachusetts (Boston) www.umb.edu
University of Massachusetts (Dartmouth) www.umassd.edu
University of Massachusetts (Lowell) www.uml.edu

Colleges, M.A. level

Rhode Island

Providence College (Providence) www.providence.edu
Rhode Island College (Providence) www.ric.edu

Connecticut

Albertus Magnus College (New Haven) www.albertus.edu
Connecticut College (New London) www.conncoll.edu
Saint Joseph College (West Hartford) www.sjc.edu
Trinity College (Hartford) www.trincoll.edu

Massachusetts

Assumption College (Worcester) www.assumption.edu
American International College (Springfield) www.aic.edu
Babson College (Wellesley) www3.babson.edu
Bay Path College (Longmeadow) www.baypath.edu
Bridgewater State College (Bridgewater) www.bentley.edu
College of the Holy Cross (Worcester) www.holycross.edu
Curry College (Milton) www.curry.edu
Emerson College (Boston) www.emerson.edu
Emmanuel College (Boston) www.emmanuel.edu
Endicott College (Beverly) www.endicott.edu
Fitchburg State College (Fitchburg) www.fsc.edu
Framingham State College (Framingham) www.framingham.edu
Gordon College (Wenham) www.gordon.edu
Merrimack College (North Andover) www.merrimack.edu
Mount Holyoke College (South Hadley) www.mtholyoke.edu
Nichols College (Dudley) www3.nichols.edu
Salem State College (State) www.salemstate.edu
Simmons College (Boston) www.simmons.edu
Smith College (Northampton) www.smith.edu
Stonehill College (Easton) www.stonehill.edu
Wellesley College (Wellesley) www.wellesley.edu
Western New England College (Springfield) www.wnec.edu

Westfield State College (Westfield) www.wsc.edu
Worcester State College (Worcester) www.worcester.edu

IV. PUBLIC HISTORY

Public history is a field that has come into its own over the last thirty years. It can involve work in either the private or public sector. What is public history? One can categorize public history as history intended for anyone outside the formal institutional setup of the college or university. The methods, formats, places, and styles for presentation of history to the public (with all the internal differentiation that this word implies) are exceedingly varied.

Public historians are usually historians working outside a college or university. Where do we find public historians? Their employment and imprint is almost everywhere: in federal, state, county, city, and town government; in corporate research offices; at historic monuments and other commemorative sites; in archives and museums; in newspapers; in trade union organizations; and so on. A public historian can be a newspaper or magazine columnist, editorial writer, or news reporter; a museum curator and archivist; an editor; a preservation specialist; cultural resource specialist; a self-employed researcher; a corporation researcher; an oral historian; a genealogist; an assistant to an elected official; a media specialist; and there are others.

The following degrees exist in public history: B.A., B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. In other words one can start at different levels. Currently, there are over 130 U.S. colleges and universities offering degrees in public history. For more information see www.publichistory.org. Read through this web site's "Public History Resource Center," and click on the many links, such as "descriptions of degree programs" and "various careers in the field."

By the way, have you ever thought about working in museums? There are, for example, art museums, natural history and anthropology museums, science and technology museums, history museums, music museums, botanical gardens and zoos, children's museums, and state and local governmental museums. Take a look at these two helpful books: Alexander, Edward P. and Mary. *Museums in Motion. An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums*. 2d edition. Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania: Altamira Press, 2007 and Lord, Barry. *The Manual of Museum Learning*. Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania: Altamira Press, 2007.

V. NGOS AND INGOS

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) over the last few decades have become important organizational factors internationally and domestically. While being neither governmental nor private, their activities intersect with both sectors. Typically housed in North American and European countries, NGOs (domestic focus) and INGOS (international focus) engage in a whole host of beneficial advisory and implementary strategies and other activities intended to foster technical, educational, socio-economic, communicatory, and political activist awareness change and improvement within the United States and in foreign countries. Here are two key web sites: www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/index.htm and www.ric.edu/ingos. By all means contact Professor Peter Mendy, Department of History, Rhode Island College pmendy@ric.edu for further information.

HOW DID I BECOME A HISTORY MAJOR?

Ever wondered how some of us who stand in front of you and lecture on history ever became interested in the subject? Well, here are some inspiring accounts...

1. **Why I became interested in history.** I think it was associated with my father's stories of serving in WW II and his discussing the fact he had been raised by his grandparents, who were German immigrants. When my family did major trips (to the East Coast, since my dad was from Philadelphia), we always visited historic sites. Also, my maternal grandfather came to this country in 1909 and always loved reading and talking about his Norwegian roots. He traveled back to Norway several times when I was a kid and he always brought back interesting stories.

I had originally planned to be a print journalist and began college majoring in English and German, but did not really enjoy the English major that much. I switched to history because I knew journalism schools did not care what your undergraduate major was, just so long as your grades were fine. I became enamored of history because of my sophomore year U.S. survey course instructor, a good-looking newly minted Ph.D. from the University of Virginia. His enthusiasm for the field and love of teaching—although he stared at the back wall when he lectured—got me on the path to do professional history and aspire to teach at the college level.

2. **Why I became interested in history.** I would have to say, being born several years after WW II, it was all those ancient history movies that my folks took me to: *The Ten Commandments*, *Ben Hur*, *El Cid*, *Cleopatra*, etc. and also the fact that, growing up in New York City, the *Million Dollar Movie* series featured one film all week long and all day long on Saturdays. Imagine me glued to the screen from morning to night watching Victor Mature as Samson or Demetrius the gladiator, and, when Mom was not home, chasing my older sister around the house with the rotisserie wand (my gladius [sword]!) So there you have it.

A second reason was that growing up Catholic I was fascinated by the Latin mass, so I began studying Latin as soon as I entered high school. It did not seem fair for priests to enjoy a monopoly on what seemed to be a secret language. In high school, our teacher was the principal, a short, elderly Jewish man who used to light a match and challenge us to decline a noun or conjugate a verb before it went out. To this day, I fondly recall Mr. Israel as a Cicero figure, though my imagination adds a toga. Teachers like him opened up a whole world of possibilities to me, the youngest but first child in my working-class family to go to college.

As you can see from my picture outside the office (as Grace O'Malley, the pirate queen) I have not changed all that much. History rocks!

3. **Why I became interested in history.** I knew I wanted to do in life by the time I was 15! Being born on the West Coast, in the immediate, post-WW II generation, I was saturated by the time I was 10 with stories (from kids, adults, magazines, movies) of the War in the Pacific. Europe and the East Coast were light years away. Very early on I became aware of the historical significance of people's lives. Listening to my dad's whimsical-Irish-like, fantastical tales of Sammy the Seagull outsmarting the opposing side's warships in the Pacific may have had something to do with it. Seeing all those

incredible movies, during double-feature Saturday-afternoon matinees that cost 35 cents, that commentator no. 2 spoke of (we always called him Victor Manure) and science-fiction stuff to boot blew my mind! The indomitable Walter Cronkite with his stentorian announcer's voice for the t.v. modern-history series, *You Are There*, played an important role, too.

A signal event steepening my resolve to fathom history was when, at the tender age of 13, my parents took a business trip from L.A. to San Diego. One morning my mom, who momentarily had nothing to do, stopped off at a second-hand/ book store and for 50 cents bought, as a gift for me, a Collins Russian-English/English-Russian Language dictionary that measured 1 ½" by 1". The exotic, curvilinear letters of the Cyrillic alphabet (think б, ж, и, я), at an age when hormones are bouncing off the wall, enticed me. This is the way to go! (One should never underestimate the most seemingly trivial events in one's life.)

Lastly, when I was a high school sophomore, I had an outstanding teacher of modern European History, who three years later won an award from Yale University.

History is a way of life and little-by-little brings wisdom into all of us.

TAKE A LOOK AT THESE REFERENCE WORKS!

Recommended Books

Acquiring information on careers is absolutely essential, and most of that you will have to do yourself. Thanks to your college education, you possess the organizational prowess, the cognitive skills, and the gumption to do so. Below are recommended books, pared down to a relatively small number, all of which are in paperback and available for purchase. Think of this literature as an investment, and be prepared to invest, say, \$150-\$200 in professional library purchase. It will serve you well.

Remember that these are research tools whose contents are intended not only for familiarization but in some cases internalization. Persistently read these books and retain them in your library; they are both literally and figuratively a path to your future, to your professional calling in life.

Getting Started. The Basics. I.

(1) There is but one book in this section. It is imperative that you acquire and read it: Bolles, Richard Nelson. *The 2008 What Color Is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers*. Berkeley, Toronto: Ten Speed Press, 2008. i-xviii + 1-432 + i-iv. \$18.95.

Updated and published annually, *What Color Is Your Parachute?* is the classic guidebook in preparing for job-hunting, Well-written, *What Color Is Your Parachute?* provides copious advice on job-hunting, resume and c.v. writing, interviewing, and career-planning.

Mandatory reading for everybody!

Getting Started. Orientation. II

(2) What can liberal artsy folk do? Let's get started by taking a look...

Top Careers for Liberal Arts Graduates. New York: Checkmark Books, 2004. i-iv + 3-378. \$14.95. *Top Careers* discusses 35 career paths. This book will get you started by giving you a feel of what you can do. Since you probably will have a minor or a double-major in another subject (NB, look at all the areas listed under the "Faculty of Arts and Sciences" in the table of contents of the RIC catalog.), some of the occupational pathways (anthropology, archaeology, economics) analyzed in *Top Careers* apply to you as well, even though they might not appear to be explicitly directed towards history. But the study of history, by definition, draws in everything else, and you as an historian wear several hats.

Keep *Top Careers for Liberal Arts Graduates* nearby.

Government Employment

The books listed below are intended for federal employment, but the U.S. Government is, well, a government, and so much about the rationale, mentalite, and procedures described for federal employment is applicable to state, county, city, and town governmental employment as well.

(3) Damp, Dennis V., *The Book of U.S. Government Jobs. Where They Are, What's Available and How to Get One*. 9th ed., revised. McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania: Bookhaven Press LLC. 2005. i-x, 1-278. \$21.95.

This large-cover reference tool has easily readable chapters on an introduction to government employment and on how to understand federal employment procedures, to find out what federal jobs are available, to interview, to register for and take civil service exams, to fill out a federal employment application, to find work as a veteran and military dependent, to find out about overseas employment opportunities, to work in the U.S. Postal Service, to locate employment opportunities as a person with a disability, to establish a career in law enforcement and home land security, and how to get a glimpse into federal employment secrets. In addition there a valuable appendices on federal agencies and departments and federal occupation lists.

This is a handy item for your professional library!

(4) Troutman, Kathryn Kraemer. *Federal Resume Guidebook. Strategies for Writing a Winning Federal Electronic Resume, KSAs, and Essays*. 4th ed. Indianapolis: JIST Works, 2007. i-xiv+1-368. \$21.95.

This item valuably complements Damp, *The Book of U.S. Government Jobs*. Troutman's publication focuses on composing a federal resume, properly selecting words and phrases for a federal resume, writing essays and responding to questions for a federal resume, analyzing and responding to federal job vacancy notices, targeting particular occupations, and managing career strategy (do's and don't's, being proactive, eliminating the "wait and see" mentality, networking, etc.). Throughout the chapters and appendices there are gobs of sample resumes.

This tool will enable you to hone your federal resume skills.

(5) Mannion, James. *The Everything Guide to Government Jobs. A Complete Handbook to Hundreds of Lucrative Opportunities Across the Nation*. Avon, Massachusetts: Adams Media, 2007. i-xii + 1-306. \$14.95.

The Everything Guide is a guidebook summarizing all of the above. It has a good, “flip-through” feel to it.

Non-Profit Organizations

(6) *Careers in Nonprofits & Government Agencies. 2006 Edition*. San Francisco: WetFeet, Inc., 2005. i-iv + 1-130. \$19.95.

This handy, 130-page volume primarily is about non-profit organizations, although it devotes some attention to key governmental departments and agencies. *Careers in Nonprofits & Government Agencies* addresses significant issues, such as what non-profit organizations (or, simply, non-profits) are; how to assess your motivation to work for them; what career possibilities exist in non-profits; what it is like to work inside them; how to find the names of non-profits and their contact coordinates; and how to apply and interview for jobs in non-profits.

Non-profits are quite varied. Some are involved in advocacy (e.g., Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc.), health (e.g., American Red Cross, American Cancer Society, Inc.), charity and relief (America’s Second Harvest, Goodwill Industries International, Inc.), and in other causes.

This is a neat book to keep at your fingertips.

International Employment in the U.S. Public and Private Sector, Work in the U.N. and Careers Abroad

(7) Carland, Maria Pinto. *Careers in International Affairs*. 7th ed. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2003. v-xi + 1-371. \$24.95.

(8) Segal, Nina and Eric Kocher. *International Jobs. Where They Are, How to Get Them*. New York: Basic Books, 2003. iii-xiv + 3-354. \$19.95.

These two monographs portray a wide variety of careers in the federal government (e.g., commerce, communications, intelligence, trade, agriculture, energy, environment, justice, lobbying, consulting, defense, science, the media, Peace Corps), United Nations (many agencies), international and U.S. corporations, nonprofit organizations, international communications, and in teaching abroad. As with some of the other books listed, use the web extravagantly to search out the information and details necessary to bolster your ongoing pursuit of career knowledge.

Professional Careers Using Foreign Languages

“Language is civilization itself”—Thomas Mann

(9) DeGalan, Julie and Stephen Lambert. *Great Jobs for Foreign Language Majors*. Lincolnwood, Illinois: VGM Career Books, 2001. i-xii + 1-260. \$15.95.

First of all, despite its title, this book is intended as much for history majors as it is for language majors.

Every Liberal Arts History Major should read this book, and reflect deeply on the value of using one’s foreign language skills. So many history majors have foreign language skills, acquired through schooling or family upbringing. Yet these skills, particularly in the case of language-schooling imparted on the middle- and high-school

levels, are typically undervalued, even ignored, by American undergraduates. There is no reason for this.

Even three or four years of high school foreign language training, with as little as one year of college-level foreign language training, is sufficient to get one started. Typically, upon cessation of formal, foreign-language classroom work, we neglect through lack of practice our foreign language skills, and then assume that we have lost them. Yet by spending 20 minutes per day, 5 days a week, using various foreign-language practice and recovery routines (e.g., per day, individually or in combination, reading one or two paragraphs from a foreign-language newspaper in order to build vocabulary and using a dictionary as a pony, writing down several words in a small notebook to augment vocabulary and reviewing the new words daily, speaking in the target language with an acquaintance, listening to a segment of a foreign-language t.v. channel or a foreign-language movie on VHS or DVD), after several months one becomes immersed in the foreign language culture and realizes that career opportunities, previously unbeknownst, are now beckoning. So what are they?

Great Jobs for Foreign Language Majors provides worthwhile ideas for both private- and public sector careers utilizing foreign languages. See its chapters on translating and interpreting. Government, educational administration, and business and commerce.

Private- and Public Sector Careers for Your Personality

(10) Camenson, Blythe. *Careers for Introverts and Other Solitary Types*. 2d edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006.iii-vii, 1-148. \$13.95.

If you do not wish to deal too much with people in the workplace, by all means read *Careers for Introverts and Other Solitary Types*. The author describes eight career paths that might fit your tastes: writer, artist, researcher, archivist, computer professional, forest ranger, security guard, and mail carrier. Freelance researchers can study genealogy; forest rangers (who also oversee plains and deserts) need to know local history; local history buffs and artisans, for example, can be involved in living history museums; writers can compose novels or short stories with historical themes.

Keep this book close by. It can be very useful.

Working Abroad and With Foreigners: Cultural “Do’s and Don’t’s”

(11) Bosrock, Mary Murray. *European Business Customs and Manners. A Country-by-Country Guide. How to Converse, Negotiate, Dress, Dine, and Socialize When Doing Business With Europeans from 30 Countries*. New York: Meadowbrook Press, 2006. iii-xiv + 3-481. \$16.00.

This book is your entrée into the realities of cultures, manners, and expectations abroad: a manual on how not to be an “ugly American” and how to learn to respect other cultures through appropriate interaction. Here is but a sampling of the many, many subjects analyzed: meeting and greeting, names and titles, dress, manners, punctuality, holidays and festivals, dining, corporate culture, and language. The second half of the book discusses all of these individually for 30 European countries.

(12) Bosrock, Mary Murray and Megan McGinnis. *Asian Business Customs and Manners. A Country-by-Country Guide*. New York: Meadowbrook Press, 2007. \$16.

This book accomplishes the same as above, except that its focus is Asia.

These two books are worth their weight in gold!
(Bosrock has written other guides of similar ilk on South America, Canada,
Russia, the U.S.)

INSTEAD OF SUMMING IT UP...

We hope this is helpful and has given you food for thought. Feel free to talk with your faculty adviser, other history profs., professors in other departments, and the Career Center.

A last piece of advice. This booklet by itself will do nothing. You have to use it assiduously in order for it to help you, otherwise it is useless. Good luck!